It was only 30 years ago that stalking achieved widespread recognition in the public, professional, and policy spheres as a distinct psycholegal phenomenon. But advances in our understanding this phenomenon have come fast and furious. This volume – edited by Heng Choon (Oliver) Chan and Lorraine Sheridan, two internationally recognized experts – provides an impressive and invaluable survey of research from around the world on the nature, prevalence, impact, and management of stalking. Highly recommended!

—Stephen D. Hart, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Simon Fraser University, Canada and Visiting Professor of Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway

Stalking impacts a significant number of people each year. The impact of stalking is devastating not only during the period targeted harassment, abuse, and violence but also in long-term consequences associated with this particular form of interpersonal violence. In the US, stalking has been a crime since the early 1990s. However, stalking is often dismissed and risks are diminished by the criminal justice system as well as by other agencies. The new book *Psycho-Criminological Approaches to Stalking Behavior: An International Perspective* comes along at a perfect time as societies all over the world are becoming more aware, and less tolerant, of gender based and targeted violence. This book brings together scholars from all over the world and adds to the literature on stalking in several key ways including better developing the understanding of how stalking is considered and addressed in other countries, how technology may increase the risks associated with stalking, and evidence-informed practices in addressing stalking. This book also addresses the larger scope of stalking harms not typically considered such as the impact on children of families with stalking.

—T.K. Logan, PhD, Professor, University of Kentucky, USA Author of *Partner Stalking: How Women Respond, Cope, and Survive* and *Women and Victimization: Contributing Factors, Interventions, and Implications*

What is stalking? It is the global realization that nobody has to tolerate being pestered by anybody else. Despite this realization, and the consistency with which stalking victims across the world describe their lived experiences, legal and clinical responses vary not only from country to country but across the jurisdictions of a nation. I highly recommend *Psycho-Criminological Approaches to Stalking* as an invaluable compendium of responses from across the globe. International experts describe the history of psycholegal responses in their countries and the ways we are learning from each other. Divided into three parts, this important reference provides readers with the learnings gained from the last 30 years of research into the motives and behaviors of stalking. Five national portraits highlight the challenges of developing laws to support those targeted putting protections in place. In the context of this international experience, the best practices that are now being developed for assessing risk, policing, rehabilitating offenders, and supporting victim survivors are described. This book is a must read for practitioners in family violence, criminal law, scholars, policy writers, and those tasked with supporting people who want to be left alone.

—Lisa Warren, PhD, Clinical/Forensic Psychologist, Monash University and Code Black Threat Management, Victoria, Australia
Psycho-Criminological Approaches to Stalking Behavior
The Wiley Series in the Psychology of Crime, Policing and Law publishes concise and integrative reviews on important emerging areas of contemporary research. The purpose of the series is not merely to present research findings in a clear and readable form but also to bring out their implications for both practice and policy. In this way, the series will not only be useful to psychologists but also to all those concerned with crime detection and prevention, policing and the judicial process.

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Foreword

It is with great delight and honor that I welcome the first volume of research and writing on stalking from an international perspective. Drs. Chan and Sheridan introduce us to the intercultural phenomenon of an old behavior, but a new crime; a crime first recognized and codified in the United States in 1990. Since then, all 50 states in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and many countries in Europe have recognized that continuous pursuit of another human being which makes them fear for their safety should be considered a crime.

But this work is only a start. The perceptive reader will quickly discern that many countries are not represented by the roster of authors, more specifically, large swaths of South America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. This book is a tremendous start – two internationally recognized experts in stalking are the co-editors – but there is much work to be done to codify stalking as a crime in most countries of the world where it is not; a fact which brings me to my first point in this foreword. A prerequisite of stalking is a stable democracy wherein other, and often more severe forms, of interpersonal violence have already been addressed in criminal law. Some authors have referred to these as the WEIRD (Westernized, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) countries, suggesting a certain pejorative attitude toward them; my preference is to consider them WIRED, suggesting both progression and innovation.

Why is this the case? Because stalking is a gender-based crime, wherein most victims are women and most perpetrators are men. I remember attending an early stalking conference three decades ago, and asking two female attorneys from Poland if they had a stalking law in their country: they laughed heartily, and said they were still trying to outlaw rape in marriage. We need to keep the cultural and political
aspect of the crime of stalking in mind. Those countries, political parties, and religions of the world who continue to bless, or at least turn a blind eye to, practices that keep women at home unless they are accompanied by a man, cover them from head to toe with clothing lest they sexually stimulate a man, deny the ongoing practice of clitoridectomies in their own society, allow the physical and sexual abuse of women by their husbands, kill women out of a sense of honor because they have been victims of rape, consider female babies dispensable, and generally relegate women to second-class citizenship, could care less about the crime of stalking. Despite stalking being an old behavior, it is only a crime in stable democracies, where the dignity of the person, regardless of gender, is a fundamental human right.

On the face of it, moreover, stalking is extremely bizarre behavior. Why would someone continue to pursue another when it was clear that their attention was unwanted? And why would he or she continue to do so in the face of continuous rejection and the interference of third parties? When I first became interested in stalking, I published a paper entitled, “Unrequited love and the wish to kill” (Meloy, 1989). In those days – a year before the first stalking law in the US was passed in California – my interest focused upon the psychodynamics of the stalker, and the extreme paradox encoded in the culture in such phrases as, “you only hurt the one you love.” Why do most murders occur between individuals who know each other quite well, if not intimately? Why was there such violence within interpersonal relationships, and most readily in marriage? Why is prior sexually intimate stalking so frequently accompanied by violence? What was this phenomenon my friend Lenore Walker (1984) was researching, the “battered wife syndrome?” And what sense did it make that serial murderers typically selected victims that were strangers, or at most, casual acquaintances – instead of intimates?

And then I began to read John Bowlby, the great British psychoanalyst who discovered attachment, and developed attachment theory, and I knew that the partial answer to my questions was swimming in this psychobiological undercurrent called attachment. A universal aspect of virtually all mammals, including most members of our species, attachment is often invisible unless threatened: we don’t consciously feel attached to others all the time, yet when those with whom we are bonded reject us, leave, are injured, or die, we are consumed by very intense feelings, often captured by the word grief. And if we cannot grieve our losses, we can be consumed by our grievances, and act violently toward those who have rejected us, or with whom we cannot attach despite our best efforts because they do not want us around anymore. This new crime, stalking, was fundamentally a psychopathology
of attachment. Subsequent research would test this idea and find empirical support for it (MacKenzie, Mullen, Ogloff, McEwan, & James, 2008).

Yet, it is not just actual relationships that can foster stalking. The force of fantasy (Person, 1995) is endemic in some cases of stalking, particularly when the target is a public figure. And it should come as no surprise that more than 80% of public figure stalkers have a major mental disorder, a replicated finding in both North America, Australia, and various European countries (Hoffmann, Meloy, & Sheridan, 2014). What is remarkable is the power of internal fantasy to both conjure intense longings for a relationship with a public figure, and often intense feelings of rejection and betrayal when that public figure has violated the “narcissistic linking fantasy” of the stalker, on occasion leading to targeted violence. Such internal states of mind are likely similar within cultures, but the variation across cultures brings me back to the importance of this volume.

Drs. Chan and Sheridan have assembled a world-class group of researchers and writers who elucidate in detail the demographics of international stalking, the variations in the suffering of victims across countries, the usefulness of typologies of stalking, the nexus between stalking and cyberstalking – highlighting the need to criminalize unwanted pursuit in both the virtual and terrestrial worlds, the tenacious work to politically advance efforts to criminalize stalking, and the existence of three fine European programs for the treatment of both stalking victims and perpetrators.

This book does not belong on everyone’s bookshelf. But it does belong on everyone’s desk, open for reading and reflection, whether a newcomer to the field or an experienced researcher into the dark recesses of this ubiquitous crime.

J. Reid Meloy, PhD
Forensic Psychologist
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
University of California, San Diego
Editor, The Psychology of Stalking

REFERENCES


INTRODUCTION

Stalking is a serious global problem that has attracted considerable interest from academics, practitioners, policy makers, and the general public. Despite its recognition as a ubiquitous offending behavior, there are still much to be learned about this phenomenon. Most knowledge on stalking is accumulated from studies conducted in only a handful of countries (e.g., Australia, the UK, and the US). Very limited research has been conducted in populations outside Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies (see Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010). It is only in recent years that there has been an increase in the number of stalking studies conducted within non-WEIRD populations (e.g., Chan & Sheridan, 2017 on Hong Kongers; Matos et al., 2019 on Portuguese; Sheridan, Arianayagam, & Chan, 2018 on Singaporeans) and comparisons across different countries and cultures (e.g., Sheridan, Scott, & Roberts, 2016 on 12 countries). Even though this is promising, there is still a lack of knowledge coming from under-researched populations, including Lithuania, South Africa,
Spain, Portugal, Germany, Denmark, Finland, and the Netherlands. Thus, the key purpose of this edited volume is not only to update research findings and best practice from the widely researched populations, but also to advance our knowledge of best practice and research conducted within those rarely studied populations.

**THE APPROACH ADOPTED IN THIS BOOK**

Numerous attempts to comprehend and explain crime were made long before criminology emerged as a distinct academic discipline. Similar to psychology, which grew from other disciplines such as philosophy, medicine, and physiology, the emergence of criminology also had its roots in other disciplines (Hollin, 2013), particularly in sociology. Criminology has traditionally been housed under sociology and most criminological theories are sociological in nature. Hayward (2005) observed that “Psychology and criminology emerged as distinct disciplines at a very similar historic moment—the latter half of the nineteenth century” (p. 110).

Put simply, psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes, while criminology is the scientific study of crime and criminals. Therefore, psychological criminology can be referred to as the convergence of psychology and criminology in that psychological criminology is concerned with the use of psychological knowledge to explain and describe (with the attempt to modify) criminal behavior (Chan & Ho, 2017; Hollin, 2012). By examining personality and social influences, this field of study focuses on individual offending behavior in terms of how the behavior is acquired, evoked, maintained, and modified (Bartol, 2002). In addition to considering societal-level influences, psychological criminology applies psychological theories to aid understanding of crime and criminals. Wortley (2011) postulated that psychological criminology largely addresses the question: “What is it about the individuals and their experiences that causes them to commit crime and/or to become criminal?” (p. 1).

This psycho-criminological approach to understanding crime and criminals is particularly relevant to the focus of this edited volume. In this book, we aim to explore the different aspects and dynamics of stalking behavior from a global perspective. The highlight of this edited work is the range of contributions to the comprehensive study of stalking behavior from more than a dozen countries, with most of the sampled populations coming from arguably under-researched regions (e.g., Lithuania, South Africa, Singapore, Denmark, Germany, and Spain).
Introduction

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

This edited collection on stalking behavior is written by experienced field practitioners and researchers from 14 countries. With a combined theoretical- and practical-oriented mode, this volume attempts to introduce readers to the core areas of research and practice in this field. This book is arguably the first to offer a global approach to discussing different topics on stalking perpetration and victimization, under three main themes: theories and research, national portraits, and policy and best practice.

With a total of 17 chapters, 6 chapters are structured under the first section on theories and research. In Chapter 1, Fissel and colleagues perform a meticulous review of the existing stalking and cyberstalking literature, with an emphasis on research published within the disciplines of criminology and victimology in the United States. Among other issues, concepts and definitions of stalking and cyberstalking victimization, recent prevalence estimates, and theoretically-grounded predictors of stalking and cyberstalking victimization are discussed. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research directions.

In Chapter 2, Ngo explores the racial differences among Asian, White, and Black victims in the United States in relation to prevalence, nature of stalking, and related coping strategies for stalking victimization. The literature has consistently identified that stalking is a correlate for severe and lethal interpersonal violence. Interpersonal violence victimization among Asian Americans, in general, appears to be seriously underreported in part due to their internalization of traditional sex-role expectations that tend to attribute greater stigma to victims of violence than to the offenders. A number of significant differences are found in this study among Asian, White, and Black victims in terms of the victim, offender, and incident characteristics.

Chapter 3, written by Laitinen and Nikupeteri, introduces a rarely examined perspective in ex-partner stalking—that is, the child’s perspective. The authors explore Finnish children’s experiences of parental ex-partner stalking, with an emphasis on cases where the father or stepfather stalks the mother. This chapter offers a general understanding of children’s experiences pertaining to their knowledge about parental stalking and what action that knowledge induces in them. Grounded by Giddens’s (1984) theorization of agency, five overlapping dimensions of children’s knowing agency are proposed based on the analysis of the experiences of 19 children—that is, adapting and withdrawing, vacillating, supportive and constructive, responsible and evaluating, and critical and change-seeking. Chapter 4 by Khader and Chan is written specifically on the cyberstalking phenomenon in
Singapore. The authors surveyed a total of 814 university and high-
school equivalent students on the frequency and type of cybervictim-
ization behaviors that they experienced, levels of perceived threat,
post-traumatic symptomology, coping strategies, and attitudes toward
future help-seeking avenues. With prevalence rates ranging from 27.7
to 55.5%, several significant findings are noted in this study.

In Chapter 5, McEwan and Davis synthesize the literature on the
use of different typologies in understanding and assessing stalking,
and statistically apply the three most commonly used typologies (i.e.,
Zona, Sharma, & Lane’s, 1993 typology; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell’s,
2000 motivational typology; and Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, &
Williams’s, 2006 RECON typology) to an Australian sample of stalkers.
The primary aim of this chapter is to inform practitioners on which
stalking classification system to use when assessing the risk of victim-
ization. In Chapter 6, Scott and colleagues discuss the findings of their
survey of 3,803 members of the public from Australia, the United
Kingdom, and the United States on their familiarity with, and under-
standing of, the respective stalking/harassment legislation in these dif-
ferent jurisdictions. Overall findings suggest that only a minority of
participants indicated that they were familiar with the legislation and
were able to provide information about their understanding of the leg-
islation. The authors conclude with a call to increase public under-
standing of legislation in order to increase the probability that victims
and those surrounding them are able to accurately identify their expe-
riences as stalking.

The next five chapters are organized under the section on national
portraits of stalking phenomena from Lithuania, Spain, Denmark,
Portugal, and South Africa. In Chapter 7, Laurinaityté and Michailovič
examine stalking perceptions, victimization, and anti-stalking
responses in the Lithuanian context. The authors first review
Lithuanian anti-stalking legal regulation and subsequently highlight
the available statistics on stalking. The chapter concludes with sugges-
tions on preventive responses to stalking victimization. Chapter 8,
written by Subirana-Malaret and colleagues, provides a distinctive
Spanish experience on stalking and intimate partner violence preven-
tion from the ecological and public health perspective. There was no
anti-stalking legislation in Spain until 2015. The authors argue that
violence prevention requires a complex and multisectoral response,
which should include governmental systems, health care institutions,
and community-based organizations.

Chapter 9 focuses on stalking in the Danish context. Larsen and col-
leagues from The Dansk Stalking Centre, a forerunner in providing
services to victims and offenders in stalking, introduce the prevalence
and nature of stalking as experienced in Denmark. These authors note
that it is important to distinguish the concepts and experiences of stalking, harassment, and conflict in order to ensure that the victims will receive the appropriate help and support in dealing with their victimization. In Chapter 10, Ferreira and Matos synthesize and critically review some of the national estimates on stalking victimization in Portugal, by analyzing national victimization surveys, studies conducted with specific populations, and official data from the justice system. The authors subsequently highlight difficulties and post-criminalization challenges in responding to stalking, and call for the need to maintain dynamic and up-to-date efforts to address and prevent stalking victimization. Finally, in Chapter 11, Labuschagne and Stollarz write on the stalking situation in South Africa. The authors review the current legal state of affairs by examining common-law and statutory options for combating stalking victimization in the absence of any anti-stalking legislation. The chapter concludes with three case studies to illustrate the different types of stalking incidents in South Africa.

The final section of the book, with six chapters, focuses on policy and best practice in dealing with stalking perpetration and victimization. In Chapter 12, Brandt and Voerman from the Netherlands National Police comprehensively discuss the approach adopted to policing stalking in the Dutch context. The Dutch version of Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH) is made available to police officers to assess the level of risk posed by the stalker. This 10-item checklist that includes an automated query, case screening, and prioritization is used along with case management with partner agencies when handling stalking cases. Chapter 13 by Strand is devoted to the discussion of the importance of fear as a victim vulnerability factor in assessing and managing stalking victimization. The chapter also introduces how Swedish police assess and manage the risk for further stalking victimization in conjunction with other related agencies (e.g., non-governmental organizations) from a rurality perspective.

In Chapter 14, Bartlett and Chan provide a meticulous review of the latest literature on legal developments relating to online harmful and threatening behavior, with a focus on the Australian and North American contexts. The authors highlight different online typologies, communities, and subcultures that are prone to problem behavior, and weaknesses in the current legal options and management practices. The chapter concludes with suggestions concerning effective strategies to address the issue and future research directions. Chapter 15 by Siepelmeyer and Ortiz-Müller is written to introduce the readers to a specialized community-based service center that offer psychosocial and psychotherapeutic counseling for stalking offenders and victims in Berlin, Germany. “Stop-Stalking” adopts an integrative approach that is grounded in
counseling concepts to help stalking offenders and victims via a structured modular program. To enhance program effectiveness, the center works in close collaboration with stakeholders, such as the police, public prosecution, courts, probation services, and mental health institutions.

Chapter 16, written by Henley and colleagues at the National Stalking Clinic in the United Kingdom, provides an overview of the Clinic’s development and fundamental approach adopted to assess individuals who have engaged in stalking behavior. A general finding of the analysis of the first 60 cases handled by the Clinic is provided, along with several case examples to illustrate the different approaches used in assessment and intervention. Finally, in Chapter 17, Larsen and colleagues build on their previous chapter to comprehensively discuss the services offered at their Danish Stalking Centre. Adopting a holistic and preventive approach, the Centre offers psychosocial and legal counseling and treatment to victims of stalking, their children, and next of kin. The Centre also engages in collaborative projects that primarily aim to enhance police responses to stalking cases and to develop cooperation models across police and municipalities.

EXPLORING THE GLOBAL PHENOMENON OF STALKING BEHAVIOR FROM A PSYCHO-CRIMINOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The primary objective of this book is to offer a combined theoretical-and practical-oriented text that explores the psycho-criminology of stalking behavior in a global sense. A key strength of this edited collection stems from the collective contributions of practitioners and academics in the field. Important messages are combined with valid and current case illustrations, and supported by empirical and theoretically-driven research findings; we envision that this edited volume could contribute significantly to advancing our knowledge of stalking behavior. Needless to say, such knowledge is a prerequisite for effective and timely intervention, be it offender threat assessment and management, victim and offender treatment strategies, or public and social policies to address this serious societal concern. In the words of Westen and Weinberger (2004):

Collaboration between clinicians [or practitioners] and researchers could substantially improve the quality of scientific research... The scientific mind and the clinician [or practitioner] mind can coexist, in a single field—indeed, in a single person—and that the dialectic between the two may be essential for a scientific [psycho-criminology].

(p. 610)
REFERENCES


Part I

Theories and Research