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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF A STALKER TYPOLOGY:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE STALKING CASE FILES OF THE
ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE**

By

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A Thesis

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Postdoctoral Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

In 1993, the Los Angeles Police Department, with the assistance of mental health professionals, constructed a stalker typology in order to understand the elements of stalking and implement an organizational paradigm for the management of these incidents (Zona, Sharma and Lane, 1993). The purpose of this study is to assess the relevance of this typology in a Canadian context. This research study conducts a Chi-square analysis on 152 stalking case files obtained from the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit. The results indicate that the majority of the Ontario stalking cases were consistent with the Zona typology. For the most part, the same variables found significant in the initial study were also significant in this study. However, there were a larger number of simple obsessional stalkers. It is this group that poses the greatest threat of violence to their victims, and this result emphasizes the need for early intervention and prevention on the part of the police. The Zona variables that were not found significant were the sexual orientation of the stalker, letter writing as a type of contact behaviour, attending the workplace of the victim, and the involvement of weapons. One of the difficulties associated with replicating the original study is the vague definitions of certain variables, and the lack of relevance of some variables to the Canadian context. Other limitations include the relatively small sample size of some of the stalker categories, and the large number of unknown variables due to insufficient information. The general application of this research study is to provide police with a more detailed analysis of stalkers and their victims. This information could contribute to more appropriate police responses in terms of the level and method of intervention, and would enable police to be better equipped to deal with the psychological trauma and physical violence suffered by stalking victims.

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INTRODUCTION

Until early 1990, there was a lack of information and critical understanding concerning the psychology of stalkers. This problem was first identified in the early 1980's following several incidents, the most notable of which was the death of actress Theresa Saldana. Since then, there have been several media reports of obsessed, often psychotic, fans presenting a threat to the lives of television and movie stars, as well as public figures. At this time, most citizens were generally unfamiliar with this phenomenon, and viewed these isolated incidents as reflecting the behaviour of relatively harmless individuals who repeatedly made unwanted attempts to contact a celebrity. Initially, it was assumed that the reasons for such contact were delusional beliefs, on the part of the stalker, that their victims were in love with them.

It would appear that the majority of the population, including mental health professionals, had minimal understanding as to why these individuals behaved in such a manner, and they did not comprehend the impact of this behaviour on the victim. Additionally, police agencies had little authority to intervene in these situations. All of this changed in 1989, as a result of the shooting death of actress Rebecca Schaeffer by an obsessed fan named Robert Bardo. This incident drew national attention to the phenomenon of stalking and prompted California to enact the first anti-stalking law in 1991. In doing so, these events were redefined as a social problem that had an impact on average citizens and the community at large.

Stalking is a complex issue that has only recently come to the forefront of our collective minds. Exactly what stalking is, who the stalkers are, and how to respond to stalking, has generated controversy within academic, mental health and legal professions. Mental health professionals namely, psychiatrists and related occupations such as forensic psychology are comprised of individuals who have influenced every aspect of our present Canadian judicial institutions from theories concerning the treatment of criminality, to the organization of courts and prisons, to the most specific decisions made by police officers, probation and parole officers, as well as judges. Of all the legal and clinical issues in which Canadian mental health professionals have been concerned with overtime, the prediction of dangerousness and the assessment of risk are the most notable.

In 1990, the Los Angeles Police Department (L.A.P.D.) established a Threat Management Unit in order to contend with the issue of stalkers. The intent of this unit was to become proactive in incidents dealing with stalking before they reached a tragic end. Its mission was to understand the elements of stalking and implement a new organizational paradigm for the management of these cases by police agencies (Zona, Sharma & Lane, 1993). This unit was organized to specifically handle those cases that involved stalking and their mandate was to utilize intervention as a means of preventing violence in those cases involving stalkers.

The L.A.P.D. Threat Management Unit, with the assistance of mental health professionals, constructed a profile that described pertinent case information along with a conceptual stalker typology to assess the dangerousness of stalkers. The result of this

endeavour was an article (Zona et al., 1993) that provided a comprehensive analysis of stalking and described three groups of stalkers: simple obsessional, erotomanic and love obsessional.

In 1995, the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) created a Threat Assessment Unit. Initially this unit functioned as an investigative aid with the purpose of conducting forensic analyses on identified cases involving offenders whose behaviour is indicative of an obsessional fascination with an identified victim. The applications for this type of analysis has since been expanded and applied to a wider variety of offences requiring threat assessment. However, stalking is still an important area of research within the scope of this unit.

Presently, the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit utilizes the typology constructed by Zona, Sharma, and Lane (1993) to identify the different stalker profiles and develop appropriate responses to these stalking incidents. However, this unit has found that not all of their stalking case files are applicable to this typology. Further, this study has not been replicated utilizing a Canadian population sample. Presently, the O.P.P. Threat Assessment unit merely postulates that their stalkers are similar in nature with the typology found utilizing a sample taken from the L.A.P.D. Threat Management Unit.

The purpose of this research study is to analyze the existing data on stalking cases assessed by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit and determine whether the characteristics of these stalkers are congruent with those identified by the L.A.P.D. Threat Management

Unit (Zona et al., 1993). This would describe the complexity and diversity of stalking behaviour in Ontario, and assist with the assessment of dangerousness and prediction of future violence directed towards victims in this province.

This research study sought to replicate the original Zona profiles utilizing a disparate population sample, in order to ascertain whether the stalking data in Ontario were congruent with the findings of the L.A.P.D. stalker population sample. Once it is determined to what extent this typology is reflective of stalkers in Ontario, this will allow proactive measures as a form of prevention in cases in which the stalker group identified was considered a risk for future violent behaviour.

Through an understanding of the characteristics of the stalker, their demographics, the absence or presence of a psychiatric illness, and the mode of stalking behaviour, this study would assist the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit by providing the necessary statistical compositions of each stalker group, which would aid in the identification of the stalker, and discern those groups of stalkers and victims who may be predisposed to future risks of violence. Through defining the various types of stalkers and modes of behaviour exhibited by stalkers within the province of Ontario we are better able to develop specific intervention measures to reduce the incidence of stalking and its impact on those victims.

The general application of this research study is to provide the O.P.P. with a more detailed analysis concerning the characteristics of stalkers and victims in Ontario. This

would assist the O.P.P. in determining whether the stalking typology currently used is an applicable classification system, and whether the appropriate intervention strategies are employed in these stalking incidents. Additionally, it is hoped that this research study would better enhance the ability of the O.P.P. to respond to stalking occurrences. This would be achieved through assisting the Threat Assessment Unit with the identification of the stalker, and defining the various mode of stalking behaviour, using characteristics that are empirically based and found to be statistically significant.

As previously stated, the intent of this research paper is to assess the application of the stalker typology developed by Zona and his colleagues to Ontario stalking cases (Zona et al., 1993). However, before commencing this endeavour the author first defined stalking from both academic and legal perspectives. Following this is a brief analysis of the development and current status of the Canadian legislation. In addition, the researcher examined the statistics in order to quantify the problem of stalking, reviewed police statistics related to criminal harassment, and briefly examined the predicted risks of violence that pertain to stalkers. The author then conducted a review of the stalking literature in order to develop an understanding of the various stalker typologies found within the research.

Following this comprehensive literature review, there is an examination of the stalker typology identified by those researchers who worked in conjunction with the L.A.P.D. (Zona et al., 1993). Afterwards, we analyzed this particular stalker typology and replicated the study using a forensic sample taken from an Ontario population of stalkers.

Following the presentation of the results is a discussion concerning future research on stalking, along with directives provided to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit, in order to improve upon their investigations involving stalkers.

CHAPTER ONE

STALKING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

DEFINITIONS

It is important to note the various ways in which stalking is defined since definitions from different as well as within disciplines reflect a variety of approaches to examining this phenomenon. For example, behavioural definitions are set forth to further scientific investigations and clinical understanding of the concept whereas, legal elements are utilized to define and prosecute criminal behaviours in a constitutionally acceptable manner.

Stalking is generally defined as an individual's persistent, and unwanted pursuit, or obsessional harassment of another individual, causing the victim to fear for their safety (Zona et al., 1993). Section 264 of the Criminal Code defines criminal harassment as engaging in conduct such as, repeatedly following, communicating, watching or besetting, and/or threatening another individual, which causes that individual to reasonably fear for their safety, or the safety of others (Martin's Criminal Code, 2000).

Stalking is a crime involving acts of pursuit towards an individual, which over time are threatening and potentially dangerous. While stalking behaviour may be manifested by seemingly benign gestures, such as gifts and letters that are apparently

symbols of the stalker's affection, the victim reacts in fear due to the stalker's inability, or unwillingness to accept the reality that the victim is uninterested in engaging in a relationship.

Stalking is a predatory and intrusive crime that involves a series of events, rather than one single incident. The term stalking is defined as “an abnormal or long term pattern of threat or harassment directed toward a specific individual” (Meloy & Gothard, 1995, p.259). A pattern of threat or harassment is defined as “more than one overt act of unwanted pursuit of the victim that was perceived by the victim as being harassing” (Meloy & Gothard, 1995, p.259). Often, it is difficult to recognize stalking since a specific behaviour alone may not appear threatening to an individual who is outside of the situation. However, when these behaviours of stalking are targeted towards a victim this pattern of harassment and threatening behaviour comprises criminal activity.

The legal definition of stalking has three elements: (1) an unwanted course of conduct of behavioural intrusion upon another individual, (2) an implicit or explicit threat that is evidenced in the pattern of behavioural intrusion, and (3) as a result of these behavioural intrusions, the individual who is threatened experiences fear (Meloy, 1998). In other words, stalking is “the willful, malicious, and repeated following and harassing of another person that threatens his or her safety” (Meloy & Gothard, 1995, p.258). One of the elements of the crime of stalking is often a credible threat, although it does not need to be overtly expressed and can simply be implied.

Victims of criminal harassment are typically women who are stalked by men in an attempt to either re-establish or initiate a relationship with them (Meloy, 1998). In most instances, victims range in age from 26 to 46 years, while stalkers are slightly older than their victim and are between 26 to 50 years old (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1997). Although there are incidents involving male victims of female stalkers these incidents are relatively rare. And finally, while some victims may have had a prior intimate relationship with their stalker, other victims may have had no meaningful contact with the stalker at all.

DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN LEGISLATION

In the United States, the California legislature passed the first anti-stalking law, Penal Code Section 646.9, which became effective January 1, 1991. By 1992, stalking or harassment laws were enacted in 30 other states within the United States. Today, there are now explicit stalking laws in all 50 states in the United States and at the federal level, the crime of stalking was signed into law in 1996 as part of the Violence Against Women Act (Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Public Law 103-322).

The attention that was devoted to stalking in the United States in the early 1990's was soon mirrored in Canada, largely as result of several highly publicized incidents involving murders of women who had been killed by their estranged male partners. In these instances, these women had been harassed and stalked by their former spouses prior to these murders. Also during this time, policy issues relating to the treatment of women

and children in Canada were in the public mind and in the political arena. Finally, a very high profile study was released (METRAC, 1993) that highlighted issues of violence against women, including concerns regarding stalking behaviour. All of these elements contributed to the development of initial attempts, which were ultimately revised and amended, to create the current anti-stalking legislation.

In April 1993, Bill 126 was first introduced to the House of Commons. This contained a number of legislative reforms intended to address family violence and violence against women, including criminal harassment. This legislation was in response to several highly publicized murders of women in Canada who had been killed by their estranged male partners. Prior to these murders, these women had been harassed and stalked by their former spouses. Additionally, legislative reforms in the United States in which anti-stalking laws were being enacted provided considerable fuel for this movement. These reforms were created in an attempt to prevent behaviour indicative of potential future harm, although this threatening behaviour might not otherwise amount to criminal activity (Pilon, 1993).

The proposed amendment to the Criminal Code that addressed the issue of criminal harassment made it an offence to “engage, either recklessly or with intent to harass, in specified conduct that causes that other person reasonably to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them” (Pilon, 1993, p. 9). This legislation sought to provide better protection to victims of criminal harassment since prior to the enactment of the legislation stalkers could only be charged with either; uttering threats, intimidation,

trespassing, indecent or harassing telephone calls, or assault by threatening.

These measures to deal with stalking behaviours were criticized for failing to protect victims, since stalkers had to either threaten, and/or physically harm these victims before any police action could be undertaken. Although there are a multitude of legislative measures available to the police, by the time the harassment has reached the stage where these can be invoked, the psychological damage to the victim has already occurred. Furthermore, harassing behaviour that was deemed not violent, such as repeatedly sending gifts and letters, and constantly following or watching another individual, could not be dealt with by the present legislation. As a result, Canadian criminal harassment legislation was introduced to bridge this gap and provide a means of intervention, to prevent the escalation of violence, and protect victims before the potential for physical harm by these stalkers had occurred.

CURRENT LEGISLATION ON STALKING

In Canada, the stalking law is defined as Criminal Harassment, Section 264 of the Criminal Code (See Appendix A), and this was proclaimed law on August 1, 1993. While the word “stalking” does not appear anywhere in the text of this section, it is clear that both the legislators and the public view this section as Canada’s anti-stalking law. The purpose of this legislation is to criminalize otherwise lawful individual acts that together, amounted to stalking in order to attempt to control this type of behaviour and intervene before it results in serious harm to the victim.

The intent of this legislation is to deter potential offenders by the threat of criminal prosecution, or incarceration, or through police intervention to prevent harassment and physical violence towards the victims. Criminal harassment was created to primarily strengthen the Criminal Code provisions that deal with violence against women, and family violence. Although the purpose of this legislation was to protect women who are threatened and harassed by estranged boyfriends or spouses, this law is broad enough to apply where the offender is a casual acquaintance or unknown to the victim.

Under Section 264, criminal harassment is viewed as a hybrid offence. This means that the Crown can elect to prosecute the offence by way of summary conviction or indictable. As a summary conviction, the maximum penalty is six months in prison, and \$2000.00 in monetary fines. As an indictable offence, the maximum penalty is imprisonment for five years.

One critique of the criminal harassment legislation concerns the overly vague and ambiguous wording, which does not provide detail regarding the exact nature of the prohibited behaviour, rather it provides a great deal of discretion in the hands of police agencies, the Crown, and the courts. This issue lends itself directly to the potential for false accusations since the evidence for stalking is usually based solely on the victim's testimony. Consequently, spouses who are involved in marital or child custody disputes may abuse this law. In cases such as these, a bitter spouse may resort to reporting a false allegation of criminal harassment, and since these laws carry stiff penalties for the

offender, while it provides protection for the victim, those who were falsely accused would have much to overcome in order to become exonerated.

The criminal harassment legislation is viewed by most individuals who work within the criminal justice system as being a significant improvement over previous mechanisms for prosecuting stalkers (Pilon, 1993). It is generally seen as having the potential to be effective since it encompasses the range of behaviours of concern to victims of harassment, and it enables the Crown to invoke the broader context of the relationship between the stalker and the victim in building their case. In addition, the criminal harassment law has focused on the broader issue of violence directed towards women in Canada. The emotional effect that stalkers have upon their victims plays an increasingly important role in the judicial system since responses are in part based on the degree of emotional distress caused to the victim. This law takes into account the complaints of fear, insecurity, or the general anxiety of the victims involved in these matters.

The stalking legislation aims to end this pattern of behaviour before it escalates, or leads to physical violence directed towards the victim. Consequently, it attempts to intervene before a stalker's intent to commit a violent crime, such as sexual assault, or murder occurs. Unfortunately stalkers do not simply fade away. Their continued actions can, and in some cases do, lead to murder or serious injury. Therefore strong stalking legislation, if properly utilized, could prevent tragedies from occurring. Legislators need to realize that by enacting tough stalking laws, they will enable police agencies to intervene before these cases turn into homicides or serious bodily injury is inflicted on the

victim or those surrounding the victim.

Legislators have responded to our society's intolerance for criminal harassment by naming it a criminal offence. However, as with any crime, legislation cannot prevent its occurrence. Although stalking behaviour may not be new to our society, it is new to the legal system. Consequently, increased knowledge of the nature and extent of criminal harassment would assist mental health professionals and police agencies through better comprehension and response to this issue. One of the most important factors to consider is that the victims of stalkers can only be protected if the police agencies are adequately resourced and trained to implement the new legislation since merely enacting the law will do little to protect these victims of violence.

STATISTICS TO QUANTIFY THE PROBLEM

Since the introduction of the criminal harassment legislation in 1993, the number of reported incidents has increased (Statistics Canada, 1999). Although increases such as these are not uncommon following the introduction of new legislation, it is difficult to discern whether this increase is a result of an actual rise in the number of criminal harassment cases in Canada, an increased willingness on the part of the victims to report these incidents, a change in the way police agencies record these matters, or some combination of these above noted factors.

Until recently, there was scarce data to illustrate the incidence and prevalence of stalking. In 1997, Tjaden and Thoennes reported the results of a telephone survey that used a United States national probability sample comprised of 8,000 men and 8,000 women regarding their experiences with stalking. This report found that 8 percent of adult females and 2 percent of adult males in the U.S. have been stalked sometime during their lives.

As a result of the findings, it is estimated that 1 million adult women and 400,000 adult men are stalked annually in the U.S. This research also found 50 percent of all stalking victims reported this incident to police, and 25 percent of these reports resulted in an arrest. However, only 12 percent of all reported stalking cases resulted in criminal prosecution within the U. S. judicial system. This research study demonstrates that many incidents of stalking do not result in criminal justice intervention and relatively few result in criminal prosecution.

In 1996, San Diego, California had an adult female population of approximately one million. There were only 45 cases of stalking prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office (Meloy, 1998). If the United States national prevalence data is applied, which indicates 1 percent of adult women have been stalked in the preceding 12 months then of the 10,000 women stalked in San Diego County in 1996, only 0.45 percent of the offenders were arrested and prosecuted for stalking. Unfortunately at this time there is no data available from victimization surveys taken from other countries to describe a national victim population.

POLICE STATISTICS

Statistics Canada (1998) published a report that detailed characteristics of incidents involving criminal harassment. This research study was based on data collected from 169 police agencies in six provinces, and represents only 46 percent of the national volume of crime in Canada. Consequently, this study may not be a representative sample of the Canadian population. Further, this research study only reflects those cases involving criminal harassment that were reported to police agencies and does not take into account any unreported stalking incidents.

This study found that there was 5,376 reports of stalking in Canada and 40 percent of these reported cases were cleared by charges laid against the offender (Statistics Canada, 1998). In 32 percent of the incidents charges were not cleared, 18 percent of the victims declined to lay charges against the offender. In 27 percent of these cases, this lack of cooperation involved male victims who were stalked by their former female spouse. In 6 percent of the cases police officer discretion was utilized that resulted in charges not laid against the offender. Finally, 4 percent of the cases were cleared otherwise. This Statistics Canada definition would include the death of the accused or victim, pertained to matters beyond the control of the police agency such as the accused was committed to a mental facility, residing in a foreign country, had diplomatic immunity, or was under 12 years of age.

Statistics Canada (1998) also found that females comprised 78 percent of the victims who were stalked. By comparison, females represented 50 percent of victims involved in all violent incidents. This demonstrates that the majority of criminal harassment victims are women. In 37 percent of these cases, former or estranged spouses stalked female victims, and 25 percent of these stalkers were an acquaintance. This research study also noted that 15 percent of the stalkers were friends, 10 percent were strangers, 4 percent comprised a family member, and 4 percent of the stalkers were business associates. And finally, in 4 percent of these criminal harassment incidents, in which women were the victims, the identity of the stalker was unknown. As a result, it would appear that the majority of victims of criminal harassment are women, and the largest proportion of these stalkers are former or estranged male partners.

The remaining 22 percent of the victims in this Statistics Canada (1998) study were comprised of males. In 46 percent of these incidents, an acquaintance stalked male victims whereas, in 13 percent of these cases, the stalker was a former or estranged spouse. This study also found that 11 percent of the stalkers were strangers, 10 percent were business associates, 8 percent were friends, and 8 percent of the stalkers involved a family member. Finally, in 6 percent of these reported stalking incidents, in which the victims involved men, the identity of the stalker was not known.

These police statistics obtained from Statistics Canada (1998) present a brief overview of the issue of criminal harassment within a Canadian context and illustrate some of the characteristics of these stalking victims.

PREDICTED RISKS OF VIOLENCE

As a result of the increased attention to the stalking phenomenon, behavioural forensic researchers began to examine the possibility of learning to predict which stalking incidents will result in violence. Considerable research has since been done in the area of risk prediction, and it is now common practice that many different types of offenders undergo a threat assessment evaluation. For example, the largest Canadian assessment centre is the Metropolitan Toronto Forensic Service (METFORS). This forensic clinic was established specifically to conduct court-ordered assessments regarding criminal responsibility, fitness to stand trial, dangerousness, and related issues that are relevant to the criminal and psychiatric disposition of accused individuals.

Risk assessments have also been applied to stalkers and research has been undertaken in an attempt to develop risk prediction models based on offender characteristics and associated behaviour. Although recent research has demonstrated flaws with this prediction technique, it is still implemented due to an absence of any other proven method of prediction (Menzies et al., 1994).

Predictions of violence in any research study vary and are dependent on the definition of violence applied to the stalking sample, the classification of stalkers, the relationship between the stalkers and victims, the duration of the harassment and the effectiveness of intervention by mental health professionals and police agencies (Meloy, 1998). However, variables concerning the probability of violence in a group of stalkers

may be quite distinct from risk factors that would predict violence in any single case.

Stalking research has indicated that physical violence is most likely directed toward the victim, and the second target is the individual who is perceived by the stalker as interfering with their access to the victim (Meissner, 1978). In 1996, Meloy found that intervention by third parties, to help or protect the victim, might increase the risk of violence since it implies to the stalker the existence of another interpersonal relationship. This triangulation may increase the risk of violence since this third party represents a threat to the stalker and the result may be a displacement of rage away from the rejecting object and onto a third party. Consequently, mental health professionals and police agencies must realize that their involvement as a third party may triangulate the stalking situation since attempts made to deter the stalker may actually increase the risk of violence.

Stalking violence is likely to be an affective, rather than a predatory mode of violence. These two types of violence have received substantial research and represent two biologically distinctive modes of violence in mammals (Meloy, 1997; Meloy, 1988). Affective violence is the common aggression we observe between individuals who are violent and preceded by heightened autonomic arousal, accompanied by anger, fear and is a reaction to an immediate perceived threat. In incidents of stalking, the threat is often perceived as rejection.

Predatory violence is planned, purposeful and emotionless. It is not preceded by heightened autonomic arousal, and in cases of stalking the intent is likely control, intimidation, or devaluation of the victim. This type of violence is rare in incidents of stalking, and most do not result in injury to the victim. Studies of predatory violence in cases of stalking have correlated significantly with psychopathology on the part of the stalker (Meloy, 1997; Meloy, 1988).

According to Statistics Canada, only 5 percent of criminal harassment incidents reported to police agencies resulted in victims suffering physical injury (Kong, 1996). Moreover, this study found that victims who did endure assault at the hands of the stalker did not report grievous bodily harm. In other words, the assault was considered to fall on the low end of the scale of the legal definition specifically, level one in which case there are no lasting physical effects. However, the absence of physical harm does not mean that no harm is done.

Wallace and Silverman (1996) found that stalking can affect the emotional and physical well being of the victim and their reactions to criminal harassment may vary, ranging from no effect to severe reactions such as depression, substance abuse, and phobic anxiety. In this study, some of the individuals who had experienced criminal harassment exhibited behavioural, emotional and cognitive reactions that were similar to those individuals who had experienced physical trauma. Consequently, research suggests that victims of criminal harassment may experience depressive symptoms and the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (Pathe & Mullen, 1997).

The important factor to note is that the issue is not whether the victim incurred physical harm by the stalker rather, we must take steps to protect our victims since in most instances it is the quality of life that is reduced and may be permanently affected. This tends to be one of the repercussions of stalking, which is not surprising given the invasive nature it has on the lives of its victims.

Homicide or attempted murder occurs in less than 1 percent of the reported stalking incidents (Kong, 1996). This number does not include those cases in which stalking had preceded the homicide and the victim had not reported this matter to their respective police agency. In 1991, a research study on domestic violence found that there were 551 women killed by intimates in Ontario between the years 1974 and 1990. While a lack of detail in the police reports made it difficult to create statistical data, these findings suggested that stalking might have been a precursor since victims had been threatened by their intimates or former spouses prior to the homicide in 80 percent of these cases (Cornish et al., 1999).

While there is a lack of statistical data on criminal harassment in Canada, its link to domestic violence provides some insight into its prevalence. In Canada, it is estimated that 1 in 10 women are assaulted by their present or estranged spouse, and in 1991, there were 120 women killed by their current or former partner (Cornish et al., 1999). Consequently, stalking appears to be one aspect of a larger pattern of domestic violence.

In those incidents in which the victim had been stalked prior to the homicide or attempted murder, the offender was known to the victim, usually a prior sexual intimate, and the weapon of choice was a firearm or knife (Zona et al., 1993). Research studies of weapons in incidents of stalking have received little attention. However, the studies that have been conducted (Menzies et al., 1995; Garrod et al., 1995; Zona et al., 1993) found that both threats with weapons and weapons use were unusual. When a weapon was used it rarely resulted in physical injury to the victim instead, these weapons were used to control and intimidate, rather than injure the victim.

On a final note, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) was quoted as stating, “neither psychiatrists nor anyone else has reliably demonstrated an ability to predict long-term future violence or dangerousness” (American Psychiatric Association, 1974, p.20). However, research studies have found that short-term dangerousness was shown to be more accurately predictable (Monahan, 1981). Since then, psychological studies dealing with predictions of dangerousness have evolved and refined their practices. Although violence cannot be predicted with certainty, researchers are aware that a history of physical violence committed by an individual is an indicator of future acts of physical violence committed by them (Fritz, 1995; Meloy, 1997; Monahan & Steadman, 1994). Consequently, risk assessments have become common practice among mental health professionals and this has been applied to a wide variety of crimes as a basis for criminal justice decisions.

THE DIFFERENT STALKER TYPOLOGIES

Stalking research has evolved beyond the psychiatric study of erotomania and the psychological study of sexual harassment. Several early case studies discussed the involvement of erotomaniac individuals within the criminal justice system (Goldstein, 1978; Noone & Cockhill, 1987). Due to the obsessive nature of erotomania, individuals with this disorder frequently displayed stalking behaviours. Alternately, early psychological research focused only on the stalking behaviours and labelled these behaviours sexual harassment.

None of these studies addressed aggravated stalking. In 1993, Zona, Sharma and Lane conducted a study that combined erotomania research and psychological harassment research. The result of this study found three groups of stalkers: simple obsessional, erotomania, and love obsessional. This research study provided the first comprehensive analysis of the demographic and clinical characteristics of criminal harassment.

Most of the research conducted on stalking has focused on examining particular characteristics of stalkers. This has typically been done by a comparison of stalkers with other offenders, or through a comparison of different types of stalkers in order to determine categories of stalkers. The intention of these research studies is to discern certain characteristics of stalkers such as, the presence of a particular mental disorder, their demographic background, the mode of stalking behaviour exhibited, and their relationship with the victim, in order to establish a classification of stalkers.

There is scant empirical research on stalking. A review of the stalking literature identified only four research studies that have described the characteristics of stalkers, and categorized stalkers based on these variables (Harmon et al., 1995; Kienlen, Birmingham, Solberg, Regan & Meloy, 1997; Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Zona et al., 1993). This review found only one research study that constructed a victim typology based on incidents of stalking (Meloy, 1996). And finally, one study was found that constructed seven distinct stalker types. However, this work was not based on empirical data (Sapp, 1995).

In 1995, Sapp hypothesized that stalkers could be classified into seven categories: the random target stalker, the celebrity stalker, the single-issue stalker, the casual acquaintance stalker, the co-worker stalker, the intimate partner stalker, and the domestic violence stalker. This typology was based on a review of media articles involving stalkers. One of the issues with this study is that the typology was created using media articles. Consequently, the data is questionable concerning its accuracy with respect to its depiction, account of the events, and details surrounding the incidents of stalking. Third hand information is not an accurate account of the facts. As previously stated, this study is problematic since this typology was not empirically tested.

In 1996, Meloy conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on stalking, utilizing data compiled from 10 empirical studies. In this study, he discussed the various methods utilized to classify the victim and stalker relationship, and noted that the current systems lead to confusion. As a result of his study, Meloy suggested that in order to

rectify the ambiguity, victims should be assigned to groups, not stalkers. He argued that victims could be classified, based on their relationship with the stalker, to one of three plausible categories: prior acquaintances, prior sexual intimates, and complete strangers.

However, the suggestion from Meloy may cause further confusion since the terms prior acquaintance and prior sexual intimate are ambiguous, and may exclude the victim and stalker relationships that would otherwise be included in the proposed typology. For example, the term acquaintance does not differentiate between professional relationships, friendships or neighbours. Similarly, the designation of prior sexual intimate implies that the victim and stalker had engaged in sexual intercourse. This implication may not be accurate with respect to relationships in which the victim and stalker had merely dated and sexual relations had not occurred. This classification system does not take into account the degree of intimacy involved in the relationship.

The following two empirical studies concentrated primarily on the stalking behaviour rather than determining the characteristics of the stalkers. Dietz et al. (1991) conducted a correlational study to ascertain whether a relationship existed between letter writing and subsequent approach behaviour. One benefit of this study was that their goal, to verify whether certain letter writing characteristics could be associated with approaching the victim, provided valuable information to those professionals who deal with stalkers. This research study found a significant variety in both writers and the content of their correspondence. However, their focus on topography, which analyzes the type of paper on which these letters were written, was not a useful indication since

stalking is a behaviour that can manifest in literally limitless ways.

Fremouw et al. (1997) conducted a research study that sought to determine the prevalence of stalking behaviour in a university population, as well as its impact on stalking victims. This study demonstrated a surprisingly high prevalence of stalking. What was found problematic with this research project, however, is the fact that the population was limited to a university population, and therefore not a representative sample of the general population. Furthermore, it is limited in its reliability since the data is from victim self-report questionnaires. And finally, this study does not provide any information pertaining to why stalking behaviours occur.

The remaining empirical studies of stalking sought to discern distinguishing features of stalkers by either creating categories of stalkers and comparing them, or through a comparison of stalkers with other populations. Meloy and Gothard (1995) analyzed psychiatric and legal records of 20 stalkers and 30 randomly selected mentally disordered offenders from the San Diego County Superior Court's Forensic Evaluation Unit. Although the authors did not propose a classification system for this study, they did analyze the victim and stalker relationship, which consisted of former spouses, former intimates, and strangers. This clinical study found that 55 percent of the stalker sample had prior relationships with their victims. Forty percent of these victims were former intimates, while the remaining 15 percent comprised former spouses. And finally, 45 percent of the stalkers were strangers to their victims.

This study also found a diagnosis of schizophrenia was significantly less common in the stalker group, as compared with the mentally disordered offenders. Stalkers were also less likely to have a diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder. The fact that no particular diagnosis was found specific to these stalkers demonstrates the overall diversity of the stalker population. However, the sample size for this study was problematic since it was too small for a representative sample of the stalker and criminal populations. Keep in mind that knowing which disorder is prevalent in stalkers does not necessarily advise us why these individuals engage in this behaviour. If this were the situation then all individuals suffering from the same mental disorder would display the same behaviours.

Kienlen et al. (1997) conducted a study in which stalkers were separated into two categories namely, those with psychotic, or those with non-psychotic views of reality. This is a more useful distinction since it avoids the necessity of making fine distinctions between diagnoses and the presence of a psychosis is easier to determine. However, it should be addressed that this was a retrospective study making the validity of this determination of a psychosis is problematic. Furthermore, it is not clear from this study what criteria were utilized to arrive at their conclusion.

In the Harmon et al. (1995) study, the authors analyzed the records of 48 individuals who were charged with harassment. These cases were classified into a two-dimensional typology: affectionate/amourous or persecutory/angry. This is based on the offender's motivations for stalking, as well as the nature of the victim/stalker relationship. These relationships were then further divided into six categories specifically: personal,

professional, employment, media, acquaintance, and no relationship. This study found 71 percent of the stalking cases involved prior relationships. Thirteen percent had personal or romantic relations, 25 percent had professional relationships, 25 percent had employment relationships, and 8 percent were merely acquaintances.

One of the issues noted with this study, as indicated by the authors, is perceptions and emotions that stalkers direct towards their victim often changes over time (Mullen & Pathe, 1994; National Institute of Justice, 1993). For example, a stalker who initially is infatuated with the victim, who would place them in the affectionate/amourous group, may become vindictive, if repeatedly rebuffed, which would then place them into the persecutory/angry group. This study is problematic in its classification scheme since these categories are not static.

One of the problems concerning stalking research is a lack of agreement regarding the terms and definitions used to refer to stalking. A second problem found in the research studies occurs when stalkers are assigned to different categories based on some classification scheme. Often, it was found that the criterion used to establish these typologies was unclear, which made the interpretation of the findings ambiguous (Harmon et al., 1995; Kienlen et al., 1997; Meloy, 1996). The third issue pertains to the classification of stalkers based on non-empirical evidence (Sapp, 1995). It is imperative that studies dealing with stalking have demonstrative statistical validation, since the dangers lie in the likelihood that these stated typologies could be viewed as definitive categories. Consequently, decisions or assumptions by mental health professionals and

police agencies could be made based on this information.

THE ZONA, SHARMA AND LANE STUDY

In 1993, a study by Zona, Sharma and Lane analyzed 74 stalking cases from the L.A.P.D. Threat Management Unit and classified stalkers into three categories: simple, obsessive, erotomania, and love obsessive, based on the nature of the stalker's obsession. These researchers identified 7 cases of erotomania, 32 incidents that fulfilled the criteria for the love obsessive group, and 35 stalking cases belonged to the simple obsessive category.

There was a total of 5,994 pieces of information collected in their database and this generated 81 categories or fields for evaluation. This developed profile was over-inclusive since it was the intent of the researchers to capture some included categories, which may be found to be significant, without having any prior knowledge of their usefulness. This was especially evident in the categories involving medical and psychiatric history. From the information contained in the database, this study identified several significant variables related to the demographics of the victim and the stalker, whether the stalker suffered a psychiatric illness, and the mode of stalking manifested. This research project demonstrated that these characteristics were significantly different for each type of stalker profile.

The stalking case files were divided into simple obsessional, erotomania, and love obsessional. Both the erotomania and love obsessional groups had only brief, if any, contact with their victims. The erotomania group held delusions that their victims were passionately in love with them. The difference between these two groups is that the love obsessional stalkers did not believe that their victims passionately loved them. However, they did hold delusions that if their victims were given the opportunity to know them, they would then fall in love with them. The simple obsessional group was different from the other groups in that a prior relationship existed between the stalker and the victim. Often, these were romantic relationships that had ended and left the stalker feeling mistreated or wronged by the victim.

Table 1 illustrates the results of the statistical analyses conducted on the background information of the victims. Zona, Sharma and Lane (1993) found that gender and age were the only significant variables that related to the demographics of the victims. In 71 percent of the erotomania cases, the victims were a male and generally older. The average age of victims in the erotomaniac group was 42 years. The findings for the love obsessional group indicate that in 93 percent of the cases, the victim was a female whose average age was 34 years. The victims in the love obsessional category were much younger than those in the erotomaniac group. And, 71 percent of the cases involved female victims in the simple obsessional group, with an average age of 41 years. Overall, victims were women in 74 percent of stalking case files.

TABLE 1

Age and Gender of Victims			
	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>
Gender:			
Male	71%, 5/7	7%, 2/32	29%, 10/35
Female	29%, 2/7	93%, 30/32	71%, 25/35
Average age of Victim (In years)	41.7	34.1	41.4

TABLE 2

Gender, Age and Origin of Stalkers			
	<i>Erotomania</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>
Gender:			
Male	14%, 1/7	88%, 28/32	57%, 20/35
Female	86%, 6/7	12%, 4/32	40%, 14/35
Average age of subject: (In years)	34.6	35.3	34.7
Foreign Born:	43%, 3/7	3%, 1/32	5%, 2/35
Sexual Orientation:			
Hetero	57%, 4/7	50%, 16/32	51%, 18/35
Homo	14%, 1/7	3%, /32	9%, 3/35
Bisex	29%, 2/7	3%, 1/32	0%
Unknown	0%	44%, 14/32	40%, 14/35
Marital Status:			
Single	72%, 5/7	41%, 13/32	29%, 10/35
Div/Sep	14%, 1/7	3%, 1/32	5%, 2/35
Married	14%, 1/7	6%, 2/32	0%
Unknown	0%	50%, 16/32	66%, 23/35

Table 2 presents the results of this research study that examined several demographic characteristics of the stalker: the gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, and whether the individual was foreign born. The findings in this study indicated that the stalker demographics inversely matched the victims. In 86 percent of the erotomaniac case files the stalkers were female, while in 88 percent of the love obsessional case the stalkers were males. And finally, in 71 percent of the simple obsessional group the stalkers were male. The results of this study found that there was little age difference among the stalkers of each typology. The average age for these stalkers was 35 years.

In this extensive group study of erotomaniac, love obsessional, and simple obsessional stalkers, one significant, and surprising variable found was whether the individual was foreign born. Although the findings were not significant for the love obsessional and simple obsessional groups, 3 percent and 5 percent respectively, in the erotomaniac group the stalker was foreign born in 43 percent of the cases evaluated.

Zona, Sharma, and Lane (1993) broke the characteristics related to sexual orientation and marital status into subgroups. Sexual orientation was divided into four categories: heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and unknown. Marital status was also further broken down into four plausible groups: single, divorced or separated, married, and unknown. One of the apparent problems noted with this subdivision is that a common law relationship is not acknowledged in this classification. The married category should have included common law as a selected criterion. The study found 43 percent of the erotomania stalkers were either homosexual or bisexual, and 86 percent

was either single or divorced. However, these differences were not found to be statistically significant.

This research study also assessed stalkers based on psychiatric and temporal features such as, an identified major mental illness, known drug and/or alcohol abuse, known pursuit of other victims, the duration of the obsession, and the duration of the contact. Table 3 presents the findings of these variables with respect to each of the stalker groups. Erotomanics suffer from a major mental illness that is classified in the DSM IV as one of the delusional disorders (See Appendix B). Consequently, this study found that all erotomaniac stalkers suffered from a major mental illness, 37 percent of the love obsessional stalkers, and 40 percent of the simple obsessional stalkers also demonstrated evidence of a psychiatric illness. Although this finding was significant, the presence of a major mental illness was not known in 50 percent of the love obsessional and 17 percent of the simple obsessional groups.

The Zona et al. (1993) study found 43 percent of the erotomanics had a documented drug and/or alcohol abuse problem. In both the love obsessional and simple obsessional cases there was a high proportion of unknowns pertaining to this variable. Therefore, whether this characteristic is significant with respect to these two categories is unknown. This study found 14 percent of the erotomaniac stalkers, and 15 percent of the love obsessional stalkers had pursued another victim prior to the present one. There was no positive documented history of this variable noted for the simple obsessional typology.

TABLE 3

Subject Psychiatric and Temporal Features

	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>
<i>Major Mental Illness:</i>			
Yes	100%, 7/7	37%, 12/32	40%, 14/35
No	0%	13%, 14/32	43%, 15/35
Unknown	0%	50%, 16/32	17%, 6/35
<i>Known Drug/Alcohol Abuse:</i>	43%, 3/7	9%, 3/32	2%, 1/35
<i>Known Family History of Pursuit:</i>	0%	3%, 1/32	0%
<i>Identification with other stalkers:</i>	0%	3%, 1/32	0%
<i>Known Pursuit of others:</i>	14%, 1/7	15%, 5/32	0%
<i>Duration of obsession: (In months)</i>	125	146	*
<i>Duration of contact: (In months)</i>	19	9.7	5.1

* Information was not collected

The two temporal features that were assessed regarding the stalker pertain to the duration of the obsession, and the duration of the contact. This research study found that the duration of obsession for both the erotomaniac and love obsessional groups was quite lengthy. In the erotomania cases, the average duration of the obsession was 125 months. Similarly, in the love obsessional group the average duration of the obsession lasted 146 months. There was no information collected regarding the duration of the obsession for the simple obsessional stalkers. What is interesting to note is the average duration of the contact for the erotomaniac group was 19 months long, twice as long as love obsessional stalkers, who on average, remained in contact with their victims for 10 months. The average duration of the contact for the simple obsession group was 5 months.

Table 4 illustrates the remaining variables that pertain to the mode of stalking behaviour manifested by the stalkers of each group. These characteristics include the type of contact made, firearms involvement, verbal or implied threats, destruction of property, and physical harm. The type of contact made by the stalkers was further subdivided into several categories: letters, telephone, facsimile, work location visited, stalking, residence visited, and physical approach. This research study found that there were significant differences in the types of contact in each of the three categories. In 85 percent of the erotomaniac group, stalkers contacted their victims by telephone. Only 40 percent of the love obsessional, and 65 percent of the simple obsessional stalkers engaged in telephone contact.

TABLE 4

Subject Contact Behaviour			
	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>
<i>Contact Behaviour:</i>			
<i>Letters</i>	100%, 7/7	81%, 26/32	34%, 12/35
<i>Telephone</i>	85%, 6/7	40%, 13/32	65%, 23/35
<i>Work location</i>	43%, 3/7	31%, 10/32	31%, 11/35
<i>Stalking</i>	43%, 4/7	21%, 7/32	28%, 10/35
<i>Home location</i>	71%, 5/7	21%, 7/32	34%, 12/35
<i>Approach</i>	15%, 1/7	12%, 4/32	22%, 8/35
<i>Firearms involved</i>	0%	16%, 5/32	9%, 3/35
<i>Threats made</i>	57%, 4/7	18%, 18/32	65%, 23/35
<i>Destruction of property</i>	0%	3%, 1/32	14%, 5/35
<i>Physical Harm</i>	0%	0%	6%, 2/35

In this study all erotomaniac stalkers wrote to their victims. There were also significant findings with respect to the mode of contact behaviour manifested by the stalkers. In the love obsessional group, 81 percent of stalkers wrote letters, but only 34 percent of the simple obsessional stalkers utilized this method of contact with their victims. Facsimile transmission was another significant variable found in the study: 14 percent of the erotomaniac group, and 6 percent of the love obsessional stalkers displayed this type of contact.

Zona et al. (1993) did not find any significant differences in either the location visits or home visits among the three groups. In fact, 43 percent of the erotomaniac stalkers, 31 percent of the love obsessional, and 31 percent of the simple obsessional stalkers made location or worksite visits. However, there were differences found between the three groups with respect to the residence visits made by the stalkers. This study found that 71 percent of erotomaniac stalkers had made visits to their victim's residence whereas, only 21 percent of the love obsessional and 34 percent of the simple obsessional stalkers made visits to their victim's home.

The final type of contact behaviour assessed pertains to the physical approach of the stalker to make direct contact with the victim. In all the stalker groups this characteristic was not significantly high. Only 15 percent of the erotomaniac stalkers, 12 percent of the love obsessional group, and in 22 percent of the simple obsessional cases did the stalkers make person-to-person contact.

The four remaining variables, which pertain to the mode of stalking behaviour used by stalkers, involve firearms, threats, the destruction of property, and physical harm. In the erotomaniac group, there was no documented evidence to suggest that firearms were a factor, and none of these stalkers possessed a registered weapon. In 16 percent of the love obsessional and only 9 percent of the simple obsessional cases, there was either mention of a firearm, or there was one registered to the stalker.

There were significant differences found between the three categories based on whether the stalkers made threats towards their victims. In 65 percent of the simple obsessional group, and 57 percent of the erotomaniac stalkers, threats were made. However, only 18 percent of the love obsessional stalkers threatened their victims. Furthermore, this study found none of the stalkers from the erotomaniac group followed through on their threats, which was measured by both physical harm and destruction of the victim's property.

And finally, Zona et al. (1993) found that only one of the love obsessional stalkers acted on the threats made to destroy the victim's property. However, none of these stalkers physically assaulted their victims. The simple obsessional typology was the only group in which the stalkers had physically harmed their victims. This study found that 4 percent of these stalkers had assaulted their victims and 14 percent had destroyed the victim's property.

FURTHER RESEARCH ON THE STALKER TYPOLOGY

As previously mentioned, based on the type of obsession Zona et al. (1993) identified three distinct groups of obsessional subjects in their sample: love obsessional, erotomania, and simple obsessional (See Figure 1). The findings of this study revealed that within each, there exist different victim/subject profiles, motivations and directed patterns of harassment, and/or threatening behaviours exhibited by stalkers. Most of the research on stalking is grounded in the theoretical framework created by Zona and his colleagues. We will now examine this typology in more detail, and discuss the current research that has further defined each stalker category.

1. SIMPLE OBSESSIONAL

The simple obsessional type (See Figure 1) involves cases in which the victim and the stalker know one another. The findings of the Zona et al. (1993) study revealed that 47 percent of the 74 cases were identified as simple obsessional stalkers, and the majority of these cases involved prior romantic relationships between the victim and the stalker. These are the most common incidents of stalking, and the most dangerous (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). Although celebrity and stranger stalking have received the most attention, it appears that a majority of stalkers pursue prior sexual intimates (Meloy, 1998). The simple obsessional stalkers were also found to have the highest rates of substance abuse and personality disorders (Zona et al., 1996).

FIGURE 1

THE ZONA TYPOLOGY

Simple Obsessional Stalkers

- These stalkers are predominately male.
- The victims tend to be female.
- There is usually a prior relationship between the stalker and victim.
- The stalker's motive is often to continue or re-establish the relationship.
- This is the most common type of stalker.
- These stalkers are the most volatile and have the highest risk for violence.

Love Obsessional Stalkers

- These stalkers are usually men, who are strangers to their victims.
- They tend to engage in obscene, frequent letters and hang-up telephone calls.
- Stalkers harass their victims to make them aware of the stalker's existence.

Erotomania

- These stalkers are usually female.
- The victims tend to be men, who have a high social status (i.e., famous or rich).
- There is usually no prior relationship.
- This is the only stalker category classified in the DSM IV (Delusional Disorder).
- These stalkers falsely believe that their victims are in love with them.
- These types of stalkers tend to engage in a long-term campaign of harassment.

The simple obsessional category had the shortest duration of stalking, and was the most volatile of the three groups, displaying the highest rates of property damage and physical harm. Since these stalkers know their victims personally, they directly confront their victims more often, and are more dangerous than the love obsessional and erotomanic groups (Zona et al., 1996). About half of all stalkers eventually threaten their victims, and this number increases in likelihood if there was a prior intimate relationship (Zona et al., 1993). However, it was found that 75 percent of threats were not followed through with actual physical violence (Meloy, 1996). Paradoxically, a few studies found that some stalkers who had never threatened the victim suddenly and unexpectedly became assaultive (Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Mullen & Pathe, 1994).

The majority of simple obsessional stalkers are male (Statistics Canada, 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1997). Although these cases do not always involve an intimate relationship, a significant number are the outgrowth of these relationships, such as an ex-spouse or ex-dating partner (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). In many instances, simple obsessional stalking is an extension of domestic violence, in that there was violence during the relationship and the stalking involves a campaign of harassment, intimidation, and mental terrorism as a result of the disintegration of the alliance (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). The stalker's motive may be to coerce the victim back into a relationship or simply to seek revenge by making the victim's life miserable.

The self-esteem of simple obsessional stalkers is often related to the relationship they had with their partner (Meloy, 1998). In many instances, these stalkers bolster their

own self-esteem by dominating and intimidating the victim. Exercising power over the victim enables them to feel a sense of power in a world in which they feel powerless. Consequently, the victim literally becomes the stalker's primary source of self-esteem, and the stalker's greatest fear is the loss of this individual. It is exactly this dynamic that makes simple obsessional stalkers most dangerous. Incidents of stalking that emerge from domestic violence situations constitute the most common, and potentially lethal group of stalkers since domestic violence victims who leave an abusive relationship run a higher risk of being murdered by their partners (Coleman, 1997).

In contrast to the domestic violence cases, many relationships involve nothing more than brief dating, with one of the partners deciding to end the contact. The dissolution of these relationships is not always the result of abusive behaviour rather; they are based on incompatibility. In certain situations one partner may have an unrealistically high degree of emotional investment in the relationship and becomes angered as a result of a loss of control, an attack on their self-image, or a sense of mistreatment (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). Significant personality disorders would then exacerbate the reaction of this individual and their behaviour may become manifested by stalking and/or threatening the victim.

The other major category of simple obsessional cases involves non-intimate situations that often occur in the work environment. The common occurrences of stalking within the workplace involve an employee, usually male, who attempts to establish a personal relationship with a co-worker and his advances are rejected (Meloy, 1998).

Similar to the dating relationship, these individuals continue to force themselves on the victim to the point where, having not been successful, their adoration turns to anger and a pattern of stalking begins.

A variety of other non-intimate relationships exist within the simple obsessional category. The largest group involves individuals who had some prior professional relationship, such as a physician-patient, psychotherapist-client, teacher-student, and other similar relations. Other non-intimate groups include neighbours, schoolmates, roommates, friends, individuals who dated the same person such as, a former girlfriend stalking the new girlfriend of her ex-boyfriend, and other acquaintances (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). These stalkers may either be pursuing an intimate relationship with the victim, or they are seeking revenge for some real or imagined act of mistreatment (Harmon, Rosner, & Owens, 1995).

2. LOVE OBSESSIONAL

These cases are characterized by the absence of an existing relationship between the stalker and the victim (See Figure 1). Often times, the victims are only known through the media, including radio, television, and motion pictures celebrities. Incidents in which the victim is an ordinary individual who falls prey to this type of stalker are rare. The most common type of love obsessional stalker is one who focuses on a celebrity or public figure (Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998).

The vast majority of love obsessional stalkers suffer from schizophrenia or a bipolar disorder (Meloy, 1996). Regardless of the specific disorder, nearly all of them display some delusional thought patterns and behaviours. Most are socially maladjusted, and have seldom been involved in a meaningful intimate relationship. These individuals retreat to a life of fantasy relationships with individuals they hardly know. They believe that they can make the object of their affection love them, and desperately want to establish a personal relationship with their victim. However, when the victim refuses to respond to the stalker as desired then the stalker may attempt to force the victim to comply through threats or intimidation.

3. EROTOMANIC

These incidents are distinct from the love obsessional ones since the stalker delusionally believes that the victim loves them (See Figure 1). The theme of this category often concerns itself with idealized love and “spiritual union” rather than sexual attraction. Erotomaniac individuals are convinced that the object of their attention, who is usually someone of the opposite gender, fervently loves them and would return the affection if it were not for some external influence.

Although erotomania is very rare in the general population, these individuals are the most noted stalkers in the media realm. Erotomaniac individuals have received much media attention, especially those who are “celebrity stalkers” or “obsessed fans”, and it would erroneously appear that this typology is the most prominent. Despite the public

and media perception, the majority of erotomaniac victims are not public figures. The most unique feature of erotomania is that the majority of these stalkers are female (Meloy, 1996; Zona, Palarea, & Lane, 1998). One study has suggested that chronic failures in social and sexual relationships during young adulthood may be a precursor in the development of erotomaniac symptomatology (Meloy, 1996).

Mullen and Pathe (1994) found the average age for erotomaniac individuals was 44 years old. Harmon et al., (1995) found in their study that the average age was 40 years. These studies demonstrate that these stalkers tend to be significantly older than a comparison group of criminal offenders (Meloy and Gothard, 1995). The majority of these victims are of higher socioeconomic status or fame, which conveys a feeling of importance to the erotomaniac stalkers who are often lonely, socially isolated individuals (Segal, 1989; Meloy 1990). The victims, or object of love, are typically involved in the political, athletic, or entertainment industry. Although these stalkers can be aggressive in their pursuit to contact their victims, research findings have indicated that these cases are not likely to result in any physical harm to the victim (Zona et al., 1993).

CHAPTER TWO

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

THE ROLE OF POLICE

Traditionally, police activities were focused on apprehending and prosecuting a violent offender after they had committed an offence. In most circumstances, the primary responsibility of police officers is to determine whether a crime has occurred, conduct an investigation to identify and apprehend the offender, and gather evidence to assist the crown attorney with the criminal trial. However, when police officers are presented with information concerning a possible future violent crime, their responsibilities, authority, and investigative aids are less clear.

In incidents of anticipated violence, police officers must be proactive in their investigation. These investigators must be resourceful, creative, flexible, tactful, strategic, and considerate in their endeavours. They need to assume several non-traditional roles, and be prepared to confront a wide range of human dynamics, from obsessed or psychotic individuals to reluctant, and traumatized victims. This poses practical constraints for police investigators since they must deal with the myriad of variables and dynamics that constitute criminal harassment, and this often requires an understanding of human behaviour beyond that of the layperson. Consequently, police agencies initially sought assistance from mental health professionals to contend with

incidents of criminal harassment and from this working alliance developed threat assessment units.

The term threat assessment is used to describe the set of investigative and operational techniques utilized by police agencies to identify, assess, and manage the risks of targeted violence and potential offenders. The prediction of violence is, at best, a complicated exercise. Presently, only a few North American police agencies staff full-time threat assessment or threat management units. These units have mandates ranging from complete investigation and management of the complaint, to only supportive roles for threat analysts. Most act as a resource for those police agencies without their own threat assessment unit, or as part of a support network in conjunction with other agencies within the community.

Some threat assessment units, such as the L.A.P.D. Threat Management Unit, have gained considerable expertise in the management of criminal harassment cases. Others, such as the Washington Capitol Police's Threat Assessment Unit specialize in the threat assessment and protection of elected congressional representatives. The O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit utilizes a multidisciplinary evaluation process combining police experience, criminal profiling, and correctional experience, with input from a forensic psychiatrist to evaluate dangerousness.

Threat assessments can assist in determining the likelihood of violence in a given set of circumstances. Police agencies and mental health professionals utilize different

threat assessment processes, however all share several common features. The process utilized by the O.P.P. involves reviewing observable personality traits of the stalker, as well as the victim, and the situational indicators of their stability. Factors of the stalker that are considered include the gender, age, relationship to the victim, propensity for violence, weapons experience, substance abuse issues, psychiatric history, medical information, changes in behavioural patterns, personal stability, and suicidal or homicidal ideation.

Other variables of the stalker that are considered when assessing the risk of violence include empathy, employment status, self-image, personal insight into problems, and their personal concept of dangerousness. It should be mentioned that the amount of specific background information available on an identified or unknown stalker affects the scope, accuracy, and effectiveness of the threat assessment.

Another factor that must be taken into consideration, which affects the degree of police intervention and implementation of proactive measures, involves the sophistication of the victims, whether they have dependent children, their level of fear, vulnerability, financial ability, and personal tolerance for the criminal harassment behaviours.

The personal circumstance of the stalker, such as recent termination of employment, marital separation or infidelity, or child access proceedings may affect their conduct, and must be taken into consideration. The most useful variable to threat analysts are the previous reactions stalkers had to stressors in their lives.

Once this information has been collected, these risk indicators are evaluated individually, and in combination on either a risk-enhancing or risk-reducing basis. They are then compared to other situations where violence has occurred in order to express an opinion on the likelihood of violence occurring, and the stalker's likely response to stressful incidents. As previously mentioned, the most reliable indicator in threat assessment is that future violence is predicted based on past behaviour.

Human behaviour is often difficult to interpret when examined through emotional filters, some of which may be external to the investigator and some internal, such as their previous experiences or personal biases. Consequently, threat analysts utilize a continuum approach to assist with ranking the risk indicators by dangerousness. These factors are considered on a scale of one through ten, to gauge their severity. This analysis of human behaviour attempts to provide a more in depth, or organized and comprehensive understanding of the causes of criminal harassment, and the behavioural, motivational, and personality characteristics of stalkers. This insight can assist the decision-making process in the investigation and management of criminal harassment cases.

A typology of stalkers provides a general description of traits, characteristics and modus operandi. The dimensions and risk indicators such as the relationship between the stalker and victim, the mental health of the stalker, and their potential for violence, are considerations for incidents of criminal harassment and are the key component to categorizing, classifying and understanding stalkers (Dietz, 1985). The Zona typology, developed in conjunction with the L.A.P.D., is the one utilized as a theoretical framework

in threat assessments by both the O.P.P. and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It is imperative to mention that the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit utilizes this typology since this unit was modeled after and trained by members of the L.A.P.D. Threat Management Unit, and further this study provides a comprehensive analysis of criminal stalking that had empirical evidence to support this theory.

There are four fundamental principles that underlie threat assessment investigation and management. The first principle is that violence is a process, as well as an act. Violent behaviour does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, a careful analysis of violent incidents demonstrates that violent acts often reflect the accumulation of long-developing, identifiable problems, conflicts, disputes, and failures.

The second assumption on which threat assessment is grounded is that violence is the product of an interaction among three variables namely; (1) an individual who engages in violent action, (2) a stimulus that leads the subject to believe that the solution to their problem is violence, and (3) a setting that permits or facilitates the violence, or does not prevent it from occurring.

A key to the investigation and resolution of threat assessment cases is the identification of the subject's "attack-related" behaviour. This principle believes that individuals who partake in targeted acts of violence engage in discrete behaviours that precede the incident, and are linked to these attacks. Consequently, these individuals consider, plan, and prepare prior to engaging in these violent actions.

The final principle that is the premise of threat assessment is that threatening situations are more likely to be successfully investigated and managed if other agencies and systems, such as courts, probation services, corrections, social services, victim services, and mental health communities assist with solving the problems presented by each case.

Finally, it should be pointed out that threat assessment officers create a network that acts towards a common goal by involving other agencies, coordinating their efforts, educating and facilitating safety plans. This assists victims in becoming self-reliant and maximizes the likelihood of preventing future violence, while decreasing the workload of the initial investigating officer. This translates into an efficient use of time, an appropriate use of resources, and is consistent with the principles of community policing, and the most recent trend towards the rights of victims.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized quantitative research techniques to describe the various types of stalkers, their demographic and social profile, and the mode of stalking behaviour manifested. The focus of the typology is primarily on the nature of the relationship between the stalker and their victim.

SUBJECTS

This research project is an application of the stalker typology constructed by Zona, Sharma, and Lane (1993) using 152 forensic stalking case files taken from the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit. This unit was designed to handle cases in which an individual establishes an obsessional pattern of threat or harassment directed towards a specific individual. All of the identified stalkers in this study were defined as “obsessional” in their pursuit. The term obsessional refers to “persistent ideas, thoughts, impulses, or images that result inevitably, in some act in relation to the victim” (Zona et al., 1993, p. 897). A pattern or threat of harassment was defined as “more than one overt act of unwanted pursuit of the victim that was perceived by the victim as being harassing” (Meloy & Gothard, 1995, p. 259).

When a stalking incident is referred to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit, an analyst initially screens the case and if the pattern of harassment meets the definition for being obsessional in nature then it becomes formally opened as one of their investigations. Consequently, only those case files that were officially opened by the Threat Assessment Unit for investigation were included in this particular research study.

Once the Threat Assessment Unit decides to assess a particular stalking incident, it is issued a numeric case file number. These control numbers begin with the last two digits of the year, followed by three numbers to indicate the sequential receipt of the file, and finally the number 30, which denotes this case file specific to the Threat Assessment

Unit. For example, if a case file is received in January 1995, and this is the second official file opened for that particular year, then the control number for that Threat Assessment Unit case would be registered as 95-002-30.

The Threat Assessment Unit stalkers, or subjects, provided an ideal population for this study since most police agencies within the province of Ontario submit their cases to this particular unit for assessment and assistance with respect to potential threats directed towards victims by these subjects. There were no active participants involved in this study, and none of the participants were aware of this project since the data was collected after the Threat Assessment Unit completed their assessment and had provided assistance to the victims.

The participants in this study involved only those victims who requested police intervention, as well as their perpetrators. Specifically, those police agencies that decided the victim was at such risk, that the case file was subsequently forwarded to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit for analysis and assistance. Consequently, the results of this study were skewed to the more severe end of the spectrum since only those stalkers from a high-risk population were selected. This sample is not representative of all stalkers.

Before the Threat Assessment Unit receives a stalking case file, there are a few assumptions that must first be met. First, there is the assumption that a stalker exists whose obsessional behaviour is directed towards a particular victim. Although this would appear an obvious assumption, there are reported cases of stalking in which further

investigation revealed that the victim had constructed an elaborate scenario to falsely report they were being stalked. This phenomenon has been denoted as false victimization syndrome.

The second assumption involves a victim who deems the stalker is threatening enough to warrant bringing this matter to the attention of the police. The behaviour of the stalker must cause the victim to feel threatened for their safety, or the safety of others. Research studies have found in many instances, victims do not report criminal matters to police agencies, and criminal harassment is not exempted from this rule (McCann, 2000; Statistics Canada, 1997; Tjaden, 1997).

Often times, victims are too intimidated to report these matters to police agencies for fear of retaliation or an escalation of violence directed towards them by the stalker (Westrup et al., 1999; Meloy, 1998). The victim must weigh the costs and benefits associated with reporting this crime before this matter is brought to the attention of a police agency. This research study only pertains to those victims who reported being stalked to their respective police agencies. Consequently, this population sample was not representative of all victims who endure criminal harassment.

Not only is a lack of reported stalking cases an issue, there are also problems associated with police agencies who do not conduct thorough investigations, thereby dismissing valid allegations of criminal harassment made by victims. This study only concerned itself with stalking case files received by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit

and as a result, it negates those that were not submitted, due to human error, or neglect on the part of the investigating officer. One of the most obvious criteria that must be met, pertains to the investigating officer who must deem that the criminal harassment allegation made by the victim is legitimate, warrants a criminal investigation, as well as assistance from the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit.

The investigating officer must consider the stalker capable of committing a future act of violence towards the victim, and this would therefore necessitate assistance from the Threat Assessment Unit. In some circumstances, the investigating officer may decide to divert the stalker and issue a warning, instead of laying charges. Police officer discretion is an important criterion to mention since this study is based on those stalking incidents in which the investigating officers subsequently involved the Threat Assessment Unit with their criminal investigation. This study only dealt with those reported cases of criminal harassment that were serious in nature and required police intervention as a form of prevention, in order to protect the victim.

The number of reported stalking cases across the province of Ontario is greater than the actual number of case files submitted to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit for their analysis and assistance (Statistics Canada, 1998). This is important to mention since there is no mandate that requires police agencies to report serious cases involving stalkers to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit. Consequently, this decision is based solely on the opinion of the investigating officer. Each police officer conducting an investigation has several options and/or resources available to them, and the O.P.P. Threat Assessment

Unit is just one tool to assist the investigator however, its utilization is not at present a mandatory requirement.

The mandate of the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit is to offer assistance to various police agencies in the management of all incidents that have a potential for violence. Some of the investigations undertaken by this unit include: stalking by known and unknown offenders, threats to political, judicial officials and celebrities, high-risk offender releases, sexual offenders, threatening correspondence, and domestic assault.

In order to collect the stalking data for this research study, a photocopy was made of the master control files for every year since June 1995, the inception of the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit, up to (and including) December 1999. The master control file is a database that briefly outlines every investigation that is commenced. The information noted on the master control file contains the occurrence number followed by the name of the subject involved, the name of the investigating officer, the analyst assigned to the incident, the surname of the victim, and the primary type of offence.

To accomplish the task of collecting only the pertinent stalking cases, several other files had to be reviewed in order to determine whether they were relevant to this research study. All case files that were classified as domestic assault or threats, had to be read to ensure that stalking did not comprise part of the incident. Although a case file is deemed as a threatening or domestic assault occurrence, stalking may have been a secondary classification. However, this would not have been evident since only primary

classifications were noted on the master control file list. If, after reviewing the file the incident also met the criteria for stalking then the case was included in this research study.

There were nine stalking case files that were not located. Although the researcher collected the data in a meticulous manner, these missing reports were not found. Consequently, they could not be included in the present study. One plausible reason for these missing files could be due to human error in placing these files in the incorrect location. Since each stalking incident is assigned a case file number, it is quite possible that these files were placed in the wrong location.

Another stalking incident was excluded from this study due to insufficient information. This specific case was submitted from an outside source, not an investigating officer, and the victim disclosed little information since she had been involved in a homosexual relationship with the stalker and was fearful of repercussions that would affect her career. The O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit provided the victim with verbal advice. However, this case file was not included in the present research study. The population sample in this research study may not be representative of homosexual relationships since victims often feel uncomfortable disclosing criminal harassment to police agencies due to their sexual orientation.

After a thorough review of all plausible case files, this study subsequently amassed information from 152 stalking incidents that occurred between 1995 and 1999,

within the province of Ontario. These cases were submitted by Ontario police agencies requesting analysis and assistance from the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit with respect to a potential threat by a subject towards a specific victim.

Once all relevant files had been collected, another number was written beside the master control file photocopy. Each case was assigned a number beginning with the digit one and this was issued in a random, sequential order, ending with the numeric digit 152. The new number that was assigned to the case file was also denoted as such on the corresponding questionnaire that was completed for each stalking incident. As a result, the anonymity of the subjects and victims in this research project was maintained, and none of the participants were identified.

PROCEDURE

After each stalking case file had been designated a new number, a preliminary review of the file was made to enable the researcher to assign the case to one of the three stalking groups, if applicable, based upon the nature of the obsession of the subject. As previously mentioned, the original Zona study identified three types of stalkers: erotomania, simple obsessional, and love obsessional (See Figure 1). Erotomania is the delusional belief that another individual, who is usually of higher socioeconomic status and/or an unattainable public figure, loves them. It is important to note that in these circumstances there is no prior relationship between the stalker and the victim.

Erotomania has been deemed a delusional disorder and is classified in the DSM IV as a major mental illness (See Appendix B).

Love obsessional, on the other hand, occurs when the stalker is a stranger to the victim but is obsessed with them, and subsequently harasses the victim in order to make them aware of the stalker's existence. In most circumstances, the victims are only known through the media, such as, radio, television, and motion picture celebrities. This category differentiates itself from erotomania since the subject does not have the delusional belief that the victim is in love with them. However, it should be noted that the subject believes that the victim would love them, if given the opportunity.

The last group identified is denoted as simple obsessional. Unlike the erotomania and love obsessional categories, there exists a prior relationship between the subject and the victim. This prior relationship varies in degree from an ex-spouse, ex-lover, acquaintance, former employee, or neighbour. In all cases, the simple obsessional category is characterized by a relationship that has ended and the subject has a perception of mistreatment, which in turn begins a campaign of harassment either to rectify the situation, or to seek some form of retribution.

After the researcher accomplished the task of assigning each case file to one of the three noted stalking groups then a two-page checklist was completed for each stalking incident. On the first page of the questionnaire, the researcher wrote the new designated file number. This page sought to determine which stalker category suited that particular

case file. There were four plausible responses: erotomania, love obsessive, simple obsessive, and other. This was based on the relationship between the stalker and the victim. After the researcher determined which category befitted each stalking case file, then a checkmark was placed beside that particular typology.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Once the obsessive groups were determined, several characteristics pertaining to the stalker, victim, and mode of stalking behaviour manifested were extrapolated utilizing a specified checklist. This instrument (See Appendix C) contained variables that were deemed significant based on the findings of the Zona, Sharma and Lane study (1993). There were three plausible responses for each variable namely; “yes” which indicates agreement or the presence of the specific characteristic, “no” for disagreement or the lack of a particular variable, or “unknown”. For each stalking case file, the researcher accounted for each variable denoted on this list.

It should be noted that the majority of the significant variables that were found in the original Zona study (1993) were replicated however, there were a few amendments made. Some of the variables that comprised the original research study were excluded, while other variables, deemed important by this author, were added to the checklist. Each of these characteristics was addressed and explanations are provided as to why these changes were required. Further, the definitions of some of the variables were modified and reasons are also provided with respect to each of these amended items.

A limitation that should be indicated is that the data gathered was dependent solely on the information disclosed within each case file. Some of the files were more detailed and contained more information than others. This was especially evident in those cases forwarded and subsequently investigated by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit, which had been received from Probation and Parole. On a couple of occasions, the original police report was not contained within the stalking case file. However, all of the cases received from Probation and Parole included ample information on the subject such as a psychiatric assessment or evaluation.

Most of the stalking case files did not include written statements taken from the subjects. Consequently, the information extracted from the cases relied heavily on the reports disclosed by the victim and the investigating officer. And finally, it must be stipulated that the information ascertained is accurate only for the time period in which the data was collected since this is not static and may change due to new circumstances such as the mental status of the subject, or their behaviour towards the victim.

Included on the first page of the questionnaire were two variables pertaining exclusively to the victim. The first variable determined the gender of the victim. In order to continue with the same pattern utilized for the other variables in this checklist, which is an indication of either a “yes”, “no”, or “unknown” response, this question inquired as to whether the gender of the victim was male. This was not to slant the output of this study, and in fact, it has no bearing on the findings. However, this format did assist in the simplification of the questionnaire created, along with the ease of inputting the raw data

into the SPSS computer database. The age of the victim was the second characteristic included on the checklist and this information was indicated in years.

On the second page of the questionnaire the same variables for the victims specifically, gender and age were also ascertained for the subjects. This procedure was similar in the collection of data as the description noted for the victims. Another characteristic of inquiry was whether or not the subject was foreign born. Although the category foreign born is interpreted in several manners, the author in this study determined this variable based solely on the subject's place of birth. The reason this definition was selected was due to the availability of information contained within the stalking case files. As notations with regards to residency were unavailable, it was not possible for the researcher to include this as a consideration.

Although marital status was a variable in the original Zona study (1993), this characteristic was not included in the present study. The primary reason for this exclusion was due to insufficient information contained within a majority of the stalking case files. For example, in several of the stalking incidents, in which there was dissolution of the relationship between the subject and the victim, there was no indication of the marital status of these subjects.

The majority of information obtained from these case files is self-explanatory, however there are a few exceptions. The presence of a mental illness was assessed by a review of the complete file. Any mention of suffering a clinical diagnosis of a mental

illness, or prior stay at a psychiatric facility was considered a positive “yes”. In addition, when reviewing letters written by the subject and it appeared that they were suffering from psychotic thinking, made clear mention of hallucinations, or disorganized thought processes then these subjects were also marked positive as suffering from a mental illness. However, it should be noted that this attribution of a mental illness is not a formal medical diagnosis and instead these behavioural disturbances were subjective attributions made by the researcher.

The only variable that was added to this questionnaire, which was not included in the original Zona study (1993), is a history of previous acts of violence. This characteristic is important since it is utilized to predict future violence. Although violence cannot be predicted with certainty, advances in this area now permit a more accurate assessment of risk factors for future violent behaviour (Meloy, 1997; Menzies et al., 1995; Monahan & Steadman, 1994). However, it should be pointed out that the notion of a history of violence is usually operationalized to focus on previous engagement in acts of violence by an offender and does not take into consideration the past experiences the offender may have encountered as a victim of violence.

Consequently, this study should find that those subjects with a history of violence would be more apt to engage in violence directed towards their victims. Most individuals who engage in stalking behaviours will not be violent towards their victims. However, it is important to distinguish variables that are indicative of future violent behaviour in order to intervene in these circumstances to prevent harm to these victims.

Another characteristic pertaining to the subjects involved known drug and/or alcohol abuse. This variable was somewhat ambiguous and subjective since abuse has several different degrees and definitions. For the purposes of this study, if there was sufficient information that indicated the subject had consumed alcohol and/or drugs when stalking the victim then the subject was deemed positive for abusing the substance. It should be noted that the presence of alcohol and/or drugs may be indicative of an apparent facilitator of stalking behaviour however, does not necessarily dictate a causal factor.

Two variables that were excluded from the questionnaire, which had been included in the original Zona study (1993), were known family history of pursuit and identification with other stalkers. The reason for this exclusion was due to a lack of information contained within the stalking case files.

Another characteristic on the checklist pertained to whether the subject pursued other victims. If the subject was in pursuit of more than one victim, or there was information indicating that the subject had previously pursued another victim, then a checkmark was indicated in the “yes” column.

The next two variables namely, the duration of obsession and the duration of contact have been modified from the initial study (Zona et al., 1993). The duration of the obsession was not clearly defined within the scope of the published research article, and would be problematic to determine based solely on information provided by victims. In

order to avoid any ambiguity, and to allow more flexibility, this category was changed to the duration of the harassment, which is based on either disclosure made from the subject or victim. The duration of the harassment was indicated in months.

The second variable that was modified from the original Zona study (1993) is the duration of contact. Again, this term was not defined in the initial research study, and was changed to the duration of the relationship, which pertains to the length of the relationship between the subject and the victim prior to the harassment. As earlier mentioned, the marital status of the subject was not included in the present study due to insufficient disclosure. However, this factor enabled the current study to determine whether there were significant differences between the stalker types based on the existence of a prior intimate relationship between the subject and victim, and whether the duration of the relationship was statistically significant.

This checklist contained several variables that focused on types of contact made by the subject namely, through letters or e-mail, via the telephone, attending the workplace of the victim, attending the victim's residence, watching or besetting the victim, and physically approaching or confronting the victim. Contact with the victim was indicated by a mark in the "yes" column, if the subject attempted these types of communication.

One of the variables from the original Zona study is firearm involvement. This research study expanded this characteristic to include weapons involvement. The reason

for this modification was due to differences in firearm legislation hence, ownership and accessibility to firearms in Canada as compared with United States standards. In Canada, firearm ownership and misuse is significantly lower than in the United States (Statistics Canada, 1998). Consequently, this study expanded the definition of firearm involvement to include weapons in order to capture a larger number of stalking cases that met this criterion. Otherwise, this study would not have been able to test for the significance of this variable due to the small number of stalking cases that involved a firearm.

The definition of weapons includes firearms, knives, or any other tool or device that could be utilized by the subject to inflict bodily harm on the victim. Weapons involvement was indicated as “yes” in the column if the subject either owned a firearm, admitted to, or mentioned possession of a firearm, and had made threats to the victim to cause bodily harm to themselves, the victim, or a third party with the use of one of the noted objects such as, a firearm, knife, scalpel, or baton.

Another variable involves threats made by the subject towards the victim. This characteristic was noted as “yes” in this category if the subject made a specific threat against the victim, property that belonged to the victim, or a third party of the victim such as a relative, friend, or spouse. It should also be mentioned that not only were explicit threats deemed positive on the checklist, so were implied threats. The notion of implied threats refers to declarations of a threat that are perceived by the victim. Consequently, this term is a subjective interpretation made by the victim.

The last two subject characteristics included in the checklist pertain to whether the victim incurred any destruction of property or physical harm at the hands of the subject. The destruction of property variable was deemed included and marked “yes” if the victim indicated that the subject had destroyed any property that belonged to the them, or a third party associate such as a relative, friend, or spouse. And finally, the characteristic physical harm was considered positive if the victim had disclosed that the subject had assaulted them, or a third party associate such as a relative, friend, or spouse.

Once all of the raw data was collected from each of the stalking case files then it was translated into computer form for compilation. A Chi-square analysis was then performed on the nominal data to determine the statistical significance of the composition of each stalker group, and a comparison was conducted of the similarities and differences between the categories. The Chi-square statistic was utilized to assess the significance of the proposed hypotheses in the original Zona study. Since this study entailed the collection of categorical data, the most appropriate analysis is the Chi-square test of significance (Norusis, 1997; Jackson, 1995). This statistical analysis examines the frequency of equal categories to determine whether or not there are statistically significant differences between them.

The statistical analysis was conducted in the following manner. First, the focus was on the victims of each stalker group to determine the gender of the victims and their respective ages. Next, the gender and age of the subjects was analyzed to determine if there was a significant correlation between these variables with respect to each stalker

category. Other characteristics analyzed were whether the subject was foreign born, their sexual orientation, presence of mental illness, history of violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, and whether the subject pursued other victims.

Two temporal features of the subject also analyzed were the duration of the relationship, and the duration of the harassment to determine the statistical relevance. The types of contact initiated by the subject were taken into account to demonstrate significant findings, or a lack thereof. The content of this communication was also analyzed to determine the following. Whether subjects mentioned weapons and/or owned firearms, if subjects threatened to destroy property that belonged to the victim and/or a third party, and whether the subjects threatened to physically harm the victim and/or a third party associate. Finally, this study analyzed the data to determine whether these subjects followed through on their threats to destroy property that belonged to the victim and/or a third party, and/or physically harmed their victims and/or a third party associated to them.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

This study analyzed stalking cases submitted to the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit between 1995 and 1999. Each file was reviewed and classified based on the quality of the subject's obsession. A Chi-square analysis was conducted on the stalking data to determine whether there were significant similarities or differences between these groups. Following the presentation of the results, this study reflected on the findings of the original Zona study to determine whether a replication of the study had produced a similar outcome. And finally, there is a discussion of the limitations of the current research, suggestions for future research on stalking, along with directives to improve upon the investigations of obsessional subjects by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit.

We should commence with an obvious difference between these two studies namely, that the present study required the inclusion of an "other" group in the classification schemata, as an alternate option to the three noted categories in the original Zona study (erotomania, simple obsessional, and love obsessional). This residual group was included since a preliminary review of the data demonstrated that the relationship between the subject and victim was not always covered by one of the three designated groups.

An example of this other category included an incident in which the subject had randomly stalked several unknown female victims, some of whom the subject sexually assaulted. In this instance, no relationship existed between the subject and victim, and the stalking behaviour was motivated by a sexually deviant or paraphilic interest. In this specific example, the subject engaged in stalking behaviour in order to gather intelligence information concerning their victim prior to the sexual attack. Researchers have deemed this particular type of subject a paraphilic stalker since the typical psychodynamic behaviours of infatuation, affection, or rejection towards the victim are absent (Collins & Van Allen, 1999). The paraphilic stalker appears motivated by the sexual exploitation of their victims as opposed to the typical bonding attachment that is observed in traditional stalking behaviours.

Another example of a stalking case file in which the Zona typology was not relevant involved a subject who criminally harassed a family since one of the members had been responsible for the accidental death of the subject's child. Again, this incident was classified as the other group since it was not applicable to either the simple obsessional, erotomaniac, or love obsessional categories based on the relationship between the subject and the victims.

In total, there were 152 stalking case files that were divided into the four categories of erotomania, love obsessional, simple obsessional, and other. The majority of the stalking cases belonged to the simple obsessional category (N = 104). There were 29 case files that fulfilled the requirement for the love obsessional group, and 5 cases

were identified that met the criteria for erotomania. Fourteen case files were not applicable to the Zona typology, and these were subsequently classified as the other category.

Table 5 illustrates the results of the Chi-square analysis on the victim's background information, and compares the victims each group. The findings revealed that the gender of the victim was a significant variable in each group ($X = 28.596$, $p < .001$). In 60 percent of the erotomaniac cases, the victims were men, with a mean age of 43 years. Conversely, 86 percent of the victims in the love obsessional group were women, with a mean age of 29 years. Female victims in the simple obsessional group accounted for 97 percent of the stalking incidents, with a mean age of 34 years. In 86 percent of the residual cases, the victims were female, with a mean age of 34 years. Overall, women were victims in 92 percent of stalking incidents investigated by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit.

Table 6 presents the results of the statistical analysis conducted on the subject background information, and compares the subjects of each category. The findings demonstrate that the gender of the subject was a significant variable in each group ($X = 41.260$, $p < .001$). The background information of the subjects inversely matched the victim demographics since erotomaniac subjects were usually female, while the love obsessional, simple obsessional and residual subjects were typically male. In 80 percent of the erotomaniac cases the subject was female, with a mean age of 36 years. Ninety percent of the subjects in the love obsessional group were male, with a mean age of 35.

TABLE 5

Age and Gender of Victims				
	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>	<i>Residual</i>
<i>Gender:</i>				
Male	60%, 3/5	10%, 3/29	2%, 2/104	14%,2/14
Female	40%, 2/5	86%, 25/29	97%,101/104	86%,12/14
Unknown	0%	4%, 1/29	1%,1/104	0%
<i>Average age of Victim (In years)</i>	43.0	28.8	34.1	33.8

TABLE 6

Gender, Age and Origin of Stalkers				
	<i>Erotomania</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>	<i>Residual</i>
<i>Gender:</i>				
Male	20%, 1/5	90%, 26/29	97%,101/104	71%,10/14
Female	80%, 4/5	10%, 3/29	3%,3/104	29%,4/14
<i>Average age of subject (In years)</i>	35.5	34.9	37.6	44.7
<i>Foreign Born:</i>				
Yes	20%, 1/5	24%, 7/29	4%, 4/104	21%, 3/14
No	0%	17%, 5/29	53%, 55/104	36%, 5/14
Unknown	80%, 4/5	59%, 17/29	43%, 45/104	43%, 6/14

years. Male subjects in the simple obsessional group accounted for 97 percent of the stalking incidents, and had a mean age of 38 years. Finally, the male subjects in the residual category accounted for 71 percent of the stalking incidents, and were substantially older, a mean age of 45 years, than those subjects in the other groups.

The foreign origin of subjects was a significant variable ($X = 24.071, p < .001$). Only 20 percent of the erotomaniac subjects were foreign born, whereas 24 percent of the love obsessional subjects had a foreign origin. In contrast, 53 percent of the simple obsessional subjects, and 36 percent of the residual group subjects in this study were not foreign born. However, these results should be interpreted with caution since a significant number of the cases within each group failed to contain sufficient information to make a determination.

Table 7 represents the results of the Chi-square analysis conducted on the subject's psychiatric and temporal features, and compares the subjects of each group. The results indicate that the mental illness of the subject was a significant variable in each group ($X = 23.566, p < .001$). Forty percent of the erotomanics in this study suffered from a major mental illness, 20 percent did not present any clear evidence of a psychiatric disturbance, and in 40 percent of the case files this information could not be accounted. Forty-five percent of the love obsessional and 21 percent of the residual subjects also suffered from a behavioural disturbance. However, 73 percent of the simple obsessional subjects did not present any evidence of a psychiatric disturbance.

TABLE 7

Subject Psychiatric and Temporal Features

	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>	<i>Residual</i>
<i>Mental Illness:</i>				
Yes	40%, 2/5	45%, 13/29	13%, 14/104	21%,3/14
No	20%, 1/5	24%, 7/29	73%, 76/104	50%,7/14
Unknown	40%, 2/5	31%, 9/29	13%, 14/104	29%,4/14
<i>History of Violence:</i>				
Yes	0%	10%, 3/29	72%, 75/104	36%,5/14
No	40%, 2/5	62%, 18/29	13%, 14/104	36%,5/14
Unknown	60%, 3/5	28%, 8/29	14%, 15/104	29%,4/14
<i>Drug/Alcohol Abuse:</i>				
Yes	0%	17%, 5/29	48%, 50/104	7%,1/14
No	60%, 3/5	48%, 14/29	24%, 25/104	36%,5/14
Unknown	40%, 2/5	34%, 10/29	28%, 29/104	57%,8/14
<i>Pursuit of Others:</i>				
Yes	0%	48%, 14/29	16%, 17/104	43%,6/14
No	60%, 3/5	24%, 7/29	76%, 79/104	21%,3/14
Unknown	40%, 2/5	28%, 8/29	8%, 8/104	36%,5/14
<i>Duration of the Relationship: (In months)</i>				
	48.0	42.6	69.0	187.0
<i>Duration of the Harassment: (In months)</i>				
	50.3	24.0	15.1	18.1

The findings in the present study found that a history of previous acts of violence is a significant variable, which should be taken into consideration ($X = 44.434, p < .001$). This study found that none of the erotomaniac subjects had engaged in past violent behaviour. In 62 percent of the love obsessional subjects there was no history of violence. However, the simple obsessional group accounted for the higher number of subjects who had engaged in past violent behaviour. Seventy-two percent of the simple obsessional, and 36 percent of the residual subjects did have a history of previous acts of violence.

A Chi-square analysis was conducted with respect to all groups, and found that drug and/or alcohol abuse is a significant variable ($X = 17.611, p = .001$). Sixty percent of the erotomaniac subjects, 48 percent of the love obsessional, and 36 percent of the residual subjects did not suffer from drug and/or alcohol abuse. Simple obsessional subjects were the only group who abused drugs and/or alcohol. Forty-eight percent of the simple obsessional subjects had documented drug and/or alcohol abuse issues.

The results of this study also found that the known pursuit of other victims was a significant variable ($X = 28.019, p < .001$). None of the erotomanics had pursued other victims. Similarly, 76 percent of the simple obsessional subjects did not pursue other victims. However, 48 percent of the love obsessional subjects, and 43 percent of the residual subjects did engage in this behaviour.

The averages for the duration of the relationship between the subjects and victims were: 48 months for the erotomaniac group, 43 months for the love obsessional, 69 months for the simple obsessional category, and 187 months for the residual group, which was the longest timeframe. The averages for the duration of the harassment endured by these victims were: 50 months for the erotomaniac category, 24 months for the love obsessional, and 18 months for the residual group. Fifteen months was the average duration of the harassment for the simple obsessional category, which was the least amount of time compared with the other groups.

Table 8 illustrates the Chi-square analyses conducted on the types of contact behaviour manifested by the subjects. Telephone contact initiated by the subject was a significant variable for each category ($X = 9.303$, $p = .026$). The majority of subjects in each group had made telephone contact with their victims. All erotomaniac subjects made telephone contact with their victims. Similarly, 66 percent of the love obsessional, and 78 percent of the simple obsessional subjects engaged in this type of contact behaviour. The residual group subjects accounted for the lowest percentage that engaged in this form of contact behaviour since only 57 percent made telephone contact with their victims.

The results in the study revealed that the subject's attendance at the victim's residence was a statistically significant variable for each category ($X = 9.934$, $p = .019$). Sixty percent of the erotomaniac subjects attended the residence of their respective victims. In 48 percent of the love obsessional, and 57 percent of the residual cases,

TABLE 8

Subject Contact Behaviour				
	<i>Erotomania Group</i>	<i>Love Obsessional</i>	<i>Simple Obsessional</i>	<i>Residual</i>
<i>Contact Behaviour:</i>				
<i>Telephone</i>				
Yes	100%, 5/5	66%, 19/29	78%, 81/104	57%, 8/14
No	0%	34%, 10/29	13%, 14/104	36%, 5/14
Unknown	0%	0%	9%, 9/104	7%, 1/14
<i>Home location:</i>				
Yes	60%, 3/5	48%, 14/29	76%, 79/104	57%, 8/14
No	20%, 1/5	45%, 13/29	18%, 19/104	36%, 5/14
Unknown	20%, 1/5	7%, 2/29	6%, 6/104	7%, 1/14
<i>Stalking:</i>				
Yes	40%, 2/5	24%, 7/29	70%, 73/104	57%, 8/14
No	40%, 2/5	62%, 18/29	23%, 24/104	29%, 4/14
Unknown	20%, 1/5	14%, 4/29	7%, 7/104	14%, 2/14
<i>Approach:</i>				
Yes	40%, 2/5	45%, 13/29	70%, 73/104	50%, 7/14
No	60%, 3/5	55%, 16/29	27%, 28/104	43%, 6/14
Unknown	0%	0%	3%, 3/104	7%, 1/14
<i>Threats:</i>				
Yes	20%, 1/5	17%, 5/29	64%, 67/104	43%, 6/14
No	80%, 4/5	79%, 23/29	32%, 33/104	50%, 7/14
Unknown	0%	3%, 1/29	4%, 4/104	7%, 1/14
<i>Destruction of Victim's Property</i>				
Yes	0%	3%, 1/29	40%, 42/104	43%, 6/14
No	100%, 5/5	97%, 28/29	58%, 60/104	50%, 7/14
Unknown	0%	0%	2%, 2/104	7%, 1/14
<i>Physical Harm</i>				
Yes	0%	3%, 1/29	34%, 35/104	21%, 3/14
No	100%, 5/5	97%, 28/29	64%, 67/104	71%, 10/14
Unknown	0%	0%	2%, 2/104	7%, 1/14

subjects made visits to the homes of their respective victims. The majority of simple obsessional subjects, 76 percent, had visited the homes of their victims.

The statistical analysis conducted found that stalking behaviour was a statistically significant variable for each category ($X = 19.995$, $p < .001$). Forty percent of the erotomaniac subjects followed their victims, whereas only 24 percent of love obsessional subjects, and 57 percent of the residual subjects engaged in this type of behaviour. The simple obsessional group represented the largest figure, 70 percent of these subjects, who had physically followed their victims.

The results of this study found that subjects who physically approached their victims, was a statistically significant variable for each category ($X = 9.481$, $p = .024$). Forty percent of the erotomaniac subjects and 45 percent of the love obsessional subjects had physically approached their victims. In 70 percent of the simple obsessional cases these subjects engaged in this type of behaviour, and represented the largest number of subjects who physically approached their victims. And finally, 50 percent of the residual subjects had approached their respective victims.

Threatening behaviour made by the subjects was a statistically significant variable for each category ($X = 24.185$, $p < .001$). This study found that the simple obsessional subjects were responsible for the majority of threats specifically, in 64 percent of the cases. Only 20 percent of the erotomaniac subjects and 17 percent of the love obsessional

subjects engaged in threatening behaviour towards their victims. Finally, in 43 percent of the residual cases the subjects had made threats towards their respective victims.

The destruction of property that belonged to the victim, and/or a third party related to the victim, was a statistically significant characteristic for each category ($X = 18.050$, $p < .001$). None of the erotomaniac subjects and only 3 percent of the love obsessive subjects had destroyed any property that belonged to the victim, and/or a third party related to the victim. Forty percent of the simple obsessive subjects, and 43 percent of the residual group subjects engaged in this form of criminal activity. The residual group represented the highest percentage of subjects who had destroyed property that belonged to the victim, and/or a third party related to the victim.

The results of this study found that physical harm inflicted on the victim by the subject was statistically significant for each category ($X = 13.085$, $p = .004$). None of the erotomaniac subjects had physically assaulted their victims. Consequently, none of these subjects followed through on threats made towards their victims as measured by the absence of physical harm inflicted, or destruction of property belonging to the victim, and/or third party related to the victim. Only 3 percent of the love obsessive subjects physically assaulted their victims. The simple obsessive category had the highest percentage of subjects who had assaulted their victims specifically, 34 percent. Finally, 21 percent of the subjects in the residual group had also physically assaulted their victims.

Figure 2 summarizes the different groups of stalkers found in this study, along with the significant variables attributed to each category. The victim background information for the simple obsessional stalkers indicates that the majority of the victims were female. Most of these stalkers tended to be male, who did not suffer from mental illness. A history of previous acts of violence figured most prominently for simple obsessional stalkers. Although the duration of their relationships tended to be long, the duration of the harassment was the shortest, compared with the other three groups. One plausible explanation is that since these stalkers represent incidents of domestic violence these victims may be more apt to involve police agencies due to the volatile situation. Consequently, the duration of the harassment may cease due to police intervention measures such as restraining orders, or incarceration.

Most of the simple obsessional stalkers did not pursue other victims. However, as compared with the other three groups, these stalkers represented the majority who engaged in several types of contact behaviours with their victims. Simple obsessional stalkers often made telephone contact with their victims. Most of these stalkers also attended the residence of their victims, and engaged in physically stalking their respective victims. This group represented the majority who physically approached, threatened, and assaulted their victims.

The present study found that the majority of love obsessional stalkers were male, whose victim was usually female, and much younger than the stalker (See Figure 2). These stalkers tended to suffer from behavioural disturbances, and almost half of the love

obsessional stalkers had pursued other victims. This category was often difficult to discern with the erotomaniac group since the difference was dependent of the interpretation of the relationship by the stalker, and whether they were suffering from delusions. This information was based solely on the disclosure contained within these particular case files, and in most circumstances there was very little disclosure provided by the stalkers.

This study found that erotomaniac stalkers were usually female, whose victim tended to be male, and generally older than the stalker (See Figure 2). All of these stalkers had engaged in telephone contact with their respective victims. Erotomanics by definition suffer from a major mental illness, however this was often difficult to ascertain based solely on the disclosure provided within the case file. None of these stalkers had a history of violence, and none had destroyed property that belonged to the victim, or a third party related to the victim. Further, none of the erotomaniac stalkers had drug and/or alcohol abuse issues, and none had assaulted their victims.

Although the findings in the current study for the residual group maintained the same statistical significance as the majority of variables indicated in the original study, there were a number of characteristics that differentiated this group from the Zona typology (See Figure 2). With respect to age, residual stalkers were generally older than stalkers in the other three categories. In terms of the type of behaviour manifested, these stalkers tended not to engage in telephone contact with their victims. However, most of

the residual stalkers threatened their victims, and destroyed property that belonged to the victim, or a related third party.

The results of the current study illustrates that stalkers who had a prior intimate relationship with their victims are more at risk for committing physical violence towards their victims, their victim's property, and/or a third party related to the victim. As the relationship between the stalker and victim moves from stranger to intimate partner, their mental health seems to correspondingly move from mentally ill to personality disordered, and dangerousness appears to move from lower to higher levels for potential violence. These findings also support the published literature.

FIGURE 2

Simple Obsessional Stalkers

- This is the most common type of stalker.
- These stalkers are predominately male.
- The majority of victims are female.
- Simple obsessional stalkers often attend the victim's residence, telephone their victims, physically stalk and confront their victims.
- These stalkers tend to have a history of violence, threaten and assault their victims.

Love Obsessional Stalkers

- The majority of these stalkers are male.
- The victims are usually female, and much younger than the stalker.
- These stalkers tend to suffer from behavioural disturbances, or mental illness.

Erotomania

- These stalkers are usually female.
- The victims tend to be men, who were generally older than the stalker.
- Erotomanics usually engage in letter writing, and telephone contact with their victims.
- None of these stalkers had issues of substance abuse, a history of violence, or engaged in violent behaviour.

Residual

- Residual stalkers tend to be men, who are in their mid forties.
- The victims are predominantly female.
- Most of the residual stalkers had pursued other victims.
- The majority of residual stalkers threaten their victims.
- Most of these stalkers destroy property that belongs to the victim, or a third party related to the victim.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DISCUSSION

The general findings of this study supported the original Zona study, which developed a stalker typology based on the relationship between the stalker and the victim. The original study created an organizational paradigm to manage incidents of criminal harassment, and described the stalkers and victims, the presence of a major mental illness, and the mode of stalking behaviour manifested. However, not all of the O.P.P. stalking incidents could be classified into one of the three noted stalker groups: simple obsessional, erotomania, and love obsessional. Instead, this research study found evidence of another category, designated the “residual group”, which elicited a distinct type of stalker whose profile and characteristics were quite different from the original Zona typology.

The paramount difference between these two studies is the residual category found in the current study, which was not relevant to the original Zona typology. However, there are also several other distinctions noted between these two studies. In the original Zona study there is not a large disparity between the number of love obsessional and simple obsessional stalkers. However, the present study found that there were a significantly greater number of simple obsessional stalkers compared with the love

obsessional group. In this study male stalkers accounted for a large majority of the stalking cases investigated by the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit, and this figure was substantially higher than the male stalkers in the original Zona study.

One plausible explanation for this discrepancy may be that the current study provides a more accurate sample of stalking in the general population as compared with the original Zona study since the initial study had utilized a database that was over-represented with case files involving celebrities and other public figures. Consequently, the original study contained an over-representation of erotomania and love obsessional stalkers, and under-represented simple obsessional stalking incidents.

The results of the present study differed from the original Zona study in that the simple obsessional stalkers represented the largest group, and there were significantly more female victims. One possible explanation is that there is an increase in police reporting of incidents involving domestic violence, which would account for the increase number of cases for this particular group. Although the issue of criminal harassment has come to society's attention through the media's exposure of incidents involving celebrity stalkers, this behaviour is more indicative for individuals who have had a prior intimate relationship.

Another differentiation noted between the present study and the original Zona study pertains to whether the stalker was foreign born. The results in this study found a greater percentage of love obsessional subjects were foreign born, as compared with the

findings in the original study (See Tables 2 & 6). It is unclear whether this result is truly significant due to the lack of clarity in the definition of foreign-born utilized in the original study. The criterion utilized in this study was determined based on whether the individual was born in another country and their residency was not a consideration since this information was not provided within the stalking case files. This continues to be a confounding variable, and further exploration into this matter should be considered for future research.

In the Zona study, there was a substantial number of erotomanics with documented cases of drug and/or alcohol abuse (See Table 3). The results in this study contradicted these findings since none of the erotomaniac stalkers suffered from a substance abuse problem (See Table 7). These conflicting results may have occurred due to a significant lack of treatment options for substance abuse in the United States, or may reflect the easy accessibility of these addictive substances. However, we must also recognize that there are diverse interpretations and definitions of alcohol and drug abuse. Consequently, further research is required in order to determine the extent of alcohol and/or drug usage and the impact of this variable on stalking.

In the original Zona study, simple obsessional and love obsessional stalkers attended the residence of their respective victims (See Table 4). However, the present study found that these figures were almost doubled for both simple obsessional and love obsessional stalkers as compared with the findings in the original study (See Table 8).

Further analysis is required to make a determination as to the reason why these results are not congruent.

Another variable demonstrating significant differences between the two studies is the pursuit of others. In the original Zona study, only a small percentage of love obsessional stalkers, and none of the simple obsessional stalkers had pursued other victims (See Table 3). However, this study found that almost half of the love obsessional stalkers, and some of the simple obsessional stalkers had pursued other victims (See Table 7). The results in the present study differ dramatically compared with the findings in the original Zona study.

One plausible explanation would be that in the United States criminal legislation is a function of the state whereas in Canada criminal legislation is created and implemented at the Federal level. Consequently, an offender's prior criminal record is kept within the state as opposed to being available nationwide. Consequently, each state would only have a record of charges laid against the stalker concerning those victims pursued only within that particular state.

In the original Zona study, only a few of the simple obsessional stalkers had physically stalked their victims (See Table 4). However, in the present study, the majority of simple obsessional stalkers engaged in stalking behaviour, which is dramatically higher than the findings in the original study (See Table 8). In the original Zona study, a type of contact behaviour found to be significant was termed person-to-

person contact. Although the original Zona study found that each stalker category had engaged in this form of behaviour (See Table 4), the findings of the current study demonstrated significantly higher percentages for stalkers in each category (See Table 8). Further research is required to delve into these matters in order to provide explanations for these discrepancies.

In the original Zona study, more than half of the erotomantic stalkers threatened their victims (See Table 4). However, in the present study relatively few erotomanics initiated any threatening behaviour towards their victims (See Table 8). In the original study, only a small percentage of simple obsessional stalkers destroyed any property that belonged to the victim, or a third party related to the victim (See Table 4) whereas, in the current study this figure is almost three times the amount (See Table 8). In the Zona study, only a few simple obsessional stalkers harmed their victims through physical measures (See Table 4), as compared with the present study in which this figure was substantially higher for simple obsessional stalkers (See Table 8). The reasons for the disparities between the two studies are not known. Only until further research is conducted into these issues will these differences be resolved.

This current research study also demonstrated that not all of the variables indicated in the original Zona study were significant characteristics. Specifically, the sexual orientation of the stalker, letters as a type of contact behaviour made by the stalker, whether the stalker attended the workplace of the victim, and the involvement of weapons, were not found to be significant variables in the present study.

The original Zona study found that letters written by the subjects to their victims were a significant type of contact behaviour. However, the results of this present study indicate that letters written by the subjects to their victims were not statistically significant. These differences may be explained by the population sample selected in the original Zona study. Further research would be required into the significance of this variable in order to make determination concerning the differences between the two studies.

Two final differences between these two studies involve the inclusion of a variable or changes to the operational definition of a specific variable. A history of previous commissions of violent acts, although not included as a characteristic in the Zona study, was deemed important since research shows that a past history of violence is a strong predictor of future violent episodes (Menzies, 1995). Consequently, this variable was included in this current study, and the results supported that a history of previous acts of violence is relevant to the analysis of stalking.

One of the issues encountered with the original Zona study was the lack of clear operational definitions of several of the variables. For example, the operational definition of the firearms variable was too limited with respect to stalking since a significant number of Ontario cases did not involve a firearm but did involve the use of a weapon. As these two characteristics are decidedly comparable, the author determined that the operational definition of the variable should be extended to include the use of all weapons. In the original Zona study, firearms were a significant variable. However, the

results of the current study revealed that use of a weapon was not a statistically significant characteristic. Possible explanations for this difference, beyond the variation in operational definitions, may relate to the considerable difference in the laws permitting the ownership of weapons within Canada and the United States.

The author of this study was uncertain concerning the definitions of two variables, duration of the obsession, and duration of contact as noted in the original Zona study. Consequently, the present study used the terms duration of the harassment, and duration of relationship, which may have had a different meaning than those initially intended. If this were the case then changes to the operational definitions would have a bearing on the results of the current study, and may explain the reason these outcomes were not congruent with the findings of the original Zona study.

There now appears to be controversy in the stalking literature regarding the Zona typology. Critics have indicated that a belief in an actual relationship between the stalker and the victim should not be the main criteria of erotomania (Mullen & Pathe, 1994; Segal, 1989). Further, the distinction between the erotomaniac and love obsessional groups may be problematic since these are based sometimes on ambiguous classifications in the DSM IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

When different mental health professionals assess their patients their diagnosis may be markedly different. It is understood that emotions are not static. However, the diagnosis of a patient is based heavily on their emotional presentation of a problem

during a particular point in time. Further, different mental health professionals may diagnosis a patient differently based on their own interpretations of the DSM IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). For example, it would be difficult to discern in which group “Borderline Erotomanics”, as defined in the DSM IV would be most suited since the personality descriptors of these individuals would appear applicable to both the erotomaniac and love obsessional categories.

LIMITATIONS

The present study has several limitations that should be addressed for future research purposes. Interpretation of the current findings is tempered by consideration of the small sample size for some of the groups specifically, erotomaniac, love obsessional, and residual stalkers. Further, researchers should seek to replicate the current findings with a larger, and more diverse sample of stalkers.

Another issue that arose concerned the large numbers of unknown variables due to insufficient information contained within the stalking case files. The nature of police work often results in a lack of consistency with respect to the information collected, which is most often due to the individualistic or situational nature of the incidents. Consequently, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution due to the insufficient disclosure of information concerning many of the variables.

This is imperative to mention since disclosure of this information could skew the profile of each stalker group due to the smaller sample sizes in some of these categories.

Given that erotomanics tend to comprise a small figure in the general population, future research could be enhanced if qualitative research were conducted on these stalkers to elicit more information.

It must be mentioned that the stalker population sample utilized in the current study was already skewed since only the more serious allegations of criminal harassment are brought to the attention of the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit requesting its assistance. Consequently, this high-risk population would affect the statistical findings in the present study since this unit tends to receive those incidents of stalking that are highly problematic. Further, since there is no control sample, the forensic sample selected for this current study may not be a representative sample of the general stalker population.

An issue that arose in the present study concerned ascertaining information regarding specific characteristics from second hand information. For example, several of the variables pertained to specifics concerning the stalker yet most of this information was based on disclosure made by the victims. Another problem encountered with the collection of data regarding the types of contact behaviour made by the stalkers involves the reporting method.

For example, in this study only those behaviours that were witnessed by the victims were recorded on the questionnaire. Similarly, there were instances in which information was gathered through second hand sources, which questions its reliability. Future researchers should seek to examine other ways to elicit this pertinent information,

perhaps through qualitative research on stalkers. Another possible avenue would be to conduct a study to profile stalkers through the utilization of self-report measures.

Another issue that became apparent in the current study involved simple obsessional stalkers, a classification that requires a prior relationship between the stalker and the victim, without making a distinction with respect to the depth or type of relationship. The simple obsessional group included not only former intimates, but also instances in which the stalker and victim were merely acquaintances.

For example, an individual who criminally harassed an ex-spouse would be classified in the same group as an individual who stalked an employee. However, these obsessions and behaviours would be markedly different, and since differences would exist between these stalkers, this may prevent a meaningful interpretation of this particular group. Future research should re-examine simple obsessional stalkers in an attempt to circumvent this issue. One plausible alternative to this dilemma would be to further divide simple obsessional stalkers into intimate and non-intimate groups.

CONCLUSION

The incidents of criminal harassment continue to pose challenges to mental health professionals and police agencies. The effective assessment of the risk for violence in such cases, and the issue of the best approaches to contend with stalkers and their victims continue to cause concern to mental health and criminal justice agencies. Recent changes

in the law specifically, the introduction and implementation of the criminal harassment legislation, have required changes in the risk assessment tasks that police agencies are required to perform.

Today, there is a growing impetus to develop responses to prevent violent behaviour by responding to individuals who place others at an increased risk of harm. Despite the lack of empirical guidance, mental health and criminal justice agencies are regularly and increasingly required to assess the nature and degree of threat for a specific type of violence posed by stalking relationships that have come to their attention, and to respond to both the stalker and victim in such cases.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether characteristics of the stalker, the presence or absence of mental illness, and mode of stalking behaviour manifested were significant variables that differentiated stalkers. This information would influence the approach taken by police agencies. Through identification of the stalker, police agencies could develop appropriate means of intervention in these situations. Consequently, if police agencies understand the behaviour and characteristics of the stalker, mode of stalking exhibited, the relationship between the stalker and victim then this information could be utilized to assess their potential risk of violence and provide intervention strategies to assist the victims.

Although many of the results of this study indicate a strong correlation with the findings in the Zona study, the identification of the residual category and its specific

characteristics indicates that more research is necessary. Further, the general lack of extensive research in this particular domain makes the development of a distinct classification system, which would thereby direct a specific mode of response, impossible at this time. More research is required to further isolate the specific characteristics associated with this category of stalker enabling a clear differentiation with regard to the handling of these incidents.

Larger sample sizes that would be more readily available on a nationwide basis, would allow for a more accurate determination as to the significance of each of these stalker groups. And efforts could also be made by police agencies to collect specific information, which would permit further research in this area without the inclusion of incomplete or inaccurate case information. This would allow for the development of more detailed intervention strategies for stalking incidents that are case specific.

The general application of this research study is to provide the O.P.P. with a more detailed analysis concerning the characteristics of stalkers and victims in Ontario. This allows for a higher number of positive resolutions to incidents of stalking, and enables the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit to have greater confidence in strategies to deal with these occurrences. This also creates a higher degree of professionalism within the O.P.P., which results in greater respect from the communities in which they serve.

Additionally, it is hoped that this research study would better enhance the ability of the O.P.P. to respond to incidents of stalking. This would be achieved through assisting

the O.P.P. Threat Assessment Unit with the identification of the stalker, using characteristics that are empirically-based and found to be statistically significant, and defining the various modes of stalking behaviour. This is useful, especially in these tough fiscal times since the O.P.P., like every other organization, is accountable economically for the deployment and allocation of its resources.

Further areas of application could include using this information to refine police procedures and develop guidelines to assist police agencies in determining the most appropriate responses in terms of the level and method of intervention with respect to the identified stalker group. Police agencies would be able to construct a differentiated response system based on the stalker typology. This call classification system would have an operational impact on police agencies since there would be different responses given to victims based on their situation. Undertaking this endeavour would enable the O.P.P. to be better equipped to reduce, to as great an extent as possible, the psychological trauma and physical violence suffered by stalking victims.

Stalking is a multi-faceted criminal activity that involves the subtle intimidation of the victim. These subtleties are often lost on justice officials who have no experience with this type of criminal activity, and in many instances the victims often feel that they are not taken very serious. Victims also have difficulties conveying the nature of the threat to their personal safety and well being that they are experiencing. Further stalking research would not only inform justice officials as to the many forms that this crime takes, but it would also justify the implementation of the resources at their disposal.

Another application of this research would be in assisting victims and victim services since these programs could be developed specifically for the different victims of each stalker group. Women assault centres could be tailored to suit the needs of these victims since they would understand the requirements of the different victims. Further, this information would assist these agencies in better directing their clients to the appropriate community services. Counsellors would be able to specifically address the issues experienced by the different stalking victims.

The management of criminal harassment incidents poses unusual challenges to police officers. The wide variety of stalkers, motives, situations, and victims dictates that no particular analysis or strategy will be appropriate for all incidents. Fortunately, professionals from the law enforcement and mental health community have provided valuable insight into stalking. However, we are only beginning to understand the complexities and issues that comprise and surround the issue of criminal harassment. As research continues and police experience with these matters increases, our understanding of, and ability to deal with the variety of stalking incidents encountered will only become enhanced over time.

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APPENDIX A

Section 264 of the Criminal Code reads as follows:

264. (1) No person shall, without lawful authority and knowing that another person is harassed or recklessly as to whether the other person is harassed, engage in conduct referred to in subsection (2) that causes the other person reasonably, in all the circumstances, to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them.

(2) The conduct mentioned in subsection (1) consists of

- (a) repeatedly following them from place to place the other person or anyone known to them;**
- (b) repeatedly communicating with, either directly or indirectly, the other person or anyone known to them;**
- (c) besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be; or**
- (d) engaging in threatening conduct directed at the other person or any member of their family (Martin's Annual Criminal Code, 2000).**

APPENDIX B

DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR 297.10 DELUSIONAL DISORDER

- A. Nonbizarre delusions(s) (i.e., involving situations that occur in real life, such as being followed, poisoned, infected, loved at a distance, having a disease, being deceived by one's spouse or lover) of at least one month's duration.**
- B. Auditory or visual hallucinations, if present, are not prominent (as defined in Schizophrenia, A(1)(b)).**
- C. Apart from the delusion(s) or its ramifications, behaviour is not obviously odd or bizarre.**
- D. If a Major Depressive or Manic Syndrome has been present during the delusional disturbance, the total duration of all episodes of the mood syndrome has been brief relative to the total duration of the delusional disturbance.**
- E. Has never met criterion A for Schizophrenia, and it cannot be established that an organic factor initiated and maintained the disturbance.**

Specify Type: The following types are based on the predominant delusional theme. If no signal delusional theme predominates, specify as Unspecified type.

Erotomanic Type: Delusional Disorder in which the predominant theme of the delusion(s) is that a person, usually of higher status, is in love with the subject (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

APPENDIX C

Stalking Case File #

STALKER TYPOLOGY:

EROTOMANIA	
LOVE OBSESSIONAL	
SIMPLE OBSESSIONAL	
OTHER	

VICTIM:

	YES	NO	UNKNOWN
Male			
Age (indicate in years)			

Stalking Case File #
SUBJECT

	YES	NO	UNKNOWN
Gender: Male			
Age (indicate in years)			
Foreign Born			
Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual			
Homosexual			
Major Mental Illness			
History of Violence			
Drug/Alcohol Abuse			
Known Pursuit of Others			
Duration of Relationship (indicate in months)			
Duration of Harassment (indicate in months)			
Types of Contact Letters			
Telephone			
Work Location			
Home Location			
Stalking			
Physical Approach			
Weapons Involved			
Threats Made			
Destruction of Property			
Physical Harm			

