
The Role of Fear of Crime in Donating and Volunteering: A Gendered Analysis

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Abstract

Extensive empirical studies have established that women fear crime more than men and theoretical arguments have suggested this difference produces consequences ranging from increased medical and psychological problems to restricted movement and limited exposure to social networks and opportunities resulting in restrictive informal social control and reduced social capital. More recently, a number of studies have begun to test the theoretical link between fear and behavior, with some suggesting fear will restrict prosocial behavior and others suggesting fear will motivate behavior that improves personal and communal well-being. This study adds to this emerging literature by exploring how fear of crime affects two measures of philanthropic behavior—donating and volunteerism. Using a stratified random telephone survey of 2,361 individuals living in the 20 counties that compose the greater Metro Atlanta area, the authors explore the role of fear of crime as an independent variable in models of donating and volunteering time to a charitable organization. Additionally, interaction terms are included in models of volunteering to control for the possibility that the strength of the relationship may vary based on sex. The results indicate that fear of crime is an important predictor of volunteering, but not donating, and that the effects are stronger for women than men.

Keywords

gender and crime/justice, fear of crime, crime/delinquency theory

Over the past 25 years, hundreds of articles have been published, exploring fear of crime and its correlates. Extensive research has demonstrated numerous relationships between independent variables such as sex, race, education, the presence of incivilities, and so on, and fear of crime (Hale, 1996), but few studies have explored the consequences of fear of crime in an empirical manner (Cobbina, Miller, & Brunson, 2008; Liska, Sanchirico, & Reed, 1988). In contrast, much of the

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theoretical work dealing with fear of crime is concerned with the possible social control function that fear plays in shaping individual behavior, police behavior, and public policy, and how fear disproportionately affects women (Farrall, Gray, & Jackson, 2007; Garland, 2001; Gordon & Riger, 1991; Madriz, 1997; Pain, 2001; Simon, 2007). To test the theoretical link between sex, fear, and behavior, it is necessary to empirically examine the consequences of fear of crime.

Feminists like Russell (1985), Stanko (1990), Gordon and Riger (1991), and Madriz (1997) connect female fear of crime to patriarchy and fear of male violence. While official statistics may show that men are at greater risk of violence than women, the threat of domestic violence and rape both punctuate female fear and serve to structure the context and manner in which many women operate on a daily basis. Gendered fear has become a part of women's socialization, with the expectation that women change their behavior to minimize their exposure to male violence (Stanko, 1995). These behavioral limitations may also carry over to philanthropic activities and may significantly impact both individual and community efficacy.

Garland (2001) and Simon (2007) argue that fear has changed the relationship between the general public and government in society. Public calls for punitive responses to crime have been met with a myriad of retributive laws, as well as the "responsibilization" movement, where governments emphasize the role of individuals and community organizations in fighting the crime problem (Garland, 2001). Similarly, there have been a series of important changes in the inherent contract between government and citizens. One significant change is the shift from government being the critical institutional actor in the provision of goods and services to the government increasingly managing and overseeing a broad range of relationships with for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Pressures for the devolution of governmental responsibility and involvement have become ever more decentralized in a highly fragmented intergovernmental system.

As the role of the private sector increases, both nonprofit organizations and for-profit organizations have become more directly involved in the criminal justice system and in providing a broad range of crime prevention services (Garland, 2001; Simon, 2007). Nonprofits depend, in part, on a range of revenue sources to sustain their organizational missions and programming. One critical source of funding for nonprofits is individual philanthropy expressed as donations of financial resources and contributions of unpaid labor in the form of volunteering. But how the increased salience of crime since the 1970s, and resulting increases in the fear of crime, has influenced philanthropy—a driving force for nonprofit organizations—is still unknown. As both Garland (2001) and Simon (2007) note, crime fear may be both debilitating, causing citizens to give up rights and alter behavior patterns, and a mobilizing force for individual and collective action.

In this article, we attempt to establish whether or not there is a relationship between fear of crime, and volunteering and donating, and control for the possibility that fear of crime may increase community participation for some individuals while decreasing it for others. Specifically, we predict that the effect of fear of crime will be greater for women than for men because past studies indicate that women have higher levels of crime fear and are more likely to demonstrate significant relationships between fear and behavior than men. We also suspect that the difference between men and women will be smaller in models of donating than in models of volunteerism because financial contributions can be made from the comfort of your home, but the majority of volunteer engagements typically require one to leave the perceived safety of the home and participate in a communal activity. We begin by exploring the role that fear of crime may play in structuring individual behavior and then briefly review the literature, primarily from the field of philanthropy and public policy, on the predictors of giving and volunteering.

Literature Review

Fear of crime has been implicated in everything from complete individual social paralysis including withdrawal, anxiety, depression, and other health problems, to moral panics and increasingly

punitive public policy (Dolan & Peasgood, 2007; Jackson & Stafford, 2009; Stafford, Chandola, & Marmot, 2007). As such, fear of crime may produce a desire to retreat and protect oneself that could result in reduced volunteerism and restricted giving practices.

Conversely, some suggest that fear may also be functional and provide a positive “mobilizing force that could be harnessed to achieve utilitarian goals” (Ditton & Innes, 2005; Fattah, 1993; Jackson & Gray, 2010, p. 1). Philanthropy, in its many forms, is a form of engagement in one’s community. Making a decision to participate and ideally make a difference in one’s community is motivated by numerous factors, both altruistic and for personal gain. In terms of philanthropy, fear may produce what Jackson and Gray (2010) label a “constructive action” in the form of efforts to aid victims and help the community. Examples of this type of behavior were evident following the Oklahoma City Bombing on April 19, 1995; the Columbine Shooting on April 20, 1999; the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington DC (Steinberg & Rooney, 2005), as well as, more recently when a gunman opened fire on a political gathering in Arizona on January 11, 2011. Following each of these tragedies, there were well-heeded calls for donations, volunteerism, and improving social relations in communities. It is also not uncommon for politicians to attempt to use fear of crime or terrorism to motivate political action (Simon, 2007).

One could also argue that fear, and a lack of confidence in traditional sources of public safety, may lead some individuals to invest in and use philanthropy as an alternative to government. They may give, volunteer with a nonprofit, and try to play a role in crime prevention by participating in programs designed to help at-risk youth or reintegrating ex-offenders into the community. Few studies have assessed how fear of crime influences community participation and whether fear of crime may lead to withdrawal or an increased motivation to make a difference through philanthropy—whether in the form of volunteerism or financial contributions. On the other hand, numerous studies have shown us the common correlates of fear of crime and demonstrated that behaviors precipitated by crime fear are often gender specific. This literature is reviewed below.

Gender and Fear of Crime

The overwhelming majority of the fear of crime literature has focused on fear as a dependent variable. These studies have consistently shown that demographic variables such as sex, race, age, education, income, and neighborhood incivilities influence fear of crime (Ferraro, 1995; Hanson, Smith, Kilpatrick, & Freedy, 2000; Lagrange & Ferraro, 1989).¹ The strongest of these relationships are found between sex and fear of crime and this relationship is often called the sex–fear paradox or the fear victimization paradox because despite men’s higher crime victimization rates, women have much higher fear levels (Ferraro, 1995; Fisher & Sloan, 2003; Madriz, 1997; Nellis, 2009; Warr, 1984). The threat of violence, particularly male violence, shapes women’s perceptions of crime and their emotional reactions to it (Gordon & Riger, 1991; Madriz, 1997; Russell, 1985; Stanko, 1995).

In 1981, Skogan and Maxfield introduced the concept of “vulnerability” as a theoretical explanation for why women, the elderly, and people in poverty exhibit higher fear levels. Warr (1984) found that the perceptually contemporaneous offense of rape—a crime that is linked to another crime because of a perceived belief that one crime may lead to another more serious crime—helped to explain gender differences between men and women. Women feel more vulnerable to assault, burglary, or homicide than men because of the tendency to link these crimes to the additionally fear-producing possibility of rape (Lane & Meeker, 2003; Warr, 1984). Ferraro’s (1995, 1996) work on the “shadow of sexual assault” replicated these findings.

Consistent with perceptually contemporaneous offenses (Warr, 1984) and the previously identified importance of risk in predicting fear of crime (Ferraro, 1995), Killias (1990) identified (a) exposure to risk, (b) seriousness of consequences, and (c) loss of control as three overlapping dimensions of vulnerability. In this model, each dimension of vulnerability was necessary to

significantly alter perceptions of safety. Later, Jackson (2009) tested a psychological model of vulnerability in the fear of crime, which included risk exposure, seriousness of consequences, and loss of control. Risk and control were significant predictors of violent crime, while risk and seriousness of consequences were significant predictors of property crime. Inclusion of these variables reduced the direct effect of gender on worry about crime; therefore, vulnerability explains a significant portion of gender differences in fear of crime.

In stark contrast to the vulnerability argument, several scholars theorize that differences in socialization lead to women being more open about discussing fear, while men often deny fear because it is not perceived as socially desirable (Goodey, 1997; Sutton & Farrall, 2004, 2005). “The dominant culture of heterosexual masculinity makes ‘fear’ a less acceptable response for men” (Pain, 2001, p. 905). Specifically, women, who are culturally given permission to express vulnerability and fear respond truthfully to fear measures, whereas men who are often socialized to not show fear may minimize their fear levels on traditional fear scales (Bem, 1981; Goodey, 1997; Sutton & Farrall, 2005). Therefore, measures of vulnerability and fear/worry may suffer from severe validity problems and the significant findings of studies that link vulnerability to fear of crime may not reflect reality.

Gender, Fear, and Behavior

Notwithstanding the possibility that socialization produces validity problems with the measurement of fear, several studies have found crime fear to be an important predictor of constrained behaviors and health (Chandola, 2001; Cobbina, Miller, & Brunson, 2008; Jackson & Gray, 2010; Khan, Byrne, & Livesay, 2005; Liska et al., 1988; May, Rader, & Goodrum, 2010; Nellis, 2009; Rader, Cossman, & Allison, 2009; Ross & Mirowsky, 2001; Stafford et al., 2007; Palmer, Ziersch, Arthurson, & Baum, 2005; Whitley & Prince, 2005) and several theoretically important dependent variables remain unexplored. These studies, as described below, consistently find that high levels of fear-related measures (safety, concern, and worry) predict a decrease in quality of life, and that women, because of their propensity toward higher fear levels, experience these negative outcomes more frequently than men.

One of the first studies to investigate fear as a predictor variable was conducted by Liska, Sanchirico, and Reed (1988) using 1970s data from the National Crime Survey. In this study, fear increased constrained behavior, which in turn increased fear. Additionally, sex had no effect on constrained behavior that was not mediated by fear of crime, suggesting that women primarily constrain their behavior because of fear of crime. A more recent study by Cobbina, Miller, and Brunson (2008) of urban African American youths found that fear of crime often led women to “withdraw from public life and stay in or nearby their homes” (p. 700), while men commonly responded to fear by hanging out with friend/acquaintances, carrying weapons and avoiding direct confrontations with other youths.

The results from a study of female undergraduates by Khan, Byrne, and Livesay (2005) also found constrained behavior. Fear of crime is associated with increased use of rational discrimination, measured as avoiding certain men and situations because of perceived risk of sexual assault or other victimization, especially in public and during evening hours. “Rational discrimination is akin to racial profiling, a controversial practice employed by some law enforcement officials in judging the potential threat of civilians” (Khan et al., 2005, p. 979). The irony of these findings is that most sexual assaults occur in private settings and therefore the rational discrimination in public to avoid dangerous men and places likely serves a limited crime prevention function and unnecessarily constrains their behavior and lifestyle choices.

Similarly, Whitley and Prince (2005) found that fear of crime led to variation in the ability to access and utilize different times and spaces within the environment, producing “time-space

inequalities.” High fear, particularly in disadvantaged subgroups, led to restricted movement, which deterred protective social activity like social involvement, work, and use of community services. Consequentially, the authors concluded that fear of crime may contribute both directly and indirectly to low self-esteem and negative mood (Whitley & Prince, 2005). Although Palmer, Ziersch, Arthurson, and Baum (2005) did not differentiate by sex in their study, they too found that individuals living in “stigmatized” suburbs often responded to fear of crime by withdrawing from social interaction, which further disadvantaged the residents of the community by reducing their social capital. In a related article on fear of terrorism, Nellis (2009) found that perceived risk of terrorism was associated with higher levels of avoidance behavior in women than men.

May, Rader, and Goodrum (2010) found women had higher fear levels than men and there was a strong relationship between fear and avoidance behaviors for both women and men. This suggests that, both men and women may experience vulnerability, especially those with lower income, recent victimization, and a perception that crime was increasing in their neighborhood, which may lead to changes in behavior and actions.

Still other studies have examined the relationship between fear of crime and health. In an attempt to specify the well-established link between neighborhood disadvantage and public health, Ross and Mirowsky (2001) analyzed data from the 1995 Community, Crime, and Health Survey in Illinois. In contrast to the Liska et al. (1988) study, they found that fear was unrelated to walking outdoors and more likely a necessity for individuals living in disadvantaged neighborhoods that are typically associated with high fear levels. Even though there was no evidence of a relationship between fear and walking, disorder was a strong predictor of fear and poor physical well-being. The authors suggest that chronic stress from both neighborhood conditions and fear of crime contribute to poor health. In each of the models, women had higher fear levels than men. In a similar study, using 1996 data from the British Crime Survey, Chandola (2001) also found a significant relationship between perception of safety walking alone at night and self-rated health. Significant sex differences were found in each model.

In a longitudinal study of over 10,000 London civil servants, Stafford, Chandola, and Marmot (2007) found that crime worry was associated with declines in both mental and physical health, most likely because of lower levels of physical activity, socialization with peers, and involvement in community activities. Both women and those with lower incomes expressed higher levels of worry, which “suggests that fear of crime may contribute to socioeconomic inequalities in health and functioning” (p. 11). Elaborating on this study and utilizing the same data, Jackson and Stafford (2009) tested a reciprocal model for crime worry and public health. “Worry about crime is implicated in a cycle of decreased health, increased vulnerability and further insecurities about crime,” (p. 842) and women and the poor experience this cycle more acutely because of their higher levels of crime worry.

Although several studies, including the ones described above, have found fear-related measures to predict negative consequences, very few have tested the possibility that either fear produces positive consequences or differential consequences—some negative and some positive depending on the characteristics of the individual. Jackson and Gray (2010), using data from the 2007 Safer Neighborhood Survey in London, found evidence of both dysfunctional worry that degrades ones quality of life and functional worry that results in constructive action that may reduce victimization chances and make individuals feel safer. Notably, women exhibited higher levels of both functional and dysfunctional worry. Consistent with these findings, Rader, Cossman, and Allison (2009) find that fear is a more important predictor of defensive precautions (presumably functional behavior) for women than for men.

As the examples above demonstrate, the theoretical importance of the sex–fear relationship is magnified when the consequences of fear are explored. Fear is an important independent or intervening variable in models of collective efficacy and social capital, political activism, support for

punitive policies, rational discrimination, precautionary and constrained behaviors, and public health (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Brown & Ferris 2007; Clear, 2007; Garland, 2001; Liska et al., 1988; Rosenfeld, Messner, & Baumer, 2001; Simon, 2007) and perhaps philanthropy. The decision-making processes of individuals who live with high levels of fear are different than those for individuals with low fear levels, and these differences are often structured by gender, which produces both attitudinal and behavior consequences. Because volunteerism and donating are behaviors often linked to collective efficacy, social capital, political activism, and quality of life, it is hypothesized that fear of crime should also influence individual philanthropic behaviors.

This study will utilize fear of crime as an independent variable in models of donating and volunteering. Volunteering requires active participation on the part of the donor and usually involves leaving one's home and interacting with members of the community, whereas donating money or goods is a more passive activity, which may not be as sensitive to fear of crime. Each of these models will control for the possibility that there is an interaction effect between sex and fear. The vulnerability argument suggests that high fear levels should lower women's participation in philanthropy. Alternatively, it is possible that the responsabilization movement has connected crime fear to a greater sense of community responsibility for the crime problem (Garland, 2001; Simon, 2007) and that high fear levels result in constructive actions (Jackson & Gray, 2010) including stronger patterns of philanthropic engagement for both men and women.

Giving and Volunteering

Nonprofits have long played an important role in the social fabric of community in American life and addressing collective action problems. In fact, the French philosopher and statesman Alexis deTocqueville commented on the nature of American civil society as far back as the late 1800s when observing the important role these organizations play in community life and in meeting needs unmet by government. Given the growing interdependent relationship between government and its engagement with nonprofit organizations for the production and delivery of goods and services, traditional roles that nonprofits have played as advocates in the policy-making process, and the role nonprofits play in their communities, it is important to think more about individual motivations to be philanthropically engaged.

Historically, fundraisers have used a standard demographic-solicitation matrix that assumes donor behavior is homogeneous and gender invariant and does not include perceptual measures such as fear of crime (Wilson, 2000). Additionally, most donors examined have been affluent males. Understanding the factors that influence philanthropy is all the more important, given the increasing use of nonprofit organizations as partners in the production and delivery of programs and services, and the continued escalation in leveraging private philanthropic support to offset budget cuts across a range of program areas (Boris, 1999; Boris, deLeon, Roeger, & Nikolova, 2010; Salamon, 1989; Smith, 1999).

Theories of charitable behavior can be primarily classified according to the disciplinary basis of the scholars engaged in philanthropic research.² Economic theories focus on the distinction between voluntarily supporting a range of public and private goods, and the public policy conditions (i.e., tax treatment) that affect an individual's decisions to allocate portions of their wealth, income, and time to causes in which their own self-interest is not necessarily maximized (Andreoni & Scholz, 1998; Brown, 1999; Clotfelter, 1985, 1997; Steinberg, 1990). In general, the empirical studies conducted by economists examine determinants of charitable giving and isolate variables on the right-hand side of utility functions that predict levels of and changes in an individual's giving decisions and patterns. These studies show positive and significant relationships between the decision to give and level of education, age, religiosity, and Republican political party affiliation (Bekkers, 2005; Brown, 1999; Clotfelter, 1997; Ribar & Wilhelm, 1995; Rose-Ackerman, 1983; Wolff, 1999). Race also predicts

an individual's charitable contribution as a percentage of income with Whites both giving and volunteering more than non-Whites (Jencks, 1987; Weitzman, Jalandoni, Lampkin, & Pollak, 2002; Wolff, 1999). Inequality indicators, such as those variables commonly used as proxies for poverty, are found not to be significant predictors in affecting charitable giving levels (Wolff, 1999, p. 92). Andreoni, Brown, and Rischall (2003) found gender differences in giving with married women donating less money to a greater range of charities than married men, while also responding to different decision-making cues, such as the type of solicitation. However, Brown and Ferris (2007) find that females give more to secular organizations, while Yen (2002) finds that women donate more to religious causes in the United States. Regnerus, Smith, and Sikink (1998) find that females are more likely to donate to causes that assist the poor and needy, and Marx (2000) reported that women give more to human services charities than men.

Other variables found to have a positive relationship in the decision to give include number of children, home ownership, living in a city with a population less than a million, and a family tradition in which the parents gave and volunteered to charitable activities (Clotfelter, 1997; Jencks, 1987; Smith, Kehoe, & Cremer 1995; Van Slyke & Brooks 2005). Economists have tended to accept these preferences as is without investigating a donor's motivations for giving (Clotfelter, 1997). Psychologists fill this void by analyzing human behavior and motivations to give.

Psychological theories focus on motivations to contribute and identify donor behaviors that are not necessarily rationally based on reciprocity and exchange (Clary & Snyder, 1995). Prince, File, and Gillespie (1993) identify several benefits including giving to be involved in one's community, social affiliation, supporting charitable organizations for religious or moral reasons, giving back because of a past experience in which the giver or someone close to them was helped by a charity, and supporting the charity because of its perceived effectiveness in fulfilling its mission and goals. Other motives identified include helping, public recognition, commemoration, nostalgia, and prosocial behaviors such as those that can lead to feelings of sympathy for others (Chang, Okunade, & Kumar, 1999; Clary & Snyder, 1991; Dee & Henkin, 1997; Holmes, Miller, & Lerner, 2002; Mount, 1996; Radley & Kennedy, 1995; Schervish, 1997).

Radley and Kennedy (1995) review attitudes and practices affecting charitable giving by individuals and report a positive relationship between empathy, prosocial behavior, and feelings of sympathy for other individuals. "Gifts have been responsible for stress, anxiety, and disappointment, but have also led to excitement, satisfaction, and extreme pleasure" (Larsen & Watson, 2001, p. 889).

Only a few studies of philanthropy specifically address crime or crime perceptions. Kogut and Ritov (2005a, 2005b), Small and Loewenstein (2003), and Small, et al. (2007) found that framing a request for gifts of time and money by specifying a single victim and the type of crime perpetrated is more efficacious than framing that need by the number of victims affected in certain crime categories. Similarly, Twenge, Ciarocco, Baumeister, DeWall, and Bartels (2007) have found that perceiving and experiencing social exclusion lower an individual's propensity to give and volunteer.

Sociological theories are concerned with the giver's context and institutionalized affiliations, such as organized religious groups, political institutions, and organizational participation (Carson, 1999; Callero, Howard, & Piliavin, 1987; Piliavin & Callero, 1991; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2005; Schervish, 1997; Schervish & Havens, 1995; Schneider, 1996; Wolpert, 1995;). Larsen and Watson (2001, p. 893) point out that "gifts may be a medium by which social boundaries are articulated and ... can be used to shape and reflect social integration or social difference."

Research on the relationship between religiosity and giving has generally found that religious participation is strongly linked to giving and volunteering (Hoge, 1995, Jackson, Bachmeier, Wood, & Craft, 1995; Schervish & Havens, 1997). Schervish (1997) found that participating in community organizations and adhering to one's religious, political, and social values all have a positive impact on an individual's motivation to give. Trust in government as an effective vehicle for meeting community needs and solving social problems has also been found to predict philanthropic patterns.

Brooks and Lewis (2001) found that as individual trust in government declines individual charitable giving and volunteering increase.

Some attention has focused on women and the role they play in making philanthropic decisions concerning a household's charitable contributions, as well as the potential that women represent as donors (Church & Mollner, 1993; Sublett, 1993). The findings from national and regional surveys reveal that women give and volunteer to charitable organizations in greater percentages than men but give less in total dollar amounts (Giving USA, 1999; Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 1999; Mesch, Rooney, Steinberg, & Denton, 2006).³ While these surveys exist, rarely do they model volunteering and giving using several controls concurrently, therefore, the empirical evidence about charitable giving patterns and differences by gender is scant (Andreoni & Versterlund, 2001).

While fear of crime may be theoretically relevant in each of these theories and models, none of these studies include actual measures of fear of crime (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007). The present study addresses this deficit by investigating the following questions: Does fear of crime result in a withdrawal from society, and a related reduction in donating and volunteering? Does fear of crime serve as a motivator to get involved and address community problems through philanthropy? Is the effect of fear of crime stronger in models of volunteering than donating because donating is a passive activity, frequently done in the safety of one's home, and volunteering is usually more active, requiring an individual to interact with community members? Is the effect of fear of crime consistent for men and women in models of donating and volunteering?

Methodology

The data for this study was collected by Research Atlanta, Inc., as a part of a larger study of Individual Philanthropy Patterns in Metro Atlanta. The results include 2,361 interviews with adults in the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistics Area (MSA), which includes the 20 counties that make up the greater Atlanta area. The initial goal for a sample consisting of roughly 100 randomly selected individuals in each of the counties in the sampling frame with an oversampling in the four largest Atlanta MSA Counties (Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett Counties) to better approximate their actual populations relative to other counties in Atlanta's MSA.⁴ The survey was conducted from May through September 2000,⁵ a time period which immediately followed the April 15th deadline for federal income tax returns where many individuals and families would have presumably recently calculated their contributions to charitable organizations in the past year.⁶ The sample was randomly selected using random digit dialing and a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system. The introduction of the survey emphasized that the call was not a solicitation for donations but rather only to gather opinions about charitable giving. Individual hang-ups, answering machines, and the screening of calls each contributed to a participation rate of 35%.⁷ Additionally, only 4% of callers who actually listened to the introduction refused to participate in the survey.⁸

The sample overrepresented women and the elderly, something that is not uncommon in telephone surveys (Lavrakas, 1987; Tuckel & O'Neill, 2002) but that could nonetheless impact the generalizability of this study. Sixty-five percent of the respondents were women, and in Atlanta MSA, 50.6% of the population is female (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The data were weighted to control for the large gender difference between our sample and the population. The racial composition of the sample roughly mirrored the racial composition of Atlanta. Sixty-one percent of the respondents self-identified themselves as White; 27% as African American and 8% identified themselves as other, compared with Atlanta MSA Census figures of 63.0%, 28.9%, and 8.1%, respectively. The median age in Atlanta MSA is 32.9 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), while the average age in the sample is 43. The average education level of respondents was some college or an AA degree, and the average household income of respondents was \$68,764. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were married, 75% were employed, and 50% of the respondents had a child under

Table 1. Variables Used in Models

Variable	Measurement	M	SD
Donate: In the past year, did you or other members of your household donate money, assets, goods, or property for charitable purposes?	1 = <i>yes</i> 0 = <i>no</i>	.80	.401
Volunteer: Did you volunteer your time and skills to a charitable organization in the past year?	1 = <i>yes</i> 0 = <i>no</i>	.49	.500
Sex	1 = <i>female</i> 0 = <i>male</i>	.65	.48
Black (White reference category)	1 = <i>Black</i> 0 = <i>Other</i>	.22	.42
Other race (White reference category)	1 = <i>Other</i> 0 = <i>non-Blacks and non-Whites</i>	.10	.31
Age: year of birth	18 and older by year	43.03	14.59
Income	1 ≤ 5,000 K 10 >300,000 K	5.16	2.20
Employed: currently employed	1 = <i>yes</i> 0 = <i>no</i>	.74	.44
Community problems: Who should be responsible for community problems?	1 = <i>government</i> 0 = <i>other groups</i>	.29	.45
Education: Highest level of education	1 ≤ HS grad 6 = <i>graduate or professional degree</i>	3.19	1.32
Children: children under 18	1 = <i>children < 18</i> 0 = <i>none</i>	.50	.50
Married	1 = <i>married</i> 0 = <i>not currently married</i>	.63	.48
Religion: Frequency of attending religious services	0 = <i>not at all or rarely</i> 4 = <i>once a week or more</i>	2.99	1.15
Republican: political party (democrats reference category)	1 = <i>republican</i> 0 = <i>other party</i>	.27	.44
Other Party: political party (democrats reference category)	1 = <i>other party</i> 0 = <i>nonrepublic, nondemocratic</i>	.43	.49
Disadvantage Index: Percentage below poverty crime rate, and md income	Factor	-.01	1.0
Fear: 2 item index: fear of property and violent crime on 7-point scale	2 = <i>low fear</i> 14 = <i>extremely fearful</i>	6.72	3.88

18 currently residing in their households. Women were significantly more likely to have a child under the age of 18 living in their household and significantly less likely to be employed than men.

Dependent Variables

Two separate measures of the dependent variable were utilized to investigate different aspects of philanthropy (see Table 1). First respondents were asked whether or not they or members of their household had donated money, assets, goods, or property for charitable purposes in the past year.⁹ The overwhelming majority (80%) of respondents had donated in the past year. Respondents were next asked whether they had volunteered their time and skills to a charitable organization including a

religious organization or house of worship in the past year. This measured a more active component of philanthropy and perhaps one that would be more likely to trigger contemplation of risk or fear of crime. Approximately one half of the respondents had volunteered in the past year.

Independent Variables

Measurement of the fear of crime has garnered much debate over the years. As measurement of the fear of crime has evolved, so too has the understanding of what informs fear. In general, fear of crime is defined as “an emotional response of dread or anxiety to crime or symbols that a person associates with crime” (Ferraro, 1995, p. 4). Separating emotions from cognitive assessment is a major goal in research concerning fear of crime. Questions aimed at measuring “fear” try to assess the emotional state of individuals (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987). Several studies have found that although “fear” and “risk” are significantly and strongly correlated, they are conceptually distinct phenomenon (Ferraro, 1995; Melde, Esbenson, & Taylor, 2009; Rountree & Land, 1996; Warr, 1984), although others argue that fear, risk, and experiences with victimization are components of the concept “threat of victimization” (Rader, 2004).¹⁰ Following Ferraro’s (1995) model, this study used questions that asked the respondent to rank how much they fear being the victim of both violent and property crimes on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being *not at all afraid* and 7 being *very afraid*. The violent and property crime measures were added together to create a fear of crime index ($\alpha = .86$) ranging from 2 for *least afraid* to 14 for *extremely fearful*.¹¹ Additionally, the entire analysis presented in the article was also run using the separate measures of fear of violent crime and fear of property crime (as done in Jackson, 2009), and all results were consistent with the results using the fear of crime index.

The survey included several economic, sociological, and psychological items that predict giving and volunteering (see Table 1). Age, education (coded on a 6-point scale where 1 = *less than high school* and 6 = *professional or graduate school*), employment (0 = *unemployed* and 1 = *employed*), and income (1 = *\$5,000 and under* and 10 = *more than \$300,000*) were all predicted to have a positive relationship with giving and volunteering (Clotfelter, 1997; Wolff, 1999). As is quite common in survey research, there was a high refusal rate (47%) for the income question. Missing data were imputed using a linear regression model from Statistical Package for the Social Sciences missing values analysis. Race was dummy coded into two variables: Black (1 = *black* and 0 = *other*) and other race (1 = *other* and 0 = *non-White, non-Black*), with White being the reference category. Prior studies have found that minorities tend to give less (Jencks, 1987; Wolff, 1999). Prior research shows that women generally volunteer and give at the same rates as men, but that men tend to give larger amounts of money to charity (Andreoni, Brown, & Rischall, 2003; Mesch et al., 2006). Gender (1 = *female* and 0 = *male*) was included both as an independent variable in the original model and as an interaction term to examine gender differences in philanthropic behavior in relation to fear of crime.

Sociological theories often focus on how marriage and family as well as political and religious participation influence giving and volunteering. Marriage (0 = *not married* and 1 = *married*) and children (0 = *no child in household* and 1 = *child in household*) are both predicted to influence donating and volunteering in the positive direction (Clotfelter, 1997; Smith et al., 1995). Political party was dummy coded into two variables: republican (1 = *republican* and 0 = *other*) and other party (1 = *other* and 0 = *nonrepublican, nondemocrat*), with democrat being the reference category. Prior research indicates that republicans tend to give slightly more than democrats and other party members (Brown, 1999; Ribar & Wilhelm, 1995; Rose-Ackerman, 1983). Additionally, a question was posed that asked respondents who they felt should be most responsible for providing programs that help people in need or address community problems. Respondents who thought government should be responsible were coded 1, and all other responses were coded 0. Religious participation (4-point scale, 1 = *rarely* and 4 = *once a week or more*) is consistently related to higher levels of donating and volunteering (Brooks & Lewis, 2001; Hoge, 1995; Schneider, 1996). Additionally,

Table 2. Logistic Regression for Donating

Variable	Model I Donating			Model II Donating With Fear			Model III Donating With Interaction Term		
	B	SE	Odds Ratio	B	SE	Odds Ratio	B	SE	Odds Ratio
Age	.007	.004	1.01	.007	.004	1.01	.007	.004	1.01
Sex	.237	.115	1.27*	.249	.116	1.28*	.401	.224	1.49
Black	-.494	.151	.61*	-.492	.152	.61*	-.496	.152	.61*
Other race	-.450	.183	.64*	-.451	.183	.64*	-.453	.183	.64*
Education	.444	.052	1.56*	.442	.052	1.56*	.441	.052	1.55*
Income	.107	.038	1.11*	.107	.038	1.11*	.108	.038	1.11*
Marriage	.715	.120	2.04*	.712	.120	2.04*	.714	.120	2.04*
Children	-.100	.121	.91	-.099	.121	.91	-.102	.121	.90
Employed	.420	.138	1.52*	.417	.138	1.52*	.419	.138	1.52*
Religion	.248	.048	1.29*	.250	.048	1.28*	.250	.048	1.29*
Republican	.157	.171	1.17	.155	.171	1.17	.156	.171	1.17
Other political party	-.206	.134	.81	-.206	.134	.81	-.209	.134	.81
Community problems	-.324	.120	.72*	-.321	.120	.73*	-.319	.120	.73*
Incivilities	.031	.061	1.03	.032	.061	1.03	.033	.061	1.03
Crime fear				-.010	.014	.99	-.002	.021	1.00
Fear × Sex interaction							-.023	.028	.98
-2 Log likelihood	2048.426			2047.926			2047.295		
Cox and snell R ²	.13			.13			.13		
N	2,347			2,347			2,347		

Note. Logistic regression results represent the pooled equations using imputation values for income.

* $p < .05$.

a neighborhood disadvantage index factor was calculated for each respondent using the percentage below poverty, the crime rate, and the median income of the respondent's county.

Results

Logistic regression is used to estimate the net relationship between fear of crime and other independent variables and the dependent variables: donating and volunteering. We predict that fear of crime will have a negative relationship with both donating and volunteering, and we expect this relationship to be stronger for volunteering which usually requires respondents to leave the presumed safety of their homes. A positive relationship has also been suggested, arguing that fear actually motivates individuals to get involved and to make a difference in their communities. This type of phenomenon was witnessed when millions of people volunteered their time and money in response to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington and to recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina (Steinberg & Rooney, 2005). It is possible that fear can have either a paralyzing or a motivating affects depending on gender. We will control for this possibility by including an interaction effect for fear and sex in our model.

In our logistic regression model for donating (Table 2, Model I), several variables were positively related to philanthropy. As expected, women, Whites, married individuals, those with current employment, those with higher levels of education and income, those who attend religious functions frequently, and older individuals all were more likely to have donated to charity in the past year. Those who felt that it was the government's responsibility to take care of social problems, as opposed to nonprofit organizations or private corporations, were significantly less likely to have donated in the past year; consistent with Brooks and Lewis's (2001) findings. Model 2 introduces crime fear as an independent variable. Fear was unrelated to donating to charities. Even with the

Table 3. Logistic Regression Estimates for Volunteering

Variable	Model I Volunteer			Model II Volunteer With Fear			Model III Volunteer With Interaction Term		
	B	SE	Odds Ratio	B	SE	Odds Ratio	B	SE	Odds Ratio
Age	.000	.004	1.00	.000	.004	1.00	.000	.004	1.00
Sex	.032	.096	1.03	.058	.097	1.06	.551	.189	1.74*
Black	.156	.131	1.17	.162	.132	1.18	.151	.132	1.16
Other race	-.135	.157	.87	-.141	.157	.87	-.147	.158	.86
Education	.184	.039	1.20*	.180	.039	1.20*	.179	.039	1.20*
Income	.039	.028	1.04	.039	.028	1.04	.041	.028	1.04
Marriage	.225	.106	1.25*	.221	.106	1.25*	.237	.106	1.27*
Children	.319	.100	1.38*	.320	.101	1.38*	.316	.101	1.37*
Employed	.438	.121	1.55*	.434	.121	1.54*	.435	.121	1.55*
Religion	.804	.046	2.24*	.808	.046	2.24*	.807	.046	2.24*
Republican	.226	.135	1.25*	.224	.135	1.25*	.220	.136	1.26
Other political party	-.203	.116	.82	-.203	.116	.82	-.210	.116	.81
Community problems	-.098	.104	.91	-.090	.104	.91	-.081	.105	.92
Incivilities	.075	.050	1.08	.077	.050	1.08	.083	.050	1.08
Crime fear				-.021	.012	.98*	.022	.019	1.02
Fear × Sex interaction							-.076	.025	.93*
-2 Log likelihood	2,756.669			2,750.966			2,717.681		
Cox and snell R ²	.20			.20			.21		
N	2,361			2,361			2,361		

Note. Logistic regression results represent the pooled equations using imputation values for income.

*p < .05.

inclusion of interaction variables for sex and fear, crime fear remained insignificant. The pseudo R² results for Table 3, Models I, II, and III, as indicated by the Cox and Snell R², were .13 in each model; also indicating that fear of crime had little impact on an individual’s decision to donate.

Table 3 shows the results for volunteering. Model 1 is the original volunteering equation without fear of crime, while Model 2 introduces fear of crime as an independent variable and Model 3 includes a Sex and Fear interaction term. Model 1 shows that much like the model for donating, employment, education, and religious attendance all influence an individual’s likelihood of volunteering. Additionally, republicans were more likely to volunteer than democrats and individuals with children also had higher volunteerism rates; again consistent with the findings from Brook and Lewis’s (2001) work on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics associated with individual philanthropy. Unlike, models of donating, sex, race, income, and perception of government responsibility for social problems were not significant predictors of volunteerism. In Model 2, as predicted, fear of crime is negatively related to volunteering, meaning people who are afraid are significantly less likely to volunteer their time and services to the community. Although sex was not a significant predictor of volunteering in Model 1 or 2, when a sex–fear interaction was included (Model 3), the results were significant. The pseudo R² results for Table 3, Models I, II, and III, as indicated by the Cox and Snell R², were .20, .20, and .21, respectively. This suggests that fear of crime has a small but significant differential effect on men and women, with fear of crime related to lower levels of volunteering for women but not for men.

Conclusion

This study is the first study to test the effect of fear of crime on community participation, as measured by donating and volunteering, and adds to a growing body of literature that examines fear as an

independent or intervening variable in models of constrained behavior, defensive precautions, public health, quality of life, punitive attitudes, and social capital (Cobbina et al., 2008; Jackson & Gray, 2010; Jackson & Stafford, 2009; May, Rader, & Goodrum, 2010; Nellis, 2009; Putnam, 2000; Stafford et al., 2007; Whitley & Prince, 2005). Contrary to the suggestion that the “responsibilization” movement (Garland, 2001; Simon, 2007) would motivate fearful individuals to become more involved with nongovernment organizations, no positive relationships between fear and philanthropy were found. Instead, high fear is associated with lower levels of volunteerism. There is also an interaction effect that lends support to the proposition that fear does not impact everyone in a uniform manner and demonstrates that the gender–fear paradox produces significant consequences. Specifically, for women crime fear serves to restrict social movement and the development of community ties and for men crime fear appears to have limited effects. The pattern of our findings is consistent with the theoretical arguments related to the patriarchy and female vulnerability arguments presented in the introduction of the article and parallel several earlier studies on the effect of fear on various behavioral measures (Chandola, 2001; Cobbina et al., 2008; Jackson & Gray, 2010; Khan et al., 2005; Liska et al., 1988; Nellis, 2009; Ross & Mirowsky, 2001; Stafford et al., 2007; Whitley & Prince, 2005).

We utilized an index of two general measures of fear of crime—fear of property crime and fear of violent crime—therefore, the data cannot directly address the notion of “perceptually contemporaneous offenses.” On the other hand, it is quite possible that one of the reasons that fear produces a reduction in volunteering but not donating for women is because the perceived risk of crime and “perceptually contemporaneous offenses” is triggered by the thought of leaving one’s home to participate in an activity with community members. Several previous studies have found that women use avoidance (Cobbina et al., 2008; Whitley & Prince, 2005) and rational discrimination (Khan et al., 2005) in response to their crime fear.

Alternatively, women may feel more socially vulnerable relative to men, regardless of “perceptually contemporaneous offenses,” when contemplating volunteering. In this way, feminist theory would predict that fear of crime may serve to further disenfranchise women suffering from a relative lack of power and influence in society to males (Gordon & Riger, 1991; Madriz, 1997; Stanko, 1995). As Nellis’s (2009) study of terrorism demonstrated fear of any crime may result in restricted behavior for women, even without the threat of sexual assault. Future research examining the relationship between gender, fear, and volunteering should include more crime-specific measures of fear so that the theoretical arguments for perceptually contemporaneous offenses and social vulnerability can be better tested. These studies should also utilize specific measures of vulnerability (Jackson, 2009; Killias, 1990; Killias & Clerici, 2000) and measures of the frequency and intensity of fear experienced by respondents (Gray, Jackson & Farrall, 2008; Farrall & Gadd, 2004).

Furthermore, it is also possible that the differences between men and women in models of volunteering are purely based on socialization differences rather than real variation in objective fear; although the fact that the differences were not significant in models of donating discounts this possibility. As Sutton and Farrall (2005) suggest, future studies should also include measures of a tendency to respond to survey questions in a socially desirable way. This would help control for possible socialization differences between men and women.

On a more practical level, the results of this study are important for organizations that rely on volunteerism for their mission and operation (Van Slyke, Ashley, & Johnson, 2007). Fear of crime may paralyze some women and keep them from being active in their communities. Care should be taken in developing volunteer opportunities for women to feel empowered and safe while contributing to community projects. Strategies to encourage volunteering can focus on working in teams, volunteering with a friend, having organization staff on-site, training, and other methods that would reduce an individual’s, specifically a woman’s, fear of crime. Creating these types of opportunities and environments may increase women’s volunteerism levels.

One new trend that could assist with this effort can be found in giving circles. This type of philanthropy has also been called “giving clubs.” Giving circles differ from the traditional manner in which many people contribute to the community. In the past, one often attended a dinner, listened to a talk, and then wrote a check. Giving circles allow women to pool their money, time, and resources for causes that are important to them. There is no hierarchy. Each woman participates in the choices and decision making (Caster, 2008).

Giving, or volunteer, circles provide the opportunity for women to socialize and discuss their issues and concerns while also meeting their philanthropic goals. Many of the circles schedule luncheons or dinner meetings where community or philanthropic proposals are considered. Clubs like the Wine Ladies in Wisconsin gather to share wine and communicate what is going on in their lives (Barnet, 2008). While having a good time, the women have raised \$16,000 to benefit local causes. Some groups complete volunteer projects (Hall, 2005). The projects increase their sense of efficacy. Once established, charitable organizations will often seek them out and present proposals. Women can choose to join a club that shares their interests or philanthropic goals. For example, the Everychild Foundation in California gives to a wide variety of children’s charities (Caster, 2008). Some giving circles focus on education. Smart Women with Spare Change in Florida raised funds for English lessons and medical care for immigrant women who work as housekeepers in South Florida (Barnet, 2008).

Another option for both women and men is to get involved by participating in projects that improve the communities where they perceive crime risk. One example is house construction in which volunteers get involved with hands-on projects. Habitat for Humanity has tapped into the enormous potential of female volunteers and hosts a national woman’s build week during the month of May (Hutson, 2009). In each case, these alternative, new, and innovative mechanisms for socialization, discussion of responsibility and philanthropic commitments, and a desire to address the type of collective action problems in communities that may limit engagement and participation is important. Better understanding the relationship between fear of crime and philanthropy provides a finding that policy makers and community leaders can use to create more effective engagement and governance mechanisms. If successful, fear of crime and victimization need not create permanent detachment and isolation from community engagement and philanthropic participation.

Appendix A

Atlanta MSA Counties

County	Population	Percentage of Population (%)	Percentage of Sample (%)
Barrow	46,144	1.1	4.2
Bartow	76,019	1.8	4.2
Carroll	87,268	2.1	3.6
Cherokee	141,903	3.5	4.1
Clayton	236,517	5.8	4.2
Cobb	607,751	14.8	8.4
Coweta	89,215	2.2	4.2
Dekalb	665,865	16.2	10.6
Douglas	92,174	2.2	3.6
Fayette	91,263	2.2	3.2
Forsyth	98,407	2.4	4.2
Fulton	816,006	19.8	11.1
Gwinnett	588,448	14.3	8.3

(continued)

(continued)

County	Population	Percentage of Population (%)	Percentage of Sample (%)
Henry	119,341	2.9	4.2
Newton	62,001	1.5	4.0
Paulding	81,678	2.0	4.3
Pickens	22,983	0.6	2.4
Rockdale	70,111	1.7	3.3
Spaulding	58,417	1.4	4.2
Walton	60,687	1.5	3.7
Total	4,112,198	100.0	100.0

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Notes

1. Rather than reviewing all of this literature here, we focus our review on literature that highlights gender differences, as well as studies that include fear of crime as an independent variable. Please see Hale, 1996; Lagrange & Ferraro, 1989; Ferraro, 1995; Hanson, Smith, Kilpatrick, and Freedy, 2000, for a more complete review of the fear of crime literature.
2. In our study, we focus on both the economic and the noneconomic determinants of giving. Our evaluation of the literature is predicated on the interdisciplinarity of diverse social science studies conducted by researchers. This is not to suggest that these are the only disciplines from which research has been generated on charitable giving. The academic disciplines of marketing, consumer research, and public relations have also looked at charitable giving across a range of contexts and from the perspective of fundraising (Heidrich, 1990, Kelly, 1998, Prince et al., 1993, and Sargeant, 2001).
3. *The New Nonprofit Almanac & Desk Reference* of 2002, there are no comparable figures available for the percentage of males and females that give to charitable organizations.
4. Appendix A contains a table listing all 20 counties in Atlanta's MSA and the percentage of the population they represent, as well as the percentage of the total sample from each of the counties.
5. Although the data are now 10 years old, it is still unique and represents a new way to empirically test the relationship between fear of crime and behavior and is theoretically relevant based on the theoretical connections posited by Simon (2007) and Garland (2001) between crime salience, fear of crime, and the responsabilization of society to rely more heavily on nongovernment organizations to fight crime.
6. Although this survey included the summer months, which are typically a time when many people take vacation, the fact that the survey ran from May until September and most individuals in the United States only receive 2 weeks of vacation per year lessens the impact that this may have on the representativeness of the sample. Nonetheless, it is still possible that this time frame could affect the representativeness of the sample.
7. Unanswered numbers were called back 3 times before the numbers were removed from the sampling pool.
8. Although the response rate was low, it was not atypical for telephone surveys, and a recent study found that the results for studies with lower response rates on topics such as political engagement, and social trust did not vary significantly from studies with higher response rates (Keeter, Miller, Kohut, Groves, & Presser, 2000).

9. The donate question arguably does not adequately differentiate between males and females because it is a household measure. Therefore, the results of this portion of the analysis may not tap into actual gender differences.
10. In addition to variations in the perceptions that are measured, several fear of crime measures also differ in the level of reference that they use (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987). Questions can be “general” and measure risk, concern, worry, or fear for others, or they can be specific and targeted at the self. Additionally many measures never mention fear or crime in the questions. Ideally, fear of crime measures should measure emotions (fear specific), be personal (directed toward the self), and be crime specific (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987).
11. It should be noted that in the past 10 years, several alternate measures of fear of crime have been suggested, which include worry about crime, as well as measures of intensity and frequency of crime fear/worry (Farrall & Gadd, 2004; Gray et al., 2008). Validity tests of these measures indicate that more traditional fear measures, such as the ones in this study, tend to overestimate fear levels (Farrall & Gadd, 2004; Gray et al., 2008). Additionally, more researchers are using measures of the three dimensions of vulnerability in their fear models (Jackson, 2005, 2009; Killias & Clerici, 2000). Unfortunately, because the data were collected in 2000, and the focus of the study was philanthropy rather than fear of crime, these measures were not included in the data set. The theoretical importance of using fear of crime to predict donating and volunteering make this study valuable despite this drawback.

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