

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO INTIMATE PARTNER
STALKING ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AND REPORTING

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to all of the women and men who have been victims of stalking, especially my courageous and tenacious mother, Charlotte. Her story, grit, and brilliance are a constant inspiration for the woman I strive to be every day.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
Types of Stalking	6
Stalking Acknowledgment.....	12
Interactions with Criminal Justice System.....	15
III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	19
IV. RESEARCH PURPOSE	25
V. DATA AND METHODOLOGY	28
Dependent Variables.....	29
Independent Variables	30
Research Design.....	33
VI. ANALYSIS	36
Univariate Analysis.....	36
Bivariate Analysis	38
Multivariate Analysis.....	43
VII. DISCUSSION.....	52
Results.....	52

Role of Feminist Theory	54
Policy Implications	55
Study Limitations	57
Future Research	57
REFERENCE LIST	59

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Descriptive Analysis- Demographic Variables	36
2. Descriptive Analysis- Key Study Variables	37
3. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Sex of Perpetrator	39
4. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Stalking Acknowledgment	39
5. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Reporting to Police	40
6. Cross Tabulation- Stalking Acknowledgment and Victim-Perpetrator Relationship	41
7. Cross Tabulation- Stalking Acknowledgment and Reporting to Police	42
8. Model 1. Logistic Regression- Theoretical Model.....	44
9. Model 1. Goodness-of-Fit Results	45
10. Model 2. Logistic Regression- Intimate Partner Stalking Model.....	46
11. Model 2. Goodness-of-Fit Results	46
12. Model 3. Logistic Regression- Theoretical Model.....	48
13. Model 3. Goodness-of-Fit Results	49
14. Model 4. Logistic Regression- Intimate Partner Stalking Model.....	50
15. Model 4. Goodness-of-Fit Results	50

ABSTRACT

Stalking is a widespread social problem that impacts the lives of an estimated 3.3 million people in the United States each year (Catalano 2012). Many victims of stalking might not consider the actions against them to be illegal, especially if they are being stalked by an ex or current intimate partner. There are various factors that create barriers for victims to acknowledge patterns of stalking behavior, including gendered relationship ideals which normalize and even romanticize certain stalking behaviors. The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, I analyze how demographic variables, gendered stalking behaviors, and victim-perpetrator relational factors affect whether someone identifies as being a victim of stalking. The second goal of this study is to take the same variables and analyze how they influence a victim's decision to seek the help of law enforcement. Data were drawn from the Supplemental Victimization Survey, gathered in conjunction with the 2006 National Crime Victimization Survey. Five chi-square analyses established distinct associations between key study variables, while 4 binomial logistic regression analyses work to answer the research questions. Results indicate that stalking acknowledgment can be predicted by various factors including the sex of victim, a victim being controlled through stalking, violent threats with weapons, victimization through email, and victim-perpetrator relationship. Results also indicate that a stalking victim reporting to law enforcement can be predicted by stalking acknowledgment, sex of victim, violent threats, and whether or not a victim and perpetrator have ever cohabitated. I conclude with policy implications and directions for future research.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stalking is a widespread social problem that impacts the lives of an estimated 3.3 million people in the United States each year (Catalano 2012). Stalking has only been recognized as a crime for about 2 decades, starting in the state of California in 1990 after four Orange County women were murdered by former intimate partners in a six-week span (Dunn 2002; Ngo 2014). Stalking is a unique crime in itself, as it is one of the only crimes in the US where the burden of proof lies with the victim recognizing and reporting an established pattern of behavior (Dietz and Martin 2007; Katz and Rich 2015). Legal definitions of stalking vary from state to state; however, stalking can generally be understood as repeated, unwanted harassing behavior which can include following a person, showing up to a person's place of work, making harassing phone calls, leaving written messages or gifts, or vandalizing a person's property (Menard and Cox 2015; Tjaden and Thoennes 2001; Tjaden 2009). These behaviors have the potential to present a threat of serious harm, which could be precursors to assault or murder (Tjaden and Thoennes 2001).

Many victims of stalking might not consider the actions against them to be illegal. There are various factors that create barriers for victims to acknowledge patterns of stalking behavior. Critical feminist theory might help us to understand this disconnect. Gendered relationship norms, upheld through the system of patriarchy might influence women to feel that such behaviors are normal or might even be their own fault (Connell 1993). If a victim has previously been romantically or intimately involved with their stalker, they might be less likely to acknowledge repeated phone calls, unannounced

visits to work or school, or unwanted gifts on their doorstep as stalking, since many of these behaviors fall within the parameters of patriarchal relationship norms. In other cases, gender norms might influence a woman to feel as though she has unfairly led her stalker on romantically, often through the suggestions and questioning of law enforcement and even friends and family. Furthermore, literature on stalking indicates that the crime is often contextualized and perpetuated as an extension of domestic violence or intimate partner abuse (Melton 2007). Stalking literature identifies diverse and numerous motivations for stalking. However, numerous intimate partner stalkers have been found to engage in stalking behavior as a means to intensify the psychological abuse of their partner.

Another common stalking motivation among intimate partners is the desire of one party to reconcile a romantic or intimate relationship (Melton 2007). This phenomenon is consistently portrayed in mainstream media as both a normal and ideal pursuit for males specifically to “win back” the affections of their female partners. The “don’t let her get away” trope consistently portrayed in American television and film, on the surface, can be completely harmless. However, these images over time work to normalize the dynamic of men not listening to women when they decide to walk away from a relationship¹. On one end of the spectrum, this dynamic might manifest itself in sending flowers to an ex romantic partner at their place of residence or employment in order to reconcile a relationship. Yet, on the more serious end of the spectrum, this dynamic can manifest itself in a woman being trapped in an abusive or toxic relationship because she

¹ My study primarily focuses on heterosexual men stalking heterosexual women. While stalking certainly exists with female perpetrators and in same-sex relationships, less is known about stalking within these contexts.

knows that aftermath of her leaving will result in a large-scale blow up, physical harm, or even death. Somewhere in the middle of this spectrum is the unique, pattern-based crime of intimate partner stalking which can range in seriousness, frequency, and level of danger.

Stalking acknowledgment becomes a key determinant for whether or not a victim chooses to report behavior to law enforcement officials (Ngo 2014; Reynolds and Englebrecht 2010). Additionally, researchers argue that various criteria for legal stalking determination such as the “fear requirement” may create barriers for stalking victims. Some states, including Texas, require that a stalking victim be in fear of his or her life to be able to legitimize a stalking report (Texas Penal Code 42.072). Many argue that this model fails to acknowledge that stalking victimization often escalates from simple, yet annoying gestures with the potential to turn into more serious offenses that often turn violent. Stalking researchers suggest that by the time a victim is in fear of losing their lives, it could be far too late for the beginning of a criminal stalking investigation (Owens 2016).

What researchers find to be equally unique and unsettling about stalking victimization is the level of control that perpetrators have over their victims (Mullen, Pathé, and Purcell 2009). Driven by the fear of being harmed, victims often deconstruct and rebuild their lives to avoid their stalkers. Law enforcement officers often instruct victims to change their phone numbers, reconfigure their daily schedules, or take alternate routes when commuting. All of these examples are not only inconvenient to the victim, these avoidance strategies essentially act as extensions of stalking victimization. The victim’s life is swiftly rearranged to deter abusive behavior; every moment revolves

around avoidance (Melton 2007; Mullen et al. 2009). Every change a stalking victim makes to his or her behavior serves as a reminder of their stalking own experience.

Failure to acknowledge stalking behavior as such can yield a plethora of negative consequences. Oftentimes stalking, especially in the early stages of victimization, can be misconstrued as a part of normal dating behavior. If stalking is not acknowledged, the victim will likely neglect to notify police (Ngo 2014; Reynolds and Englebrecht 2010). Lack of reporting at the forefront of a stalking situation can create barriers for the victim later on after behaviors begin to escalate. Since the crime of stalking can only be legally recognized after a distinct pattern of behavior is established and documented through a partnership between the victim and law enforcement, it becomes imperative for behaviors to be recognized early on and addressed. According to Owens (2016), stalking is understandably mislabeled as harassment by the criminal justice system because, at the most basic level, stalking is a “more serious type of repeated harassment” (Owens 2016: 2197). Offenses such as harassment or trespassing are considered crimes by occurring once. In contrast, stalking is only considered a crime if a repetitive pattern of behavior is established. Additionally, it becomes increasingly important to produce research that not only identifies these barriers, but also helps inform social institutions of the barriers that stalking victims experience. Stalking is a relatively new crime in the legal sense, therefore it is imperative that research continues to guide law enforcement agencies and victim services institutions to impact positive change to processes and procedures in order to better serve this population of victims.

With these factors in mind, the present study will focus in on the subset of intimate partner stalking and will explore different barriers to stalking acknowledgment.

Guided by the theoretical framework of critical feminist theory and utilizing data from the 2006 National Crime Victimization Supplementary Stalking Survey, this study analyzes whether or not certain gendered relationship dynamics and components of intimate partner stalking victimization predict stalking acknowledgment. Finally, this study tests how these dynamics impact a victim's decision to report stalking behavior to law enforcement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Stalking is a compelling issue in sociology and criminology alike due to the various social structures that facilitate interactions between victims, perpetrators, and the criminal justice system (Dunn 2002). Stalking literature covers several topics including legal and social responses to stalking, issues with defining and measuring stalking as a crime, and qualitative accounts of the lived experiences of stalking victims. The primary focuses of this study are stalking acknowledgment and reporting. To best understand stalking literature, I begin with an overview of the dominant perpetrator profiles, including a brief discussion on the relatively new crime of cyberstalking and how victims of intimate partner stalking might be more vulnerable to this type of stalking. Next, I move into a discussion on stalking acknowledgment, the barriers that keep victims from recognizing themselves as such, and how these barriers might impact reporting. Finally, I discuss the legal issues that create barriers for reporting including fear and intent requirements and secondary victimization by law enforcement.

Types of Stalking

Different types of stalking behavior and victimization are distinguished based on the relationship between victim and perpetrator. These distinct models are best understood as stranger stalking, acquaintance stalking, and intimate partner stalking. The present study is primarily concerned with intimate partner stalking, which occurs when a perpetrator stalks someone that they have been involved with romantically or intimately at any point before, during, or after the victimization. This type of stalking is often

understood as an extension to domestic violence, with primarily male perpetrators and female victims (Dietz and Martin 2007; Katz and Rich 2015; Melton 2007).

Since intimate partner stalking can be understood as an extension of domestic abuse (sexual, physical, or emotional), we can look to the literature of the cycle of battery and abuse to better understand the early stages of intimate partner stalking. Goetting (1999) defines battering as, “an obsessive campaign of coercion and intimidation designed by a man to dominate and control a woman, which occurs in the personal context of intimacy and thrives in the sociopolitical climate of patriarchy” (Goetting 1999: 4). In her analysis, Goetting (1999) goes on to discuss the “reeling-in” process deployed by batterers and stalkers alike. Batterers and stalkers do not advertise themselves as such. Instead, Goetting argues, abusers take time to “reel-in” their victims. Abusers often present themselves as charming and adoring partners. These relationships often start strong and move fast and the unsuspecting woman feels thrilled and fortunate to be in a relationship that simply feels like young love. By the time the abuse begins, the victim might be committed or even dependent on her abuser and struggles with the prospect of leaving (Goetting 1999).

Research has shown that victims of intimate partner stalking have distinctly different experiences than those stalked by non-partners (Katz and Rich 2015; Melton 2007; Reyns and Englebrecht 2014; Spitzberg and Cupach 2014; Tjaden and Thoennes 2001). Victims of intimate partner stalking undergo their victimization within the context of a romantic or intimate relationship. The “inside information” that intimate partner stalkers have results in a wider array and more frequent stalking tactics, with increased risks of threats and violence (Logan and Walker 2009). Intimate stalking perpetrators

often have access to house keys, phone numbers, schedules, and other logistical pieces of knowledge that can intensify the victimization of their ex or current intimate partners. Beyond simply learning about schedules and passwords, the perpetrators of intimate partner violence and stalking spend time gaining the trust of their victims, allowing them access to in-depth knowledge of what the victim values or cares for the most (Goetting 1999; Logan and Walker 2009). Most acquaintance and stranger stalkers generally do not have access to this type of in-depth insight.

The concept of pursuit often complicates our conceptualization and understanding of stalking victimization. Being pursued is, after all, a generally normal and accepted part of dating behavior and is often not a cause for concern or alarm. Pursuit can transition quickly from being considered a normal dating behavior to causing distress and alarm. When pursuit behaviors are unwanted or cause the target to be annoyed or frustrated, these behaviors are considered “obsessive relational pursuit” (Logan and Walker 2015; Spitzberg and Cupach 2014). It is when individuals become fearful, distressed, and begin to change their lives to avoid pursuit that the behavior transitions into being considered stalking (Logan and Walker 2015). This process is just one example of how stalking behavior escalates over time and the danger that accompanies a target of pursuit if they choose to ignore behavior that causes them to feel uncomfortable or annoyed and consider it a normal part of dating behavior. In these scenarios, stalking occurs out of a pre-dating relational context. This is one of the many context that stalking behavior can occur within.

Research about stalking has helped to develop several stalker profiles to better understand the motivations of stalkers. Additionally, law enforcement agencies can

utilize these profiles to better serve victims of stalking and prevent stalking behavior. Within the category of intimate partner stalkers, two stalking profiles emerge: the rejected stalker and the resentful stalker (Mullen et al. 2009). The rejected stalker is an individual who becomes enraged by a partner leaving the relationship or who refuses to accept that a relationship has ended. Recent social changes to gendered relationships and marital expectations have facilitated a prevalence of rejected stalkers (Mullen et al. 2009). Intimate partner stalkers who hold on to traditional religious values, including the unquestionable permanence of marriage often fall into the rejected stalker category. Such individuals who find these polarizing beliefs to be of the utmost importance might attempt to resolve their anger through stalking. Rejected stalkers often utilize intimidation and assault in their pursuit of an ex intimate partner. In their analysis, Mullen, Pathe, and Purcell (2009) indicate that rejected stalkers often have backgrounds including domestic violence. This type of stalker is motivated by self-righteousness and entitlement, which are both conducive to violent behavior.

Similarly, the resentful stalker often emerges when they feel like they have been exposed to some injustice or humiliation (Mullen et al. 2009). In the context of intimate partner stalking, perhaps the stalker is resentful after the end of relationship that they were not willing to let go of. The resentful stalker often views him or herself as a victim of injustice and is driven by “righteous indignation” to retaliate (Mullen et al. 2009: 75). Resentful stalkers are driven by revenge and are motivated by the sense of power or control that they exercise over their victim. These stalkers feel justified in their actions, often citing themselves as victims of a more powerful oppressor (Mullen et al. 2009).

While different types of stalking victimization are generally understood within the context of victim-perpetrator relationships, changes in the prevalence of technology have led to the emergence of cyber stalking. A central question within the discipline of criminology is whether cyber stalking is simply a variation of stalking that includes the use of internet or surveillance technology or if it is a distinct crime in and of itself (Nobles, Reynolds, Fox, and Fisher 2014). Aside from the technical definition, advancements in technology have given stalking perpetrators the ability to utilize GPS technology, social media, and various smartphone applications to intensify the victimization of their targets. “Burner” is one example of an application that can be utilized by stalkers who target their victims through repeated phone calls and text messages. With the advertised intention of creating a layer of privacy and anonymity for users, the Burner application generates random, temporary phone numbers to display as incoming calls or text messages. Once the user is finished with the phone number, they simply select the option to “burn” the number and all data generated by that phone number is permanently deleted from the user’s device. Burner and other similar applications have created a situation for victims in which they are no longer able to simply block the phone number of their stalker. Repeated phone calls and text messages become unavoidable because just as soon as a victim blocks a Burner phone number, a stalking perpetrator can “burn” that number and generate a new phone number. Applications like Burner lack accountability and make it very difficult for law enforcement to hold stalkers legally responsible. Victims also experience difficulties in proving to law enforcement that their stalkers are behind the phone calls since the

numbers are randomly generated and turned on and off at the whim of the user (Nobles et al. 2014).

In their analysis of cyber stalking, Nobles and his colleagues (2014) compared the experiences of traditional, in-person victims of stalking to those only victimized through technology. The researchers found that these victim groups had significantly different experiences and behaviors. For instance, victims of cyberstalking felt the need to engage in more self-protective behaviors than traditional stalking victims. The authors attribute these behaviors to the “ubiquity of technology” and argue that negative technological contact might have an even deeper emotional impact on victims because individuals communicate more through technology than face-to-face (Nobles et al. 2014: 1007). A given state’s stalking “course of conduct” language may or may not be inclusive of all behaviors that stalkers employ. If a stalker utilizes GPS tracking technology that they have had previous access to including the “Find My iPhone” application, this usage may not be considered stalking even within an established stalking pattern of behavior, as the specific state law may not consider the use of this specific technology application to fall within the stalking course of conduct. At this time, most states fail to mention cyber stalking within their stalking laws or as a separate crime altogether. Florida, Illinois, and Rhode Island are the first three to address this issue specifically within their stalking statutes (Nobles et al. 2014). As the prevalence of cyber stalking continues to increase, criminal justice responses including police investigation, victim’s services, and prosecution will need to adapt to serve this growing population of victims (Nobles et al. 2014).

Victims of intimate partner stalking are especially vulnerable to cyber stalking. It is common for couples to share information such as email passwords, application access, and cell phone plans. Victims of stalking are required to be completely diligent in changing passwords to ensure their technological security, however, sometimes they lack the permission to do so. For instance, if they are a part of a cell phone plan in which their ex intimate partner is the primary account holder, they must obtain consent from the account holder to be removed from the account. As they continue to share the account, the stalking partner has access to incredibly personal and sensitive information including phone numbers that their victim has dialed. If the victim has reached out to victim's services agencies or law enforcement, the stalking partner would be able to access that information. Finally, if the victim has moved on to another romantic or intimate relationship, the stalking partner would have access to that data and could begin stalking the new intimate partner.

Stalking Acknowledgment

Stalking acknowledgment refers to whether or not a victim of stalking will label their experiences as stalking in the legal sense (Ngo 2014; Jordan et al. 2003). There are various reasons why a discrepancy in stalking victimization and acknowledgment might occur. For example, an individual's personal definition of a crime might not match the legal definition (Ngo 2014). In cases of intimate partner stalking, if their personal definition is shaped by media representation, they might not acknowledge stalking behavior from an ex-intimate because stalking is often portrayed as a stranger in the dark obsessively following a celebrity (Morewitz 2003).

Both acknowledgment and reporting for victims of stalking can be influenced simply by the way the stalking is legally defined as a crime in the state in which the victim resides (Owens 2015). In most states, the two key requirements for behaviors to be considered stalking include repeat victimization and fear for bodily harm (Ngo 2014). Some states, including Texas, require that a stalking perpetrator must have directly threatened the life of their victim. In Texas, victims who simply feel frightened for their safety or for the safety of their family are not able to file stalking charges against their perpetrators (Texas Penal Code 42.072). Proponents of these policies argue that stalking is a serious crime and should only apply to perpetrators that pose a serious threat to their victims. However, I argue that this limitation of reporting fails to recognize the escalation that often occurs in stalking victimization. Many stalkers utilize otherwise legal means to stalk their victims including sending gifts, making phone calls, or showing up unannounced (Owens 2016). Overall, the US criminal justice system has applied fear and intent requirements to help determine whether or not someone has committed the crime of stalking. The fear requirement is a key tool for law enforcement in distinguishing felony-level stalking from other types of criminal behavior such as trespassing and harassment (Reyns and Englebrecht 2012).

Stalking researchers argue that fear requirements for stalking create and maintain distinct barriers for victims in terms of acknowledgment and reporting. Fear requirements present unique challenges for victims and law enforcement agents, because fear itself is a complex concept, centered on the emotional responses of the victim. Measuring fear becomes increasingly difficult in terms of stalking, because stalking is a crime of repeated victimization. Fear can fluctuate and change over time and over the course of

repeated stalking victimization. Furthermore, stalking victims may experience other forms of psychological damage besides fear, including depression and anxiety (Reyns and Englebrecht 2012).

Owens (2015) was concerned with how the fear requirement might impact the gender distribution of stalking victims. Utilizing the National Crime Victimization Supplemental Stalking Survey (2006), the same dataset utilized in this study, Owens concluded that women reported fear more than men, as they were more likely than men to have significantly more “objective reasons for being fearful” (Owens 2015: 16). The women in Owens’ study were also more likely to experience markedly different stalking behaviors than their male counterparts, such as being physically pursued by their stalkers and being victimized for longer windows of time.

Reyns and Englebrecht (2012) were primarily interested in how the fear requirement in anti-stalking law might create barriers for victims. Specifically, the researchers were concerned with the progression of fear throughout the stalking victimization. They compared the levels of fear that the victims reported at the beginning of the victimization and during the victimization. Their study found that acknowledgment of stalking victimization, being stalked by someone they knew, being female, and being non-married were all significant predictors of being fearful at the onset of stalking victimization. In terms of predicting fear levels as stalking victimization progressed, seriousness of victimization was a significant predictor of fear, meanwhile the variables in the onset model (acknowledgment, victim-perpetrator relationship, gender, and marital status) increased in significance.

Interactions with Criminal Justice System

After a crime occurs, victims face numerous decisions including whether or not to report what happened to them to law enforcement. There are numerous factors that influence whether or not a victim of a crime will share their victimization experience through formal channels of reporting. One of the most significant factors is the perceived seriousness of the event, which researchers have generally operationalized as being related to injuries sustained (Reyns and Englebrecht 2014). A victim's acknowledgment of stalking behavior must be based on a distinct pattern of behavior that causes the victim to fear for their personal safety. Determining when stalking has occurred can pose unique and complex complications within the legal system for a variety of reasons. Stalking involves a set of behaviors often rooted in power and control (Goetting 1999; Logan and Walker 2009). These behaviors might not always include direct threats or acts of violence, although stalking behavior can certainly culminate into other types of crime. Instead, stalking can manifest itself in numerous micro aggressions that would normally not be considered criminal acts. Specifically, some stalking perpetrators will leave their vehicle parked outside of their victim's residence or place of work. While parking your vehicle is not a crime, the micro aggression of letting your victim know that their personal space was invaded could be considered a crime if it was part of a documented pattern of behavior.

Another interesting dynamic of stalking victimization is the element of privacy which many crimes do not have. Stalking victims often have a very personal victimization experience, especially when their perpetrator is an ex or current intimate partner. As an illustration, if an individual is assaulted in a parking lot there may be

witnesses to intervene or provide their testimony to law enforcement or in court.

Conversely, a stalking victim who receives numerous consecutive phone calls from a blocked or strange phone number would not normally have witnesses to their victimization.

To properly consider police officer's response to stalking victims, we can look to the criminal justice system's general limitations in approaching other types of gendered crime. Historically, legal gender discrimination has manifested itself in the "reasonable man" standard. Essentially, this standard causes judges, officers, and juries to consider whether or not the defendant, victim, or professional acted in a way that a reasonable man would (Merlo and Pollock 2006). Many criminological and social researchers argue, however, that there are numerous reasons that men and women might approach situations differently (Merlo and Pollock 2006). If a middle class, white, able bodied man were to experience a violent situation at home, he would likely be faced with a choice: should he remove himself or fight back? Women, even in identical socioeconomic situations, might not have these same choices. There are distinct barriers for battered women to leave abusive situations. For example, financial considerations may be an issue. If a woman is engaged in a caregiving role at home and is not making money, or if she is working but her partner controls her finances, she may not have the financial resources to leave a violent domestic situation. Additionally, she may lack the connections to safely leave and might choose to stay to provide for and protect a child or dependent. Finally, she may fear that the abuse will continue and manifest itself into an intimate partner stalking situation where her partner will continue to threaten or abuse her, regardless of her decision to leave the relationship.

To combat the harmful application of the “reasonable man” standard to female victims, the “reasonable person” standard was established and is widely used in American courts. However, many feminist scholars argue that this adjustment is inadequate and that courts continue to interpret what a “reasonable person” would do based on male standards. In 1991, around the time that the United States started recognizing stalking as a crime in and of itself, a “reasonable woman” standard was applied to *Ellison v. Brady*, a Ninth Circuit sexual harassment case (Merlo and Pollock 2006). The victim, Kerry Ellison, won her case, however, the “reasonable woman” standard has not caught on in case law and the so-called “gender neutral” standard is still widely applied in courts around the United States (Merlo and Pollock 2006).

Victims of stalking must prove to law enforcement that the behavior has taken place within an established pattern of crime (Dietz and Martin 2007; Katz and Rich 2015). Police officers are trained to instruct stalking victims to keep detailed documentation on stalking instances and to contact law enforcement to report each incident. Additionally, victims are often instructed to change up their own patterns of behavior to deter their stalkers. This includes altering daily routines and the routes that a victim takes to school or work, as well as changing their phone numbers, email addresses, passwords, and house keys. In cases of intimate partner stalking, these changes are often unsuccessful in decreasing stalking victimization (Goetting 1999; Logan and Walker 2009). Intimate partner stalkers have immense amounts of access to their victims and these avoidance strategies serve as minor inconveniences to this type of criminal.

Making the important help-seeking decision to reach out to law enforcement to report on-going behavior can be a very uncertain and scary experience for a victim.

Previous literature has indicated that victims of stalking, especially those stalked by ex or current intimate partners, experience shame, anxiety, depression, and other psychological side effects of being stalked. These internal consequences can prove to serve as barriers to reaching out to police for help (Logan and Walker 2009). Other studies show that victims of stalking experience stigma in various social contexts. Qualitative accounts of stalking victims indicate that victims experience difficulties divulging their stalking situation to their closest family members and friends (Reyns and Englebrecht 2014). Those who were stalked by an ex or current intimate partner often field questions about how they could enter a relationship with a person who would do something like this (Goetting 1999). If victims experience shame and stigma when sharing their experiences with those closest to them, it becomes easy to understand that they might experience difficulties in reaching out to law enforcement.

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses on the lived experiences of intimate partner stalking victims indicate that victims experience abrasive, predominantly male responses to stalking reports. Some attempt to report and are turned away due to technical jurisdiction parameters. For instance, if a victim lives in county A, but is being stalked at their workplace in county B, they must report the victimization with the law enforcement agency that presides over the county where the victimization took place. This can lead to stalking victims feeling deflated, embarrassed, and unmotivated to continue reporting. Once a stalking report is established, victims are instructed to adopt various self-protecting behaviors. They are also told to continue documenting stalking behavior until the behavior subsides or until the behavior culminates to threats of physical violence or murder, depending on the state stalking statutes (Owens 2016).

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Critical feminist theory challenges the dominant power relationships between men and women. As an extension of cultural hegemony, hegemonic masculinity refers to the maintenance of dominance, not always through brute force and coercion, but through cultural manipulation. The result of this manipulation of culture is a “willing” domination, where males utilize power and privilege to control females (Connell 1993). Ridgeway theorizes gender as a social construction that portrays males and females as different and unequal. Ridgeway (2011) argues that gender stereotypes are cultural instructions for enacting gender and that these stereotypes influence behavior. Violence, aggression, and domination are key components of stereotypically masculine behavior. These traits create a framework for behavior that aims to maintain or even regain power and status over individuals. On the other hand, women are socialized into subservient roles, which are upheld by social processes that stigmatize women for nonconformity (Barak, Leighton, and Cotton 2015).

The hegemonic social structure is reinforced by our everyday, individual and small group interactions between males and females. On a more micro level, romantic and intimate relationships reinforce the larger social standards of gender norms. If men are believed to be assertive, ambitious, and confident, while women are believed to be emotional, nurturing, and sensitive, this dichotomy will likely influence heterosexual relationships. Issues such as division of household labor and income contribution can represent and reinforce widely applied hegemonic values. Aggression is a component of the idealized cultural image of masculinity and violence is the physical manifestation of

aggression. Violence can be used to display one's masculinity and adherence to the social markers that make someone a "real man" (Anderson 2005). We can refer back to our discussion on stalker profiles to see these theoretical perspectives at play. For example, intimate partner stalkers often utilize emotional and psychological methods in abusing their victims. Intimate partner stalkers have direct access to practical and personal details including house keys, phone numbers, schedules, and passwords. However, stalking researchers argue that the emotional information obtained by intimate partner stalkers can be just as harmful to victims. Intimate partner stalkers spend extensive amounts of time with their victims prior to engaging in stalking behaviors. They earn rapport, trust, and access over long periods of time and gain in-depth knowledge on elements of stalking victimization that will hurt their victim the most (Goetting 1999; Logan and Walker 2009). I will argue that intimate partner stalking behavior, with a male perpetrator and a female victim, refers back to the dichotomous nature of gender in society. Male intimate stalking perpetrators appeal to the stereotype that their female counterparts are emotionally weak and sensitive.

Gendered relationship norms play a crucial role in stalking acknowledgment as well. The clearest examples of this are cases in which perpetrators of intimate partner stalking are male partners, with female victims. In these instances, males utilize power and control over their female counterparts to maintain psychological and sometimes physical domination. Critical feminist theory can also help us to understand these micro-level phenomena. In regards to both informal and formal reporting barriers, researchers have found that shame and self-blame play crucial roles in sharing one's victimization story (Reyns and Englebrecht 2014). Women are socialized to be internally oriented,

which leads to blaming oneself for adverse external interactions. In the legal sense, these factors impact stalking acknowledgment, which overall, correlates to low rates of reporting intimate stalking crimes to law enforcement (Ngo 2014).

Melton's (2007) qualitative analysis of female stalking victims included several women who felt that their partner's stalking behavior was carried out with positive intention. These women explained that they felt their partners were acting out of concern, consideration, or love. This normalization is indicative of a distinct problem with the "social construction of love" where traits like possessiveness and jealousy are not only accepted, but encouraged (Melton 2007: 360). Behavior at the beginning of a relationship that includes stalking is often similar to that of a normal, healthy romantic relationship. Melton (2007) found that women in her study often found the beginning stages of their partner's stalking behavior to be a series of sweet gestures. One respondent, who's partner would often show up at her workplace early on in their relationship, reflected, "In the beginning I sort of misread it... But I think it was more like him coming to check up on me, because it was never announced. I would never invite him. He just showed up" (Melton 2007: 355). This respondent's reflection indicates that gendered relationship norms influenced her permissiveness of the stalking behavior at the beginning of her relationship. At first, the behavior was normal and even perceived as caring and considerate. However, as time progressed and the relationship dwindled, the respondent began to recognize her own lack of power and agency in her partner's unannounced "visits."

The research on stalking literature recognizes this phenomenon in the "rejected stalker" profile. The rejected stalker generally attempts to reconcile the relationship in

hopes of “winning back” the affections of their partner are often romanticized and reinforced by gendered relationship dynamics in heterosexual relationships (Mullen et al. 2009). As Mullen and his colleagues (2009) suggest, the rejected stalker is characterized as feeling as though they are victims themselves. Consequently, the female object of the male stalker’s affection is seen as leading on her own stalker or asking for her own victimization.

There are certainly theoretical perspectives that challenge feminist literature on intimate partner abuse and stalking specifically. For instance, the controversial “Battered Husband Syndrome” study (1977-78) fueled a wave of studies that reported a “sex-symmetry” within intimate partner violence (Anderson 2005). These findings are regularly cited in challenging feminist perspectives of intimate partner violence and battery, which hold that this type of violence is rooted in patriarchal values of power and control within heterosexual relationships. Sex-symmetry arguments have been notoriously cited in by arguments against the funding of women’s shelters as this perspective implies that the prevalence of female-targeted abuse is inflated and, essentially, not worth the time nor resources to address as a legitimate social problem (Anderson 2005). Fortunately, sex-symmetry findings are not generally accepted by scholars in the fields of both criminology and sociology. Claims that men and women perpetrate similar amounts of domestic violence are not statistically supported without some sort of manipulation of how gender or violence are conceptualized in study methodologies (Anderson 2005).

Historically, legislation to address gendered crime has been passed with bipartisan support in the United States Congress. A key example of this legislation is the Violence

Against Women Act which brought women's movement organizations, liberal Democrats, and conservative Republicans together in support for laws to address gendered crime (Whittier 2016). However, feminist scholars argue that this type of legislation does not address the systemic issues involved in violence against women, but instead offers surface-level support to only certain types of women. "Carceral feminism" refers to "feminist activism aimed at increasing state enforcement against violence against women" (Whittier 2016: 792). Feminist scholars are critical of these perspectives as they focus solely on protecting women from perpetrators outside of the home. This "dark stranger in the ally" model of crime against women fails to acknowledge that statistically more women are harmed by someone that they know or someone with whom they cohabitate (Whittier 2016). A carceral feminist approach to crime also fails to acknowledge intersectional issues within violence against women such as violence within same-sex partnerships, violence against immigrants, and violence against transgender people (Whittier 2016). Furthermore, legislation like the Violence Against Women Act does not necessarily apply to all victims of stalking. Due to the restrictive nature of legal stalking parameters set by state-specific stalking statutes and the fact that stalking oftentimes starts with mild offenses with the potential to escalate into violence (Dietz and Martin 2007).

Overall, feminist literature argues that gendered crime is often rooted in power and control at the macro, societal level as well as the micro, relationship level. To test the relationship between gender stereotypes and intimate partner stalking, the present study will include a multivariate analysis with variables operationalized to represent gendered

relationship dynamics, informed by the critical feminist literature outlined in this section in order to measure how these dynamics impact one's own stalking acknowledgment.

IV. RESEARCH PURPOSE

While stalking has been heavily researched since its criminalization in the 1990's, important questions remain in terms of factors impeding stalking acknowledgment and reporting stalking behavior to law enforcement. Past research has indicated a distinct relationship between stalking acknowledgment and reporting (Ngo 2014). Although, both stalking acknowledgment and reporting are the two key dependent variables in this analysis, this study will go beyond testing this single relationship. Instead, multiple independent variables across two separate binary multiple logistic regression models will be regressed separately against these two variables. This study will not only measure how groups of independent variables predict stalking acknowledgment, but will measure those same variables to see how they predict the important help-seeking behavior of reporting stalking behavior to law enforcement. This multi-dimensional perspective is unique to criminological and sociological literature on stalking.

A goal of this study is to approach stalking from both the internal and external perspectives of this issue by strategically utilizing the dependent variables of this analysis: stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police. Stalking acknowledgment is a personal distinction for each individual to make through their own understanding of law, relationships, and behavior and a vast array of other factors. It is often a choice that happens internally, without the consultation of friends, family, or law enforcement; the variable of stalking acknowledgment represents the internal process of a victim. Reporting to police represents the external components of stalking. When a victim of stalking chooses to seek the help of law enforcement, their victimization emerges from

being a private, internal problem to a very public, external one. This public awareness can be a cause for concern to a victim for numerous reasons ranging from fear of judgement from law enforcement to the fear of a stalker's retaliation. The act of converting one's stalking victimization from private to public, I argue, is worth exploring. Research indicates that being questioned about their role in their own stalking, being turned away and told to report elsewhere, and being told that the only options they have are to change their phone number and document stalking incidents leads stalking victims to feel altogether defeated by the reporting process (Logan and Walker 2015).

The present study will indirectly work to add to stalking literature by testing whether or not gendered relationship dynamics and inequalities may reinforce hegemonic behaviors that eventually lead to stalking. This dynamic has been operationalized as the stalking motivations variable, where stalking victims respond with the reasons why they think that they were a target for stalking. By analyzing the relationship between victim and perpetrator sex variables and the stalking motivation variables, the present study will work to provide insight into specific barriers that victims of intimate partner stalking must navigate in acknowledging their own victimization.

While the relationship between stalking acknowledgment and reporting have been previously researched, my study aims to fill gaps left in existing literature regarding how a variety of independent variables impact both acknowledgment and reporting stalking victimization to law enforcement. The overarching research question of this analysis is whether or not the same independent variables that impede stalking acknowledgment will impede reporting to police.

In consideration of the gap in research and the research question, this analysis will test the following hypotheses:

H1: Victims who identify that they are being stalked for reasons related to power and control will be more likely to acknowledge themselves as victims of stalking and will be more likely to report stalking behaviors to police compared to those who cited being a target for other reasons.

H2: Victims who have experienced actual physical violence will be more likely to acknowledge their own stalking victimization and will be more likely to report stalking behaviors to police than victims who have been threatened with physical violence.

H3: Victims who do not directly acknowledge themselves as victims will be less likely to report their stalker to law enforcement.

V. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The present study will utilize data from the 2006 Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS) of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The NCVS is a self-report survey where respondents are interviewed in regards to and nonfatal personal and household property crimes experienced in the prior 6 months. The NCVS is measured annually and individual responses are weighted to produce estimates that are representative of people age 12 or older living in United States households (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2016). Conversely, the SVS is a one-time supplemental survey designed to measure the prevalence, scope, and consequences of nonfatal stalking in the United States. While NCVS interviews are conducted with household members over age 12, the SVS only included household members age 18 and above (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2016). It should be noted that respondents were not required to self-identify as victims of stalking. Stalking is a crime rooted in an established pattern of behavior (Dietz and Martin 2007; Katz and Rich 2015). Many victims do not recognize behaviors as stalking until a progression in frequency or seriousness occurs. In consideration of this phenomenon, the SVS purposefully omitted the word “stalking” from both the title and contents of the survey until the final question which asked if they considered themselves to be victims of stalking. Respondents participating in the NCVS were administered with an additional pre-screening question, which determined whether or not they qualified to participate in the SVS. This question read:

“Not including bill collectors, telephone solicitors, or other sales people, has anyone, male or female, EVER-- frightened, concerned, angered or annoyed you by:

1. Making unwanted phone calls to you or leaving messages?
2. Sending unsolicited or unwanted letters, emails, or other forms of written correspondence or communication?
3. Following you or spying on you?
4. Waiting outside or inside places for you such as your home, school, workplace, or recreation place?
5. Showing up at places where you were even though he or she had no business being there?
6. Leaving unwanted items, presents, or flowers?
7. Posting information or spreading rumors about you on the internet, or by word of mouth?
8. [None]”

The resulting dataset included both the full descriptive variables of the entire 2006 NVCS (N=78,000+) and the smaller subsample of respondents who completed the 2006 SVS. To ensure that I was only analyzing the subsample of those who completed the SVS, I ran the “Select if” command so that a new dataset was formed that only included those who answered the final question of the SVS. This question read: “Do you consider the series of unwanted contacts or harassing behavior you told me about to be stalking,” which ended up constructing the main dependent variable for this analysis. A total of n=2,409 respondents answered this final question, so only those respondents were pulled for the present study.

Dependent Variables

The two main dependent variables in this analysis will be whether or not the respondent acknowledged the reported behavior as stalking and whether or not the respondent reported the behavior to police.

Stalking acknowledgment. The first dependent variable in this study will be *stalking acknowledgment*, which indicates whether or not a respondent considers the

reported behavior to be stalking. This variable was measured with the question, “Do you consider the series of unwanted contacts or harassing behavior you told me about to be stalking,” with response options of 1= yes and 0= no.

Reported to police. The second dependent variable will be reported to police, which indicates whether or not the respondent reported the behaviors discussed in their survey interview to law enforcement. This variable was measured with the question, “During the last 12 months did you or someone else call or contact the police to report any of these unwanted contacts or behavior,” with the response options of 1= yes and 0= no.

Independent Variables

Theoretical Model. Seven independent variables were operationalized to represent aspects of gendered relationship dynamics related to stalking will be utilized in the first model in this analysis. These will include: (a) sex of victim, (b) sex of perpetrator, (c) race of victim, (d) race of perpetrator, (e) reason for stalking, (f) threats of physical violence, and (g) use of physical violence.

Sex of victim and *Sex of perpetrator* were both measured dichotomously as 0=male and 1=female. In the original data set, *race of victim* and *race of perpetrator* were categorized in different ways, as respondents were obviously more inclined to have in-depth information on their own race, but not necessarily that of their perpetrator. As a result, *race of victim* had numerous categories, while *race of perpetrator* had just 3: white, black, and other. To make these variables symmetrical, the categories of *race of victim* were recoded to match those in *race of perpetrator*. It should be noted that after this recode, Hispanic identified victims were put into the “other” race category.

Reason for stalking was measured with the question, “Why do you think this person/these people started doing these things to you? Any other reasons?” Respondents had 13 different response options including “To control me” and “Perpetrator liked the attention.” To operationalize this variable to encompass gendered relationship dynamics, the responses related to power and control were all categorized together. These responses are: “For retaliation, to scare me, perpetrator was angry, out of spite,” “To catch me doing something,” “To control me, perpetrator was jealous, possessive, or insecure,” and “To keep me in the relationship, to keep me from leaving, because I left the perpetrator.” In order to be able to compare the respondents who cited these reasons to those who believed they were stalked for other reasons, a separate comparison group was constructed with the remaining responses: “Perpetrator thought I liked the attention,” “Perpetrator was an alcoholic or drug abuser,” “Perpetrator was mentally ill,” “Perpetrator liked the attention,” “Perpetrator liked me, found me attractive, had a crush on me,” “Perpetrator had different cultural beliefs or background,” and “Proximity, convenience, because I was alone.” Respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their experience.

Use of physical violence measures any physical attacks on the victim from their stalker. It is measured with the question, “During the last 12 months, did this person attack or attempt to attack you by...,” with the six response options: “Hitting, slapping, or knocking you down,” “Choking or strangling you,” “Raping or sexually assaulting you,” “attacking you with a weapon,” “chasing or dragging with a car,” and “attacking you in some other way.” Respondents indicated all options that applied to their victimization experience.

Finally, the *threats of physical violence* variable was created by the question, “(Other than the attacks or attempted attacks you just told me about), during the last 12 months, did this person threaten to...”, with the 10 response options: “Kill you,” “rape or sexually assault you,” “harm you with a weapon,” “hit, slap, or harm you in some other way”, “harm or kidnap a child”, “harm another family member”, “harm a friend or coworker,” “harm a pet,” “harm or kill himself/herself,” and “threaten you in some other way.”

Victim-Perpetrator Relationship Model. Five independent variables operationalized to represent dynamics specific to intimate partner stalking victimization. These variables include: (a) victim-perpetrator relationship, (b) cohabitation with perpetrator, (c) frequency of stalking instances, and (d) use of Internet technology.

Victim-perpetrator relationship indicates the victim’s reported relationship with their perpetrator at the time of the contacts or unwanted behavior began. The respondents had 21 response options ranging from complete stranger to spouse. To simplify the analysis, the victim-perpetrator relationship was recoded to mirror the key stalking types: intimate partners, acquaintances, and strangers. The sample size of those who reported being stalked by a stranger was too small to include in the final analyses and were left out.

Cohabitation represents whether or not a victim has cohabitated with their stalker. This variable was measured with the question, “Did this person ever live with you?” with the response options of 1=yes, 0=no.

Frequency of stalking incidents was created through the question, “In the last 12 months, how many times did the unwanted contacts or behavior occur?” To fit into the

binomial logistic regression analysis, this variable will be recoded into 5 nominal categories: yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, and sporadic.

Use of Internet technology refers to whether or not a perpetrator utilized technology in their stalking victimization. The survey question that created this variable was, “During the last 12 months, did this person/these people use any of the following methods of internet communication to harass or threaten you...,” with the five response options: “email,” “instant messenger,” “chat rooms,” “blogs, message, or bulletin boards,” and “other internet sites about you.” Due to some responses having very low sample sizes, only three variables were recoded from this survey: email, instant messenger, and other internet sites. This was also helpful in eliminating responses with overall outdated technology (i.e. chatrooms).

Research Design

The main dependent variables for this analysis, *stalking acknowledgment* and *reported to police* are both dichotomous categorical variables. This study will utilize both chi-square cross tabulations and binary logistic regression analysis to answer the outlined research questions. First, I will provide a univariate analysis of the study’s dependent and independent variables to indicate the distribution of survey question responses both numerically and in terms of percentage. Next, five bivariate chi-square analyses will help determine whether or not there is a significant association between the following variables: 1) *sex of victim* and *sex of perpetrator*, 2) *sex of victim* and *stalking acknowledgment*, 3) *sex of victim* and *reporting to police*, 3) *stalking acknowledgment* and *victim-perpetrator relationship*, and finally 5) *stalking acknowledgment* and *reporting to police*.

The binary logistic regressions in this analysis will be utilized to predict the probability that an independent variable might contribute to whether or not someone considers him or herself to be a victim of stalking and whether or not these respondents reported the behavior to the police. To answer these questions, I will run four separate regression analyses.

The first analysis will be concerned with the role that critical feminist theory and gendered relationship dynamics play in stalking victimization. In this analysis, *stalking acknowledgment* will be regressed by independent variables operationalized to represent components of gendered relationship dynamics including the sex (male/female) and race (white, black, other) of both victim and perpetrator, the perceived reasons of victimization (including reasons related to power and control as well as a comparison group), and the incorporation of physical violence (hitting/slapping, choking, rape/sexual assault, harm with weapon, other) or threats of physical violence (murder, rape/sexual assault, harm with weapon, hitting/slapping, other) in stalking victimization.

The second analysis will include independent variables operationalized to represent intimate partner stalking. The dependent variable will remain *stalking acknowledgement* which will be regressed by victim-perpetrator relationship (intimate partners, strangers, acquaintances, family, other), cohabitation with perpetrator, frequency of stalking behavior (yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, sporadically), and use of internet technology in stalking behavior (email, instant messaging, other internet sites).

The third model will include all independent variables from the first model representing variables operationalized to represent critical feminist theory and the gendered variables of this issue. Additionally, the *stalking acknowledgment* variable will

be converted from a dependent variable to an independent variable in this model. All independent variables will be regressed with *reporting to police* as the dependent variable. Similarly, the fourth model will include all independent variables from the second analysis meant to represent victim-perpetrator relationship markers with *stalking acknowledgment* included as an independent variable. The dependent variable in this analysis will also be *reporting to police*.

VI. ANALYSIS

The analysis component of my thesis is divided into three separate sections. First, two univariate tables are provided to in order to illustrate frequencies and percentage distributions, of both demographic and key study variables. After the univariate analyses, five bivariate chi-square analyses are provided to test associations between key study variables. Overall, the bivariate cross tabulations helped to inform the final component of the analysis section, the multivariate regression analyses.

Univariate Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis- Demographic Variables		
Variable	%	N
Sex of Victim		
• Female	• 65.7%	• 1582
• Male	• 34.3%	• 827
Sex of Perpetrator		
• Female	• 35.9%	• 442
• Male	• 64.1%	• 789
Race of Victim		
• White	• 85.9%	• 2069
• Black	• 8.6%	• 208
• Other	• 5.5%	• 132
Race of Perpetrator		
• White	• 77.8%	• 909
• Black	• 12.8%	• 150
• Other	• 9.3%	• 109

This analysis includes a subsample of 2,409 respondents who answered the final question of the survey indicated in the previous section of this analysis. Table 1 indicates the sex and race variable distributions within the sample. The majority of the sample of victims/respondents identified as female; 1,582 or 65.7% of the respondents were female

while 827 or 34.3% of the respondents were male. The sex distribution of perpetrators was inverse to that of the victims/respondents, with the majority to reported perpetrators being male. In the subsample, 789 or 64.1% of perpetrators were male, while 442 or 35.9% were female.

In regards to the racial identity of both victims and perpetrators, the overwhelming majority of individuals were white. Of the victims, 2,069 or 85.9% identified as white, 208 or 8.6% identified as black, and 132 or 5.5% identified as other. The distribution of perpetrators was made up of 909 or 77.8% individuals who were identified as being white, 150 or 12.8% who were identified as being black, and 109 or 9.3% who were identified by victims as being some other race.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis- Key Study Variables		
Variable	%	N
Stalking Acknowledgment		
• Yes	• 30.3%	• 729
• No	• 69.7%	• 1680
Reported Behavior to Police		
• Yes	• 18.6%	• 448
• No	• 45.8%	• 1103
Threats of Physical Violence		
• Murder	• 24.2%	• 112
• Rape/Sexual Assault	• 3.5%	• 16
• Harm with Weapon	• 13.6%	• 63
• Hit, Slap, Harm in Other Way	• 27.5%	• 127
• Other Threats to Victim	• 31.2%	• 144
Use of Internet Technology		
• Email	• 70.6%	• 286
• Instant Messenger	• 22.5%	• 91
• Post on Websites	• 6.9%	• 28

Of the 2,409 total respondents surveyed, the majority did not identify as victims of stalking. Specifically, 729 or 30.3% identified themselves as victims of stalking, while 1680 or 69.7% did not identify themselves as victims of stalking. Of those 2,409

respondents 1,551 told someone else about their experiences. Within that 1,551, 448 individuals, or 18.6%, reported the behavior to police while 1,103 or 45.8% of individuals did not reporting the behavior to police. A total of 462 respondents were threatened with physical violence during their experiences with stalking victimization. The three most common categories of physical threats were hitting/slapping, murder, and threatened in some other way. Respondents reported being threatened by hitting/slapping made up 27.5% of the distribution reporting violence, while 24.2% reported their lives being threatened, and 31.2% of respondents reported being threatened in some other way. Finally, Table 2 indicates the frequencies and distributions of the use of internet technology variable. A total of 405 respondents reported the use of internet technology as being a component of the stalking behaviors that happened to them in the last 12 months. Of those 405, 286 respondents reported being victimized through email, 91 respondents reported being stalked through the use of instant messenger, and 28 individuals reported their stalkers posting information on websites in order to extend their victimization.

Bivariate Analysis

To begin to understand and analyze the associations between key variables in this study, I ran five separate chi-square analyses: 1) *sex of victim* and *sex of perpetrator* (Table 3), 2) *sex of victim* and *stalking acknowledgment* (Table 4), 3) *sex of victim* and *reporting to police* (Table 5), 3) *stalking acknowledgment* and *victim-perpetrator relationship* (Table 6), and finally 5) *stalking acknowledgment* and *reporting to police*. *Sex of Victim and Sex of Perpetrator* (Table 7).

Table 3 below indicates the results of the first analysis, which focused on the association between the sexes of both stalking victims and perpetrators (male, female).

Table 3. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Sex of Perpetrator		
Sex of Victim	Female Perpetrator	Male Perpetrator
Female	250 (28.7%)	621 (71.3%)
Male	192 (53.3%)	168 (46.7%)
N= 1,231	P value= .000***	$\chi^2= 67.148$

***.001 level of significance df=1

Being able to see how gender was distributed across victims and perpetrators helped test any “sex-symmetry” assumptions in this data set. For male victims, there was a roughly even distribution of perpetrator sex, with 53.3% female stalking perpetrators and 46.7% male perpetrators reported. However, 28.7% of female victims in this sample reported being stalked by another woman, while 71.3% reported being stalked by a male figure. These figures confirm the gendered nature of this crime, which critical feminist literature argues to be rooted in the patriarchal ideals of male power and control exerted over females. This chi-square analysis was significant ($\chi^2= 67.148$ at 1 df, $p=.000$). However, the phi value for this analysis is -.234, indicating a weak association between victim and perpetrator gender. While this analysis indicated a significant association between sex of victim and perpetrator, the association is still considered to be weak.

Sex of Victim and Stalking Acknowledgment

The second chi-square analysis compared victim sex (male, female) and whether or not an individual identified as a victim of stalking (yes, no). Table 4 below indicates these significant results.

Table 4. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Stalking Acknowledgment		
Stalking Acknowledgment	Male	Female
Yes	184 (25.2%)	545 (78.8%)
No	643 (38.3%)	1037 (61.7%)
N= 2,409	P value= .000***	$\chi^2= 38.309$

***.001 level of significance df=1

Results indicate that the majority of the distribution did not identify as victims of stalking. Of the 2,409 respondents, only 729 individuals identified as victims of stalking, while 1,680 did not identify as being victims of stalking. The sex distribution of this variable consists of 1,582 females and 827 males. The sex asymmetry of this variable's distribution has culminated in females making up the majority of those who do and do not identify as victims of stalking. However, if we focus on the stalking acknowledgment percentages within genders, 65% of women did not consider themselves stalking victims while 78% of men made this same decision.

This chi-square analysis was significant ($\chi^2= 38.309$ at 1 df, $p=.000$). Again, the phi value for this analysis is rather low at $-.126$, which indicates a weak association between victim sex and stalking acknowledgment. Although the analysis was found to be significant, results indicate that there are many more factors besides the sex of the victim that is associated with stalking acknowledgment.

Sex of Victim and Reporting to Police

The third chi-square analysis considered the relationship between the sex of the victim (male, female) and whether or not they reported stalking behavior to police (yes, no). Table 5 below indicates the results of this analysis.

Table 5. Cross Tabulation- Sex of Victim and Reporting to Police		
Reporting to Police	Male	Female
Yes	107 (23.9%)	341 (76.1%)
No	394 (35.7%)	709 (64.3%)
N= 1,551	P value= .000***	$\chi^2= 20.413$

***.001 level of significance df=1

In this cross tabulation, only 23.9% of the individuals who reported stalking behavior to the police were male, while 76.1% were female. This finding might be indicative of gender stereotypes at play where male victims avoid reporting stalking

victimization to police in an attempt to adhere to masculine traits of toughness and independence. Of those who did not report, 35.6% or 394 people were male, while 64.3% or 709 people were females.

This chi-square analysis was significant ($\chi^2= 20.413$ at 1 df, $p=.000$). Again, the phi value for this analysis is rather low at $-.115$, which indicates a weak association between victim sex and reporting to police.

Stalking Acknowledgment and Victim-Perpetrator Relationship

The fourth chi-square analysis compared the variables of stalking acknowledgment (yes, no) and victim-perpetrator relationship (intimates, acquaintances, strangers, family). These significant results are displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Cross Tabulation- Stalking Acknowledgment and Victim-Perpetrator Relationship				
Stalking Acknowledgment	Intimates	Acquaintances	Strangers	Family
Yes	174 (32.2%)	274 (50.7%)	59 (10.9%)	33 (6.1%)
No	162 (24.6%)	335 (50.9%)	82 (12.5%)	79 (12%)
N= 1,198	P value= .000***		$\chi^2= 17.733$	

***.001 level of significance df=1

The majority of this sample is made up of those who identified their stalkers as being acquaintances (n=609), while those who identified their stalkers as being intimate partners were the second largest group in this distribution (n=336). Those who identified their stalker to be their acquaintance made up 50% of both acknowledgment distributions. Respondents who identified their stalker as a past or present intimate partner made up 32.2% of those who acknowledged stalking and 24.6% of those who did not acknowledge stalking behavior as such. This chi-square analysis was significant ($\chi^2= 17.733$ at 1 df,

$p=.000$). Again, the phi value for this analysis is rather low at .122, which indicates a weak association between stalking acknowledgment and victim-perpetrator relationship.

Stalking Acknowledgment and Reporting to Police

The fifth chi-square analysis compared the two main dependent variables of the analysis: stalking acknowledgment (yes, no) and reporting to police (yes, no). Table 5 indicates the results of this cross tabulation.

Table 7. Cross Tabulation- Stalking Acknowledgment and Reporting to Police		
Reported to Police	Stalking Acknowledgment	No stalking acknowledgment
Yes	262 (58.5%)	186 (41.5%)
No	354 (32.1%)	749 (67.9%)
N= 1,551	P value= .000***	$\chi^2= 92.658$

***.001 level of significance df=1

The highest frequencies in this analysis are found in the cell with no stalking acknowledgment and no reporting. The cell with the second largest frequency and percentage included those who acknowledged stalking, yet did not report it. This finding is indicative of barriers to reporting, as it shows that 354 individuals acknowledged themselves as victims of a serious crime, but did not report their victimization to police. The chi-square analysis was significant ($\chi^2= 92.658$ at 1 df, $p=.000$). The phi value for this analysis was .244, indicating a weak association between stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police.

Later in the analysis, all variables from the bivariate section of this study will be included in multivariate models to further test their relationships with one another and to measure their predictive power for both stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police. Overall, these bivariate results indicate significant associations, yet all associations yielded low phi values. While chi-square analysis indicates whether or not there is an association between variables, it does not necessarily say much about the strength of the

association. Therefore, further analysis is needed to truly understand the relationships between these variables.

Multivariate Analysis

The multivariate portion of this study includes four separate binary logistic regression analyses. The first regression in Model 1 was conducted to determine whether sex of victim and perpetrator (male, female), race of victim and perpetrator (white, black, other), stalking motivations of power and control (retaliation, catch the victim, control, keep victim in relationship), other stalking motivations (paying attention to victim, perpetrator is alcoholic or drug abuser, perpetrator mentally ill or unstable, perpetrator liked the attention, perpetrator liked victim/had a crush), threats of physical violence (murder, rape/sexual assault, harm with weapon, hit/slap/harm in other way, other threats to victim), and use of physical violence (hit/slap, choking/strangling, rape/sexual assault, harm with weapon, attack in other way) are predictors of stalking acknowledgment. The results of this analysis, as well as goodness-of-fit statistics for this model, are listed in Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8. Model 1. Logistic Regression- Theoretical Model Dependent Variable: Stalking Acknowledgment		
Variables	B	Exp (B)
Sex of Victim • (Female= 0; Male= 1)	• -.422	• .656**
Sex of Perpetrator • (Female= 0; Male= 1)	• .290	• 1.337*
Race of Victim • White • Black • Other	• -.048 • .498 • ---	• .953 • 1.646 • ---
Race of Perpetrator • White • Black • Other	• .446 • .566 • .396	• 1.562 • 1.761 • 1.486
Stalking Motivations: Power and Control • To Retaliate Against Victim • To Catch Victim Doing Something • To Control Victim • To Keep Victim in Relationship	• -.086 • .859 • .363 • .282	• .918 • 2.362* • 1.437* • 1.326
Stalking Motivations: Other Reasons • Paying Attention to Victim • Perpetrator is Alcoholic or Drug Abuser • Perpetrator Mentally Ill or Unstable • Perpetrator Liked the Attention • Perpetrator Liked Victim, Had Crush	• .690 • -.067 • -.020 • -.100 • .814	• 1.995 • .936 • .980 • .905 • 2.256***
Threats of Physical Violence • Murder • Rape/Sexual Assault • Harm with Weapon • Hit, Slap, Harm in Other Way • Other Threats to Victim	• .022 • .392 • .869 • .142 • .042	• 1.022 • 1.480 • 2.384* • 1.152 • 1.043
Use of Physical Violence • Hitting or Slapping • Choking or Strangling • Rape/Sexual Assault • Weapon • Attack in Other Way	• .454 • 1.040 • -.228 • .213 • .144	• 1.575 • 2.830 • .796 • 1.237 • 1.155

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 9. Model 1. Goodness-of-Fit Results	
Model χ^2	128.328
Df	26
P	.000
Hosmer and Lemeshow Sig.	.846
Nagelkerke R Square	.143

Results indicate that both victim and perpetrator sex are significant predictors of stalking acknowledgment. The B coefficient for victim gender was -.422 with sex coded as female=0, male=1. Therefore, being male decreased stalking acknowledgment by a coefficient of .656. By inverting the odds ratio ($1/.656=1.524$), the odds of female victims acknowledging themselves as stalking victims increases by a factor of 1.5.

Of the power and control stalking motivation variables, the two significant predictors of stalking acknowledgment were “to catch victim doing something” and “to control me”. The odds of stalking acknowledgment increased for those who felt as though they were being stalking in order to be caught doing something that perpetrator did not approve of. The odds of stalking acknowledgment also significantly increased for victims who felt that their stalkers were attempting to control them through stalking victimization.

Outside of the power and control stalking motivations, the only other significant stalking acknowledgment predictor was “perpetrator liked victim, had a crush.” The odds of stalking acknowledgment increased by 2.3% for victims with this perception of stalking motivations. Overall, this regression did not indicate that any of the five uses of violence variables were significant predictors to stalking acknowledgment. However, the odds of stalking acknowledgment for victims experiencing being threatened with a weapon were increased by 2.4%.

The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test is the most used test in logistic regression to evaluate the goodness of fit of a model. To be considered a good model, the Hosmer and Lemeshow chi square value should be non-significant. The Model 1 indicated non-significance with a .846 value. Additionally, Hosmer and Lemeshow Tests include a contingency table where expected and observed values should be close to one another. The Model 1 contingency table followed these parameters. The logistic regression was statistically significant, $\chi^2= 128.328$, $p<.001$. Model 1 explained 14.3% of the variation in the dependent variable (Nagelkerke R²) and correctly classified 64.2% of the cases.

Table 10. Model 2. Logistic Regression- Intimate Partner Stalking Model Dependent Variable: Stalking Acknowledgment		
Variables	B	Exp (B)
Victim-Perpetrator Relationship		
• Intimate Partners	• .781	• 2.183**
• Acquaintances	• .844	• 2.326**
Cohabitation with Perpetrator		
• (No= 0; Yes=1)	• .117	• 1.124
Frequency of Stalking		
• Yearly	• -1.129	• .323
• Monthly	• -.822	• .440
• Weekly	• .547	• 1.729
• Daily	• .566	• 1.761
• Sporadic	• -.238	• .788
Use of Internet Technology		
• Email	• .690	• 1.994*
• Instant Messenger	• -.064	• .938
• Post on Websites	• 1.272	• 3.567

* $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$

Table 11. Model 2. Goodness-of-Fit Results	
Model χ^2	60.237
df	11
p	.000
Hosmer and Lemeshow Sig.	.905
Nagelkerke R Square	.191

Model 2 was conducted to determine whether victim-perpetrator relationship (intimate partners, acquaintances), whether a victim had ever cohabitated with their perpetrator (yes, no), frequency of stalking (yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, sporadic), and use of internet technology (email, instant messenger, post on websites) during stalking are predictors of stalking acknowledgment (yes, no).

The regression indicated that a victim being a past or present intimate partner with their stalker was a significant predictor of stalking acknowledgment. The odds of stalking acknowledgment for those who identified their stalkers as ex or current intimate partners was increased 2.2% in this model. Model 2 also indicated that the victim and perpetrator being acquaintances was also a significant predictor of stalking acknowledgment. The odds for stalking acknowledgment for individuals who were stalked by an acquaintance increased by 2.3%. Finally, Model 2 indicated that a stalker utilizing email to victimize their target was a significant predictor of stalking acknowledgment.

Goodness-of-fit figures (see Table 11) indicate Model 2 to be a good model. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test statistic is non-significant at .905. This logistic regression was statistically significant, $\chi^2= 60.237$, $p<.001$. Model 1 explained 19.1% of the variation in the dependent variable (Nagelkerke R²) and correctly classified 69.7% of the cases.

Table 12. Model 3. Logistic Regression- Theoretical Model		
Dependent Variable: Reporting to Police		
Variables	B	Exp (B)
Stalking Acknowledgment • (No= 0; Yes= 1)	• -.844	• 2.326***
Sex of Victim • (Female= 0; Male= 1)	• -.460	• .631**
Sex of Perpetrator • (Female= 0; Male= 1)	• -.005	• .995
Race of Victim • White • Black • Other	• -.222 • .083 • --	• .801 • 1.087 • --
Race of Perpetrator • White • Black • Other	• .101 • .033 • -.058	• 1.107 • 1.033 • .944
Stalking Motivations: Power and Control • To Retaliate Against Victim • To Catch Victim Doing Something • To Control Victim • To Keep Victim in Relationship	• .476 • -.245 • -.264 • .234	• 1.609** • .782 • .768 • 1.263
Stalking Motivations: Other Reasons • Paying Attention to Victim • Perpetrator is Alcoholic or Drug Abuser • Perpetrator Mentally Ill or Unstable • Perpetrator Liked the Attention • Perpetrator Liked Victim, Had Crush	• -.653 • .427 • .243 • -.098 • -.520	• .520 • 1.533 • 1.275 • .907 • .594*
Threats of Physical Violence • Murder • Rape/Sexual Assault • Harm with Weapon • Hit, Slap, Harm in Other Way • Other Threats to Victim	• 1.144 • -2.482 • 1.114 • .229 • .470	• 3.140*** • .084** • 3.046* • 1.257 • 1.600*
Use of Physical Violence • Hitting or Slapping • Choking or Strangling • Rape/Sexual Assault • Weapon • Attack in Other Way	• .149 • .857 • -.145 • 1.204 • .472	• 1.161 • 2.356 • .856 • 3.332* • 1.603

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 13. Model 3. Goodness-of-Fit Results	
Model χ^2	174.275
df	27
p	.000
Hosmer and Lemeshow Sig.	.190
Nagelkerke R Square	.199

The regression analysis in Model 3 yielded the largest number of significant variables in the study. As an independent variable in Model 3, stalking acknowledgment was a strong predictor of reporting to police in this model at the $p < .001$ level. Those who acknowledged their own stalking victimization were far more likely to report their victimization to police. Sex of victim was found to be a significant predictor of reporting to police at the $p < .01$ level. Men were found to be less likely to report than women.

In Model 3, the power and control stalking motivation variable “to retaliate against victim” became significant at the $p < .01$ level. The only other stalking motivations variable outside of the power and control category that was found to be significant in this model remained the “perpetrator liked victim, had crush” variable at the $p < .05$.

Conversely to Model 1, where these independent variables were regressed against stalking acknowledgment and were not found to be significant, many threats of violence variables became significant in this model. Murder, rape/sexual assault, harm with weapon, and other threats were all found to be significant predictors of reporting stalking behavior to police, with murder as the strongest reporting predictor at $p < .001$.

Finally, the only use of physical violence variable that was found to be significant in Model 3 was the use of a weapon. Those who were harmed with a weapon by their stalker were more likely to report their victimization to law enforcement.

The goodness-of-fit tests continued to indicate a good model fit. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test statistic indicated non-significance at .190. This logistic regression was statistically significant, $\chi^2= 174.275$, $p<.001$. Model 3 explained 19.9% of the variation in the dependent variable (Nagelkerke R²) and correctly classified 68.5% of the cases.

Variables	B	Exp (B)
Stalking Acknowledgment (No= 0; Yes= 1)	• .693	• 2.00**
Victim-Perpetrator Relationship		
• Intimate Partners	• -.119	• .888
• Acquaintances	• -.482	• .618
Cohabitation with Perpetrator		
• (No= 0; Yes=1)	• .823	• 2.297**
Frequency of Stalking		
• Yearly	• -.203	• .816
• Monthly	• -.166	• .847
• Weekly	• .260	• 1.297
• Daily	• .363	• 1.437
• Sporadic	• .430	• 1.537
Use of Internet Technology		
• Email	• -.508	• .602
• Instant Messenger	• -.374	• .688
• Post on Websites	• -.367	• .693

* $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$

Model χ^2	36.281
df	12
p	.000
Hosmer and Lemeshow Sig.	.638
Nagelkerke R Square	.124

In this final model, only two variables were found to be significant predictors for reporting stalking victimization to police: stalking acknowledgment and cohabitation with partner. In line with previous literature (Ngo 2014), the bivariate chi-square analysis (see Table 7) and the multivariate Model 3 (see Table 12), those who acknowledged themselves as victims of stalking had greater odds of reporting stalking behavior to police. The second significant predictor of this analysis was cohabitation with perpetrator, which was found to be significant at $p < .01$. Those who had previously or were currently cohabitating with their partners were more likely to report stalking behavior to police.

The goodness-of-fit tests continued to indicate a good model fit. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test statistic indicated non-significance at .638. This logistic regression was statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 36.281$, $p < .001$. Model 4 explained 12.4% of the variation in the dependent variable (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 70% of the cases.

VII. DISCUSSION

This research helps to confirm that victims of intimate partner stalking experience distinct barriers in not only reporting their victimization to law enforcement, but in acknowledging themselves as victims of stalking in the first place. Findings confirm that stalking is heavily gendered in ways that create significant barriers to acknowledgment and reporting for both men and women. In this final chapter I will discuss other key study findings, the role of critical feminist theory, policy implications, and limitations.

Results

My first hypothesis was that victims who identify that they are being stalked for reasons related to power and control will be more likely to acknowledge themselves as victims of stalking and will be more likely to report stalking behaviors to police compared to those who cited being a target for other reasons. Study results partially support this hypothesis. Of the five dummy coded variables conceptualized to represent power and control, two were found to be significant predictors of stalking acknowledgment. Victims who felt that they were being stalked in order for their stalker to control them, as well as victims who reported that their stalker was attempting to catch them doing something were more likely to identify as victims of stalking. When regressed against the second dependent variable *reporting to police*, the only power and control stalking motivation variable that was found to be a significant predictor was retaliation. Victims who felt they were being stalked as a means for retaliation from the perpetrator were more likely to report the stalking behavior to law enforcement.

My second hypothesis was that victims who have experienced actual physical violence will be more likely to acknowledge their own stalking victimization and will be more likely to report stalking behaviors to police than victims who have been threatened with physical violence. This hypothesis was not supported by the multivariate analyses.

In fact, threats of physical violence seemed to predict both stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police far stronger than the actual use of violence. In Model 1, being threatened with a weapon was the only threat that significantly predicted stalking acknowledgment, with no significant variables of actual physical violence yielding significant results. In Model 3, when these same independent variables were regressed against the dependent variable of *reporting to police*, threats of murder, rape/sexual assault, harm with a weapon, and harm in another way were all significant predictors of reporting, while actual harm with a weapon was the only significant physical violence variable. Overall, threats of violence seemed to predict the dependent variables far more than the actual use of physical violence.

My final hypothesis was that victims who do not directly acknowledge themselves as victims will be less likely to report their stalker to law enforcement. This hypothesis was strongly supported. At the bivariate level, the chi-square analysis (Table 7) comparing *stalking acknowledgment* and *reporting to police* was significant ($\chi^2=92.658$ at 1 df, $p=.000$). At the multivariate level, stalking acknowledgment was converted to an independent variable for Models 3 and 4, where it was found to be significant at the $p<.001$ and $p<.01$ levels, respectively.

The symmetrical nature of the multivariate portion of this analysis gave me the unique opportunity to compare the predictive power of the same independent variables

against two dependent variables: stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police. Victim sex, perpetrator liked me/had crush, and threats of being harmed with a weapon were significant predictors of both stalking acknowledgment and reporting to police (see Tables 8 and 12). In models 2 and 4, there were no overlapping significant variables. It is important to not only consider the variables that were significant across the models, but to also pay attention to the variables that were significant in predicting one dependent variable and not the other. Sex of perpetrator, for example, was a significant predictor for stalking acknowledgment, but was not a significant predictor for reporting. This finding supports the idea that those who identify as victims of stalking view the crime through the popularized conceptualizations of stalking (male perpetrator, female victim, motivations of affection, etc.).

Role of Feminist Theory

The results of this study confirm that stalking is a heavily gendered crime with negative consequences for both male and female victims alike. Of the male victims in this sample, the majority did not acknowledge nor report stalking behavior (see Tables 4 and 5). This could certainly be indicative of the restrictive nature of masculinity, which holds that a “real man” is tough, strong, and does not need to seek help from law enforcement especially if they are being stalked by females who are supposed to be docile and harmless (Ridgeway 2011).

These data were made up of mostly male perpetrators and female victims (see Table 3). This statistic confirms that the prescribed paradigms of both masculinity and femininity have been adopted and maintained by these respondents. The concept of male privilege plays a key role in the issue of stalking with male perpetrators behaving as if

they have the right to their victim's privacy. Intimate partner stalkers who fit the resentful stalker profile specifically perpetuate stalking in order to keep a victim in a relationship or to control a victim's behavior. In these situations, stalking is often perpetuated to "show" a victim how their lives will be if the victim does not choose reenter into a romantic or intimate relationship with the perpetrator (Mullen et al. 2009). It is certainly a privileged notion that stalkers reserve the right to cause physical, and psychological stress and damage to another person simply because they decided to leave a relationship.

In this study, those stalked by acquaintances were more likely to acknowledge stalking than those stalked by intimate partners (Table 6). This partially supports the notion that stalking victims are permissive of behaviors of past or present intimate partners because they accept the stalking behavior as a part of normal dating behavior. Qualitative analysis or a more specific survey targeting victims stalked by intimate partners could help to further answer this research question.

Policy Implications

Stalking acknowledgment and reporting must be addressed at the macro and micro levels of our social structure. On the macro level of this issue, we must continue to deconstruct masculinity and femininity as traits that should govern our behavior and what we expect from a partner through research and educational efforts. Instead, masculinity and femininity should be recognized as social constructions that are harmful to both males and females. From a young age, girls and boys alike should be taught that they have ultimate power of their own autonomy and privacy. Additionally, early in our development we should recognize that we have no right to propagate behaviors that aim to control someone else's own behaviors, decisions, or views.

Therefore, on the micro level we should work to tailor components of primary prevention education to address stalking as something that should be taken seriously, no matter who the perpetrator is. Stalking is not a normal part of dating behavior and should be addressed early on as something to be aware of throughout our development.

While couples should be mindful of what technology accounts (cell phone services, email accounts, etc.) they share with each other, companies that manage applications like Burner should build in security features to protect victims of stalking and should collect data to help victims and police officers hold stalkers accountable. For instance, apps like Burner could track outgoing calls from single user accounts. When the frequency and time between calls to a single phone number exceed a preset figure, apps like Burner should block that user account, send a notification to the recipient of the repeated calls, and retain that user's data so that police can access it later on during stalking investigations.

I argue that concrete changes in law enforcement's approaches to all gendered crime, especially stalking, must be made to better serve victims of these types of crime. There is a significant uneven gender distribution within the United States police force at large. I argue that police agencies should take concrete actions to include more women on the police force. Many police departments have excluded women from the police force and their lack of representation has caused harm to victims of domestic violence and stalking (Lonsway 2003). This problem could be remedied with an increase in women patrol officers paired with educational initiatives for officers that explain best practices for handling the dynamics of stalking victimization that do not fit well within traditional policing models.

Study Limitations

Limitations of this study include the age of the data set. While choosing the NCVS SVS from 11 years ago was justified because of the important final stalking acknowledgment variable. However, the age of the dataset did limit some variables that I would have liked to include in this analysis. For example, I was not able to test any relationships between the dependent variables and the use of cell phone application such as “Find my iPhone” as apps were far less common or popular in 2006 and were not included in the survey. A more general limitation to this study is the role that social desirability bias may have played at the time of data collection. Since the original NCVS SVS (2006) was entirely self-reported, some responses to sensitive questions regarding their victimization may have been skewed.

Future Research

The creation of this data set sparked a large amount of quantitative analyses about stalking acknowledgment, victimization, and help-seeking behaviors. A direction for future research would be to focus in on reporting experiences of stalking victims, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Additionally, this type of concentrated stalking data should be collected again, with updated technology variables. This way, we can take a closer look at the use of cell phone applications and other technological advances that have changed the landscape of stalking since 2006 when this data was last collected.

Overall, this topic is multifaceted and leaves a variety of potential future research projects. Variables such as age, marital status, relationship history, number of divorces, history of abuse, among many others can be explored through quantitative methods so that we can continue to learn more about this issue.

The recent news report of Shana Grice, a nineteen-year-old woman who was actually fined with a fixed penalty notice by Sussex police for “wasting their time” filing stalking reports against her ex-boyfriend, Michael Lane, illustrates barriers that stalking victims often face. Tragically, Shana was brutally murdered by Lane in her own home later that year (Khomami 2017). The culture of victim-blaming, stigma, and shame for victims of intimate partner stalking must be addressed by victim’s services and law enforcement agencies alike in order to better serve these victims.

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