

**The author(s) shown below used Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice and prepared the following final report:**

**Document Title:** Draft Final Technical Report: The Impact of Victim Self Protection on Rape Completion and Injury

**Author(s):** Gary Kleck and Jongyeon Tark

**Document No.:** 211201

**Date Received:** September 2005

**Award Number:** 2004-IJ-CX-0046

**This report has not been published by the U.S. Department of Justice. To provide better customer service, NCJRS has made this Federally-funded grant final report available electronically in addition to traditional paper copies.**

<p><b>Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.</b></p>
---

# **Draft Final Technical Report: The Impact of Victim Self-Protection on Rape Completion and Injury**

The Analysis of Existing Data Program,  
National Institute of Justice

Gary Kleck and Jongyeon Tark

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Florida State University

Tallahassee, FL 32306-1127

April 2004

## **Abstract**

Rape and other sexual assault is prevalent and inflicts serious trauma on its victims, yet prior researchers and law enforcement agencies have failed to provide practical and consistent self-protection advice to potential victims. Researchers have generally agreed that female victims' resistance is effective for preventing the completion of a rape attempt. Controversy remains, however, concerning the impact of resistance, especially forceful resistance, on whether the victim suffers any additional injuries other than rape itself.

Variation in the findings of these studies is due in part to defects of methodology and data. The problems include using small non-probability sample, failing to consider the temporal sequence of victim protective actions and injury, lumping various victim protective action into two or three broad categories, and not controlling for relevant circumstances. The current research avoids or reduces these flaws.

We analyzed the largest probability sample of sexual assault incidents available, derived from the National Crime Victimization Survey for 1992-2002. In order to provide comparative insights, assault cases involving female victims were also analyzed. The sample consisted of 733 rapes, 1,278 sexual assaults, and 12,235 assault incidents involving female victims.

Logistic regression analysis revealed that most self-protection (SP) actions, both forceful and non-forceful, significantly reduce the risk of rape completions, and that the effects of SP actions on rape completion did not vary depending upon conditions such as whether the offender was a sexual intimate, whether the offender was under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, whether there were multiple offenders, whether incidents

occurred at home, or at night. We did not find significant effects of specific SP actions on injury or serious injury, in part because injuries, particularly serious injuries, beyond rape itself, are rare.

Cross tabulation findings indicated that victim resistance was not associated with nonsexual injury (injury besides rape or attempted rape) compared to nonresistance, and was associated with only very slightly more risk of serious injury. Even if one made the extreme assumption that SP actions alone caused the slightly higher rate of serious injury than no SP, the difference is very small, especially considering the large favorable effects of SP on rape completion. Further, the results of the multivariate analyses of general assault incidents (including both sexual and nonsexual assaults) involving female victims showed that most SP tactics, both forceful and non-forceful, appear to reduce the risk of injury and serious injury compared to nonresistance.

Taken together, we believe that rape victims' self-protection actions significantly reduce the probability of rape completion and do not significantly increase the risk of serious injury.