



Anti-Assault Clothing for Women

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As a woman, there are times when we are in a situation where we don't feel completely safe. Many women already carry with them devices, such as alarms and sprays, to make them feel more comfortable being out whether it be at night or just in day to day situations. Many women may also dress differently in hopes that they will not attract unwanted attention. The presence of anti-assault clothing in the market is still in early stages. Most notably, a company by the name of AR Wear has developed a line of underwear and running pants to prevent sexual assault. These garments have been designed with adjustable, lock sealed technology that prevent attackers from cutting, ripping, or pulling down the garment. AR Wear has recently reached a crowdfunding goal of 50K to research and develop a prototype but has yet to reach consumers (Yuval, 2013). Another successful crowdfunding venture has already reached the market in the form of a wearable device. Athena is a quarter sized, clip-on device which uses Bluetooth technology to send the wearer's location to the contacts within a connected smartphone (Jeunesse, 2015). Anti-assault products are only available in the form of items you can add to a pre-existing wardrobe. There has yet to be a line of complete garments designed with sexual assault safety in mind. The purpose of this project is to create clothing that encloses a device that would either track location or set off a loud alarm when a woman is at risk. Throughout this project, we want to ask: Can fashionable garments be created that also functions as a safety device for women? Will women, or anyone, be comfortable wearing devices such as a tracker or alarm to keep themselves safe?

Anti-Assault Clothing for Women. A qualitative approach of one-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interview took place at the client's place approximately for an hour. During the interview, a client was asked about insight on protective clothing. Our client wanted clothing that she can wear that makes her feel safe but doesn't compromise her style. Unfortunately, our customer could be anyone at any time. However, to make the project more effective we're going to focus on the college aged woman. She goes to school like the rest of us, is in her late teens to early twenties, and likes to occasionally go out to the bars. Even though she goes out with her friends, it's easy to be separated from them at a busy bar, in the bathrooms, or on the walk home. Times like this can put her at risk for harassment, uncomfortable situations, or even sexual assault. The risk doesn't end when the sun comes up either; many times a day a woman can be put in a setting where she feels uncomfortable. Whether it's walking to class or walking to her car in a parking lot. We want to make a product that a college aged woman could wear to feel safe and in control no matter where she is.

Using locking zippers, fabric placed in waistbands and necklines that is unable to rip, special pockets, and hidden security alarms, we provide a certain measure of security. Day or night and look to look the belt that we designed can effortlessly be worn and used in times of distress. We incorporated the technology of the Sound Grenade, a small device that emits a 130 decibel alarm when triggered. From an unsuspecting eye, the belt looks like any other belt, but hidden under the belt buckle is a second clip that when pulled sounds the alarm. The use of the hidden second closure allows the wearer to feel secure without it being apparent. Aside from the belt, we incorporated the

locking zipper in the fly of the pants and as the closure of the dress. When locked, the zipper pull can be pulled up but not pulled down. This makes unwanted removal of the garment harder if not impossible. In addition to the special technologic features, we adjusted our designs to better suit the security of our client. Shorts are concealed under the skirt of the dress, the bodysuit does not have snaps at the crotch compared to most bodysuits on the market, the pants are higher waist, to make it difficult to pull over a woman's hips and the jacket includes belt loops and a closure at center front. All garments have deeper pockets designed to easily hold additional items such as pepper spray and trackers.

We believe that the use of technology, along with fashion, can aid in the goal of keeping women safe in any situation. Our goal is to help women feel comfortable with wearing or having a safety device on their person to help them from being in a distressing situation. We want women to feel like they could wear anything that we have created and they don't feel hindered by the presence of the safety device. We understand that a device like an alarm or tracker can only be used so far and that it will not completely solve the problem of sexual harassment but by creating this garment we hope that it is a step in the right direction in stopping harassment from happening in many situations. There are a few changes we would make when manufacturing for mass production for future production. First, we would use Cut Tex Pro material instead of Tyvek, because in addition to not being able to be ripped, it can also not be cut. We would also develop our own tracker and sound alarm to be more compatible with the garments we designed. In the future, we envision a broader collection of garments that include these safety features to suit the needs of all women looking to feel uncompromised in security and style.



References

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