



Joining Families

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REAL WORLD RESEARCH FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

FEATURED INTERVIEW



Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence: Unwanted, Repeated, Fear-Inducing

An interview with TK Logan, PhD

TK Logan, PhD

Dr. Logan is Professor, University of Kentucky School of Medicine, Department of Behavioral Science and the Center on Drug and Alcohol Research. She is an internationally recognized expert on partner violence and stalking. She serves on the editorial board of Violence and Victims, the Journal of Interpersonal Violence, and Sexualization, Media, & Society. She is a member of many national organizations

such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline Research Council, the Violence Against Women Act Firearms Subcommittee, and is a consultant to the Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Dr. Logan's recent research has focused on coercive control, stalking, protective order effectiveness, sexual assault, intimate partner homicide, and health disparities of rural women with partner violence experiences.



In This Issue

This issue of *Joining Forces Joining Families* (JFJF) features an interview with TK Logan, PhD, on stalking victimization and perpetration in the context of intimate partner violence (IPV). We provide a brief overview of stalking research, a relatively new topic of investigation in IPV. In our regular research methods article, we describe differences in qualitative and quantitative research methods using one of Dr. Logan's articles as an example. Another article describes threats in IPV as a form of coercive control. Websites of interest contains a wide variety of online resources that can be used to educate about stalking as well as provide information for social service providers, victims, advocates, and criminal justice professionals.

CONTENTS

Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence: Unwanted, Repeated, Fear-Inducing	1
Building Bridges to Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Research: What are the Differences?	4
What is Stalking in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence?	5
Threats of Intimate Partner Violence are Forms of Coercive Control...	9
Websites of Interest	12

Dr. McCarroll: Stalking is considered a type of intimate partner violence (IPV) and criminal conduct. It is largely a gendered phenomenon in which 16% of women and 5% of men report at least one incident of stalking in their lifetime and 4% of women and 1.5% of men in the past 12 months (Black et al., 2011). These figures translate to approximately one in six women and 1 in 19 men that will be stalked in their lifetime. How did you become interested in stalking?

Dr. Logan: One of the themes that drives my work is what I call silent suffering. [Editor's note: For example, see her article on silenced suffering in partner sexual violence (Logan, Walker, & Cole, 2015).] When I started there was not much out there about stalking. I noticed that women were leaving, or attempting to leave, abusive relationships, but the abuse was not ending with that separation. Yet, the ongoing abuse, harassment, and stalking was not being discussed or addressed. One of the things that I as a researcher can do is give voice

Continued on page 2

*Stalking is unwanted,
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to those who are silenced, who are trying to speak out, but cannot or do not want to do so. We always ask the question “Why doesn’t she just leave?” In many cases women do try to leave. What we should be asking is “Why doesn’t he just leave her alone?” And that was the reason I have spent so much time talking about stalking.

Dr. McCarroll: Let’s talk about the definition. Most include three components: behavior on the part of the stalker toward the stalking victim that is unwanted, repeated, and fear-inducing. Is there anything left out of that definition that you think is important for clinicians or law enforcement?

Dr. Logan: The simple definition is that it is a course of conduct that induces fear or concern for safety, typically directed at a specific person. It is targeted violence. What I mean is, they are targeting a specific victim. If you put that person in prison or in jail or you send them to treatment, they are going to re-offend and you know exactly who they are going to re-offend. Stalking is systematic, deliberate, and intentional, not accidental, and it is fairly common. It is a set of tactics designed to maintain an unwanted relationship. I go one step further to talk about psychological warfare. The harm

from stalking is psychological and is cumulative over time.

Dr. McCarroll: I remember reading that having the emotion of fear included in state statutes can disqualify some people from being charged because the victim was not afraid. They may be angry or just irritated. Have you encountered that?

Dr. Logan: The ways we talk about it are fear or concern for your safety or for close others. When you cross that line and people become afraid, then the second piece of the question comes in. Those being targeted with stalking often feel angry and irritated as well. The fear and significant distress component though is important in distinguishing between the more harmful aspects of harassing and stalking behavior. However, a victim does not have to say they are afraid to show fear. Even if a victim were to say she were afraid, the police are going to be looking for corroborating evidence. I could always say to you, how do you tell if someone is afraid, even if they do not tell you? What are the things you would look for or you would notice?

Dr. McCarroll: Face-to-face with a person, I would look for voice tone and facial expressions. I would look for changes in behavior that might indicate that they are trying to avoid the stalker.

Dr. Logan: Absolutely. An additional component is any extraordinary time, money, or effort spent for their safety and the safety of others: getting a protective order, having to take off work, asking for accommodations at work, changing their locks or getting lighting. These are not anything any of us want to do. We are all busy. These things cost money and time. You can corroborate fear with some tangible costs.

When I am doing a training, I ask, “If you had a victim and you gave her a choice,” and this is a horrible choice, “He is going to beat you up, but you are never going to hear from him again,” versus “He will never touch you physically, but he is going to stalk you.” What do you think that victim would choose?

Dr. McCarroll: I think they would take the beating and get it over with.

Dr. Logan: Yes, because being stalked is so uncomfortable. There is no prediction, there is no control, and there is no certainty. For human beings, those are very uncomfortable. That

Continued on p. 3

JOINING FORCES

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Whenever you have a stalker you should be on guard that violence is possible.

creates a lot of anxiety and misery. You cannot plan, you cannot rest. You just never let down your guard. It is a chronic stress overload and you do not know how to prepare. And another aspect of being stalked is that it violates every assumption about how to stop the abuse and violence. It is very distressing when you do the one thing that everyone tells you to do to stop the abuse, and it does not work.

Dr. McCarroll: What are theories or themes that are helpful in understanding stalking? Coercive control is frequently mentioned in your papers.

Dr. Logan: There is a big difference when we use the lens of physical violence as the gold standard to decide when someone is a domestic violence victim or not, versus using the lens of coercive control, which is made up of both physical abuse and threats. In coercive control, one big component is what the controller keeps her from doing for herself as well as the threats of harm. You can walk away from physical violence, but coercive control is about the chain around the brain. Coercive control really cuts across a variety of phenomena including human trafficking, cults, kidnap victims, and prisoners of war.

I often talk about stalking on a continuum. The beginning of the continuum is normal courtship or even breakup pursuit. That can move into being annoying and bothersome. For me, the line is when the target feels fear or concern for their safety. Typologies are not helpful to me because as a researcher, I want to have mutually exclusive groups. We are all capable of experiencing multiple emotions such as anger, revenge, and love. So are stalkers. Typologies rarely help me to understand or to do research. One that I find helpful is the target-stalker relationship: ex-partner, acquaintance, or stranger.

Dr. McCarroll: Are there differences in violent and non-violent stalkers? Is their behavior predictable?

Dr. Logan: Whenever you have a stalker you should be on guard that violence is possible. However, when we are talking about coercive control we have to think beyond violence. Many relationships can go for years before there is any physical violence. Coercive control is about domination over the victim. Violence is just a tool in that process. I do not believe that in many stalking cases, the stalker's goal is violence. That does not mean that it is not part of a course of conduct, that they are not going

to use violence or sexual assault in the course of that conduct, but overall, they are not stalking to find an appropriate time to assault this person.

That is not what it is about. It is about ruining the life of the victim. It is about sabotage. It is about control. Understanding stalking requires a shift in thinking. They ruin the victim's life, jeopardize their jobs, their financial welfare, and the victim does not have any kind of ability to predict. It is psychological warfare. That is the devastating harm. It invades everything. It invades my ability to have a relationship with my child because I am so anxious, I never know what he is going to do. Is he going to directly interfere with my child? With my parenting world? Is he going to affect my friends and family? Is he threatening to harm them as I associate with them so I am withdrawing from them? He is slashing my tires so it is costing me financially. It is now affecting my health and I have to go to the doctor. It is literally the ruin of my life.

Dr. McCarroll: In addition to protective orders, what else can be done to help someone who is being stalked? Protective orders are a preventive mechanism. Leaving the relationship is obviously another one. What else?

Dr. Logan: I just use a simple model. I do a lot of training of law enforcement. I always say, "You only have five minutes with a victim, here is what I would suggest—What I call STEPS." 1. See it, acknowledge it, and validate it. You may be the first person to put this together for that person. The victim may not realize what kind of risk they face; they may not realize what is happening. If they do know it is happening, it is often dismissed, denied, and minimized. Acknowledge that this is stalking. 2. Then I talk about the *threats* so they are not minimizing or downplaying any of their safety concerns. 3. I talk about preserving the *evidence*, and documenting what is happening. Documentation is important to get help through the criminal or civil justice system or other agencies. But, it is hard to write everything down when you just want it to go away. Every time you document, you have to re-live everything that is happening and the documentation is hard to do. However, documentation is not a safety plan. 4. The next important thing to talk about is *self-protection* with the goal to make it as difficult as possible for the stalker to stalk. We do have SHARP as a

Continued on p.10

BUILDING BRIDGES TO RESEARCH

Qualitative and Quantitative Research: What are the Differences?

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

Qualitative research is descriptive and is used to obtain information about people's opinions and experiences.

Qualitative research is generally descriptive and collects rich details, but not measured data. Quantitative research strives to measure counts and uses statistics to estimate whether something is likely or not. Neither is better than the other and each has its own unique characteristics. In fact, the same study can use both methods and qualitative data can be quantitated.

Qualitative Research. Qualitative research is descriptive. Interviews, focus groups, and open-ended questions are qualitative methods to obtain information about people's opinions and experiences. In cases where little is known about an event, data collection is exploratory and descriptive and is intended to suggest hypotheses for more structured research. More formal qualitative methods include structured or semi-structured interviews to answer specific questions. These are frequently used to determine if a person has a mental health condition. Qualitative data are frequently grouped into themes representing responses of research participants. The results of qualitative research can then be analyzed using quantitative methods to determine if there are significant differences between categories.

Quantitative Research. Quantitative research uses formal data collection methods and statistics. This allows for comparisons between groups on one or more specific measures. Simple statistical tests, such as a t-test, compare groups on a single measure, whereas complex computer programs can provide sophisticated analyses of large volumes of data, sometimes referred to as "big data" analysis. Quantitative methods are largely used to determine if the findings of the study will apply more generally. In order to do this, the investigator has to sample the population that represents the larger group. The object of most of this type of research is to generalize from a sample to a population.

Differences in qualitative and quantitative methods are illustrated in much of Dr. Logan's work in which she begins with qualitative methods, by conducting interviews to obtain the viewpoints and experiences of women

who have been stalked, and then uses quantitative methods to analyze these data. Logan and Walker (2010) conducted a study of women who obtained a protective order (PO) against a male intimate partner. The women and two groups of key informants (criminal justice professionals and victim services representatives) were interviewed. The investigators presented two hypothetical scenarios of women who were being stalked and then asked the participant women and key informants two open-ended questions: (1) What would you advise her to do? and (2) How should the women who were being stalked cope with the situation? The perceptions of the participants of the three groups were categorized into themes and chi-square tests were used to determine significant differences in the responses. The results of the analyses of the questions were that, for the first question, the overwhelming majority believed that the women who were being stalked should report it to the police. For the second question, the largest category of coping was that the women should report it to the justice system by calling the police, filing criminal charges, or obtaining a PO.

Additional comparisons between the responses of the three groups interviewed showed that there were significant gaps between the understanding of the harms of stalking, particularly between the criminal justice professionals and social service providers compared to those of the victims. Victim service representatives, compared to criminal justice representatives, believed that women were stalked very often or always stalked by violent partners, about 50% vs. about 31%, respectively. About 45% of victim service representatives believed that the women should document the stalking behavior compared to about 21% of criminal justice representatives. Finally, about 73% of victim service representatives believed that the stalking victims should take steps to protect themselves compared to about 40% of criminal justice representatives. As shown in this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods add complexity and context to research findings.

Continued on page 5

What is Stalking in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence?

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

A high level of fear was the most important predictor variable that pre-dated a serious attack by a stalker.

Stalking as a concern for intimate partner violence (IPV) is a relatively recent development in research, practice, and law enforcement. It became a criminal offense in California in 1990. Subsequently, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S territories have anti-stalking laws, from misdemeanors to felonies, often with jail time and a hefty fine (see <http://victimsofcrime.org/ourprograms/stalking-resource-center/stalking-laws/criminal-stalking-laws-by-state>). While there are many contexts in which stalking occurs, such as celebrities, politicians, and other public figures, in this brief review, we will discuss stalking as it occurs in the context of IPV.

Definition. Stalking is usually defined legally and for research purposes by three elements: (a) a pattern of (b) unwanted conduct directed at a specific person that (c) would cause a reasonable person to feel fear, terrorized, intimidated, harassed, or fearful for family members, dating partners, and property (including pets), or death. Stalking involves concerns about safety (Logan & Walker, 2010).

A high level of fear is the most important predictor variable that can pre-date a serious attack by a stalker (Sheridan & Roberts, 2011). Women who were stalked experienced more physical and psychological consequences than men who were stalked (Sheridan & Lyndon, 2012). These consequences are mediated by fear. Women are twice as likely (60%) as men to report fear of their stalker (30%). Victim fear mediated the relationship between the victim gender and the nature of the prior relationship and predicted the psychological, physical, social, and economic consequences of stalking.

Stalking can also be defined perceptually as well as legally. In pursuit behaviors, such as might be involved in courtship, an intimate partner may not always recognize stalking. Some victims may not label their experience

as stalking due to a past or current relationship with the stalker. Obsessional relationship intrusion (ORI) is repeated unwanted pursuit of a love object that may turn into stalking. It is much more common than stalking (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2003). Low levels of ORI may be viewed as mildly annoying, but ORI can cross a threshold after which it is perceived as threatening and as a form of stalking. Thus, stalking can be ambiguous. It may be benign pursuit of a romantic relationship or threatening behavior such as harassment and interference with the victim's life. Stalking can also be covert, that is, without the awareness of the target of the stalking. An example is stalking the new partner of the target. It is another means of obtaining information about the victim's routines and relationships, which can be used in pursuit of the stalker's goal (Duntley & Buss, 2012).

Prevalence of Stalking. The National Violence Against Women (NVAW) survey, the first large-scale national study of stalking in the U.S. found that 8% of women and 2% of men reported being stalked in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Several more recent studies have estimated the prevalence of stalking. The Second Injury Control and Risk Survey (ICARIS-2) found that 7% of women and 2% of men reported lifetime stalking (Basile, Swahn, Chen, & Saltzman, 2006). These figures were almost identical to the findings of the NVAW study. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Study (NISVS) found 16% of women and 5.2% of men reported lifetime stalking (Black et al., 2011). The authors explored possible reasons for the higher prevalence of stalking of women found in their study: its greater recognition by the public, more study of special populations such as in IPV victims and in college students, and advances in technological devices capable of communication.

Continued on page 6

Building Bridges to Research, from page 4

Reference

Logan KT & Walker R. (2010). Toward a deeper understanding of the harms caused by partner stalking. *Violence and Victims*, 25(4), 440-455.

Quantitative research is used to determine if the results will apply more generally, from a sample to a population.

What is Stalking...
from page 5

Stalking is defined by three elements: (a) a pattern of (b) unwanted conduct directed at a specific person that (c) would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. Stalking involves concerns about safety.

Estimates of stalking of women in the past 12 months were 2.2% and 0.8% for men in a National Institute of Justice (NIJ) study (Catalano, 2012). A slightly higher figure was found for female victims (4%) in the NISVS, but the percentage of male victims (1.3%) was similar to the findings of the NIJ study. Criteria for stalking differ in surveys, but these data show that stalking is a gendered phenomenon and that men are not unaffected as victims.

In addition to differences in survey methods, it is difficult to arrive at a firm estimate of the prevalence of stalking as the estimates depend on the sample studied: clinical, forensic, general population, and college students. Overall, females are more likely to experience stalking victimization than males. Approximately half of all stalking comes from romantic entanglements, especially among college samples, in which 80% of stalkers were known to the victim (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007).

What Constitutes Stalking? Stalking consists of Surveillance, Life Invasion (unwanted contact), Intimidation, and Interference. An easy way of remembering these elements of stalking is by the first letter of each characteristic — SLII. SLII organizes the tactics of the stalker by strategy. This framework is presented on fact sheets for advocates, judges, law enforcement, victims, and friends (See Connecting the Dots on Outrageous.com on Websites of Interest). An additional framework for understanding stalking behaviors is DIF, which stands for Duration, Intensity, and Frequency of stalking.

Some examples of surveillance may include approaching or following the victim, unexpected appearances, showing up at the victim's home, and the use of electronic media. Life invasion may include unwanted communications and contacts may include telephone calls, e-mail, texts, letters, notes, and graffiti. Interference with the victim's life may include property damage, ordering goods, canceling appointments and physical assaults. Intimidation may include initiating bogus legal actions and threats (Ostermeyer, Friedman, Sorrentino, & Booth, 2016). Stalking by means of electronic technology is a relatively new means of stalking, one that is continuously developing and may become very sophisticated depending on the skills of the stalker (e.g., phones, tablets, computers, and social networking sites). This type of electronic surveillance can be used to create a sense of the stalker's omnipresence and to

isolate, punish, and humiliate victims (Woodlock, 2016).

Effects of Stalking. The effects of stalking can occur in three domains: the victim, the social and institutional networks of the victim, and unique effects among network members such that they may become targets (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). As a result of these second and third order effects, stalking has hidden costs in addition to direct effects on the victim. Stalking involves chronic stress due to the accumulation of events, but also on anticipation of further stress. However, delineation of symptoms associated with stalking has additional complex factors. Disorders may have existed prior to the stalking, stalking behavior can change over time, and victims can develop resilience based on personal characteristics and help from social networks.

Variables that impact the extent of physical, psychological, and economic costs for victims include a prior relationship with the stalker, victim gender, and the degree of fear experienced by the victim related to the stalking (Sheridan & Lyndon, 2012). When there is a prior stalker-victim relationship, particularly a prior intimate partner relationship, the severity of stalking increases and victims experience more serious physical, psychological, social and economic costs. In this international study of women (n=896) and men (n=318) who had been stalked, women were significantly more likely to report that they were very frightened of their stalker, 60% and 30%, respectively. Over half of all respondents said that they lost money as a result of being stalked (an average of \$3,583, gender differences not given). When the stalker was an ex-intimate partner rather than acquaintance or stranger, both women and men reported a higher level of fear, 66.5% and 40%, respectively. Also, victims who were stalked by an ex-intimate partner were more likely to experience a greater number of psychological, physical, and social costs (e.g., moving, giving up job, giving up friends, and many other personal connections) than victims without such a relationship. Consistent with findings from previous studies, female stalking victims in this study reported a greater number of physical and psychological symptoms than male victims. In addition, further analyses found that victim fear was a significant mediator of victim gender for psychological and physical consequences of stalking victimization. Victim fear was a stronger predictor of the consequences of stalking than either gender or prior relationship.

Stalking involves chronic stress due to the accumulation of events, but also on anticipation of further stress.

Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence.

In the NVAW study, 52% of stalking victims were between the ages of 18-29 (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Most stalking perpetrators and victims knew each other. Women (59%) were significantly more likely to be stalked by intimate partners than were men (30%). IPV was common in stalking: 81% of women who were stalked by a husband or former husband or cohabiting partner were physically assaulted and 31% were also sexually assaulted.

Risk Factors for Stalking and Severe IPV.

Risk assessment is difficult as a stalker may exhibit very different behaviors (Schwartz-Watts & Rowell, 2003). Eighty-five stalkers referred for psychiatric evaluation in London included 27 who had committed serious violence (James & Farnham, 2003). Serious violence was defined as homicide, attempted homicide, and assault resulting in bodily harm. These stalkers were compared with others who stalked, but had committed general or minor violence. For the stalkers referred for serious violence, there was no association between serious violence and substance abuse, previous convictions for violence against persons, the presence of a personality disorder, or unemployment. There was an association between serious violence and depression at the time of the incident. Serious violence was also associated with a shorter duration of stalking, which suggests the importance of early intervention.

Stalking and Femicide. Stalking coupled with physical assault is significantly associated with murder and attempted murder of women. A ten-city study of police records of the risk factors by stalkers for actual or attempted IPV and intimate partner homicide included 821 female victims: 263 femicides, 174 attempted femicides, and 384 control women who reported IPV, but not an attempt on their life (McFarlane, Campbell, & Watson, 2002). Being followed or spied upon was twice as likely for the women who were attempted or actual victims (55.6%) compared to 29.4% for control women. Other significant differences with a greater percentage by the attempted or actual victims were unwanted phone calls, sitting in a car outside the victim's home or work site, trying to communicate with the victim against her will, and destroying or vandalizing her property or something she loved. Significant differences were also found in threatening behaviors by the stalker. These included frightening and threatening her with a weapon, threats to kill, threats to harm children and other members

of the victim's family, and leaving threatening notes on the victim's car.

Court Services and Protection Orders.

Victim service and criminal justice officials may not understand the harms caused by partner stalking. In an early study of stalking, in the U.S., about half of victims reported their stalking to the police, but only about 25% of these reports resulted in an arrest (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). About 25% of female and 10% of male victims obtained restraining orders against their stalkers, but 69% of women and 81% of men said their stalkers violated the orders. Women with civil protection orders against violent male partners or ex-partners and who were stalked by their violent partners reported significantly more distress than women who had experienced only protective order violations, but not stalking (Logan & Walker, 2010).

Theories on Stalking. There are several theories of stalking, but the major ones are attachment theory, relational goal pursuit theory, and coercive control (Davis, Swan, & Gambone, 2012). Attachment theory has a long history in psychiatry and psychology. An infant's attachment to the parent (or caregiver) can be secure or insecure. Infants who have a secure attachment have good later interpersonal relationships. Insecurely attached infants do not have good interpersonal relationships and develop personality styles that are avoidant, insecure, and ambivalent in that they simultaneously crave attachment and then reject it (Miller, 2012). Insecure attachment styles are hypothesized to characterize stalkers who pursue former intimate partners. Due to their rejection, the stalker feels a variety of negative emotions tied to their own perceived lack of self-worth and results in desperate measures to reclaim the relationship.

Relational goal pursuit theory is based on the assumption that certain goals are desirable and feasible (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). When a relationship goal is thwarted, the individual tries even harder to achieve the goal. When this behavior becomes extreme and the goal is not attained, the theory proposes that individuals will tend to inflate the importance of their goal leading to thoughts and feelings that fuel persistent relationship pursuit.

The theory of coercive control has been developed to provide a framework for describing IPV in such a way to account for all types of maltreatment, particularly physical violence of

Continued on page 8

Stalking coupled with physical assault is significantly associated with murder and attempted murder of women.

women (Stark, 2009). Coercive control includes perpetrator threats, controlling the victim's conduct, sexual coercion, and other behaviors that result in victims' isolation and fear (Myhill & Hohl, 2016). Coercive control in the context of IPV has also been used to examine how it affects child adjustment, particularly internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Jouriles & McDonald, 2015).

Conclusion. Gender differences and issues in stalking victimization and perpetration are at the heart of stalking research, clinical practice, law enforcement, and legal statutes and judgments. Stalking is often overlooked and minimized by law enforcement, counselors, and others, but it is an extremely important influence on people's lives that often requires significant efforts and help to overcome its effects on victims, relatives, friends, and providers.

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Threats of Intimate Partner Violence are Forms of Coercive Control

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

Threats are a form of coercive control that create an ongoing sense of fear and chronic stress.

Threats are a form of coercive control that occur in the course of stalking and intimate partner violence (IPV) that create an ongoing sense of fear and chronic stress. Threats can be explicit or implicit. Explicit threats are easily recognizable while implicit threats may depend on the context and the history of the relationship. An example of an implicit threat is “I hope nothing bad happens to you” [author’s quotes] (Uhl, Rhymer, Terrance, & Plumm, 2017).

The U.S. Department of Justice reported that from 1993–1998, about two-thirds of IPV victims were attacked while one-third were threatened. Threats that were reported by female and male victims, respectively, consisted of an unspecified type of threat (52% and 41%), kill (32% and 27%), threaten with a weapon (18% and 22%), throw object (4% and 11%), tried to hit, slap, or knock victim down (13% and 15%), followed or surrounded the victim (4% of female victims), and rape (1% of female victims) (Rennison, 2000).

A review of stalking research found that 54% of stalking cases involved some issuance of threat. Aggressive verbal and non-verbal forms of harassment and intimidation such as insults, spreading rumors, attempting to harm the victim’s reputation are troublesome, but not necessarily threatening. However, when behavior escalates from stalking to coercion and threats, there is the suggestion of future harm to the victim (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007).

In a study to understand the role of threats in stalking and coercive control in intimate relationships, Logan (2017) inquired threats among 210 women with protective orders against abusive partners. These women received threats of harm and death, threats of harming friends and family, actual threats to friends and family, threats to harm children, pets, coworkers, and supervisors. Ninety-four percent of the women endorsed at least one of the 11 explicit threats inquired. Threats of harm were reported in 90% of cases at least once: 81% were threatened with serious harm, 76% with death, and 40% were threatened with a knife or gun. A high frequency of threats of harm was associated with the highest rates of abuse, violence, distress, and fear.

In research on IPV, the presence of threats is rarely measured. Threats are only minimally measured on the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) (Straus, 1979) and Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996), the most widely used measures of IPV. To threaten with a knife or gun was the only threat item on the CTS. The Revised CTS has two threat items: threaten to hit or throw something and threaten to make partner have sex.

Threats of violence are, at a minimum, psychological abuse and a form of coercive control. However, threats of harm are also a criminal act of assault. Threats of harm to a victim as well as to a wide variety of others, including pets and property, are serious issues for law enforcement, medical, and social service providers. Service providers should assess for the presence of threats and the types of threats in relationships in which there is IPV. Referring victims for law enforcement and legal assistance can prevent injury and death of victims.

References

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When we are about talking coercive control we have to think beyond violence. Coercive control is all about domination over that victim. Violence is just a tool in that process.

tool [see Websites of Interest]. This tool helps with the documentation as well as with some safety suggestions. 5. And then, finally, making sure the victim has that one *support* person, at least one person that they can trust to help them as they negotiate this psychological terrorism. That person may need to be educated about stalking and safety so they can help them through all of the process. It is on-going and it is exhausting. It is hard to stay a step ahead of the stalker.

Dr. McCarroll: Your paper on threats made me aware of threat as a primary issue in stalking and domestic violence (Logan, 2017).

Dr. Logan: The vast majority of domestic violence and stalking victims are threatened implicitly or explicitly. We need to know more about the assessment of threats and their trajectory. If the threats are detailed, graphic, and frequent, should that be a higher concern for us? In domestic violence, the more frequent the threats the more we tend to ignore them. I almost feel like sometimes the more threats there are the more we tune them out and say “Ah, I’m tired of hearing that.” But, frequency of threats may actually indicate more danger. Our recent paper found that ex-partners who stalked were more likely to threaten the victim and to threaten other people (general public and the victim’s friends or family) with a gun. Also, more of the partner violence victims who reported and those that were threatened with a gun and who were stalked also reported that their ex-partner carried that gun in public. So, stalking can become a public safety risk (Logan & Lynch, In press).

Dr. McCarroll: Do you find that stalking is being taken more seriously now by courts and law enforcement and shelters or not?

Dr. Logan: You have to pound it into their heads.

Dr. McCarroll: Why does it not catch on as a risk? Is it because it does not involve the degree of violence that you see with physical assault?

Dr. Logan: The criminal justice system tends to be really incident-based and past-focused. With stalking, one incident might look coincidental. It might not even be illegal. You have to look at the course of conduct and at the threat of future harm. For law enforcement, it requires a shift in thinking. The first thing

they will always say is that there is no evidence. It is pretty hard to get a charge if there is no evidence. I always say that we should start with the assumption that there is always evidence because they are continually repeating this behavior. Of course there is evidence. Does it take a little more work to get the evidence, to work this case? Think about white-collar crime, which again is a course-of-conduct crime. You have to go in and show these patterns. It takes a longer time to build those cases. Also, it is important to show the full picture of the course of conduct of the stalker.

Incidents often look minor and trivial, but when you put all of the incidents together you start to see the big picture and can better understand victim reactions to what is going on. Unfortunately, it is the victim who is the crime scene. There is no crime scene without her or him. The victim must keep themselves safe, but also they have to collect the evidence and put it together in a coherent way. Just sitting down and telling the story is the biggest barrier to getting help and support—helping others to see that bigger picture. Victims often do not know how to tell that larger story. That is why I created SHARP, to help them with this narrative picture.

Dr. McCarroll: Much of what you have said also applies to social service providers as well as law enforcement personnel. What messages would you like law enforcement and providers to take away?

Dr. Logan: That is a hard one. We need to take stalking seriously and every reaction matters. The other thing that I would tell them is that you have to ask the right questions, questions that help clarify that bigger picture. Some of what you are going to hear may sound trivial, coincidental, or unbelievable, but reactions matter. Even if you cannot see enough information or evidence right there to make a case, how you react to that man or woman who is being stalked can make all the difference in the world. Victims have told me that the reaction from the authorities or even close friends or family was so minimizing or dismissing, that they went on suffering for several years before they were able to tell someone again to try to get help. Meanwhile, they were stalked all those years. Many women who are stalked are murdered. There is always that risk of lethal violence, and there is also much suffering in between.

It is surprising that the stalkers did not even realize that their behavior was unacceptable.

Dr. McCarroll: What do we know about treatment for stalkers?

Dr. Logan: Research on stalker treatment has been limited. Some batterer treatment providers talk about discussing stalking with their participants. They tell the stalker, “Hey! This is against the law.” They think it is their right to follow their wife to see if she is cheating or to know where she is. It is surprising that the stalkers did not even realize that their behavior was unacceptable. Another difference between using the framework of coercive control versus physical abuse is that if you put batterers in treatment, they know before they get to treatment that they should not be hitting their wife. They do not necessarily understand that controlling, dominating, and taking away their wife’s freedom of opportunity and choice is also not ok. That may be one avenue for addressing stalking.

Dr. McCarroll: Do you find the same themes with men who are stalked?

Dr. Logan: I have not focused as much on male stalking victims, in part, because they are a much smaller proportion of victims. Also, it is important to remember that both men and women are often stalked by men. For example, it may be the male ex-partner of the woman who is stalking her new male partner. What we do not know is how the stalking may differ for men if the stalker is male rather than female. The impact of stalking is similarly devastating across males and females. One difference may be that men who have been stalked by females may worry more about others close to them and about their reputation. Also, the experiences of male stalking victims are different because there are even fewer services for them and less understanding of the stalking dynamic.

Dr. McCarroll: You have done a great deal of research in rural areas. Were you surprised at the differences you found in the cases in urban and rural areas?

Dr. Logan: I have been doing work in eastern Kentucky for a long time. Rural women are amazing. They overcome all these barriers and still survive and are optimistic. The other thing about the Appalachian rural women is that they are storytellers. I taped interviews and transcribed them. When I read the transcripts from a rural woman, I feel like I am right there with her. They are just so good at telling stories. We in the urban areas are very businesslike.

We are very “yes-no”. There are many barriers for the rural women. For example, to get a protective order may take twice as long; they may have to hunt the judge down. They have to deal with more stigma and backlash; the urban women will complain about no parking. We are all annoyed with little things, but another person would feel so blessed if that were all they had to deal with.

Dr. McCarroll: Thanks for your time. This has been a real pleasure.

Dr. Logan: Thank you.

References

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Websites of Interest

There are a number of websites devoted to various aspects of stalking. We include here some that we believe are the most informative and can be used for both educational and clinical purposes.

Connecting the Dots — Recognizing and Responding to Stalking

An 18-minute video on stalking produced by the Stalking Resource Center, National Center for Victims of Crime. It presents discussions on what constitutes stalking, responding to stalking such as assessing risk, and resources for victims.

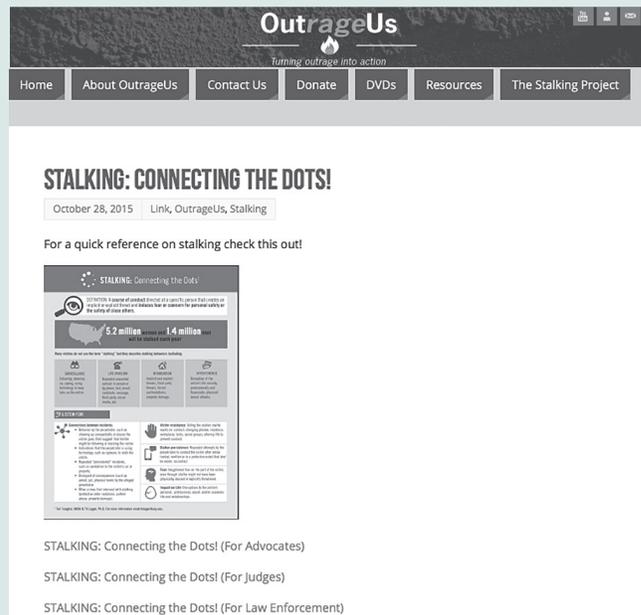
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2BHO8eXvxA>



Outrageous.org

www.OutrageUs.Org

Contains a wide variety of materials on stalking including miniseries documentaries on stalking, dating violence, and views from criminal justice professionals, and many other sources on stalking. It also provides fact sheets for coping with stalking under the framework of Connecting the Dots for advocates, judges, law enforcement, victims, and friends. Many other valuable resources on stalking and other forms of violence are available on this website.



Stalking and Harassment Assessment and Risk Profile (SHARP)

The Stalking and Harassment Assessment and Risk Profile (SHARP) is a research informed tool developed by Dr. Logan for increasing awareness of stalking. It can be used by victims, friends, or other who want to gain information about possible risks of being stalked. See: www.StalkingRisk.com

Another route to both OutrageUs and SHARP is through the website www.CoerciveControl.org. It has access to these resources and many more.

