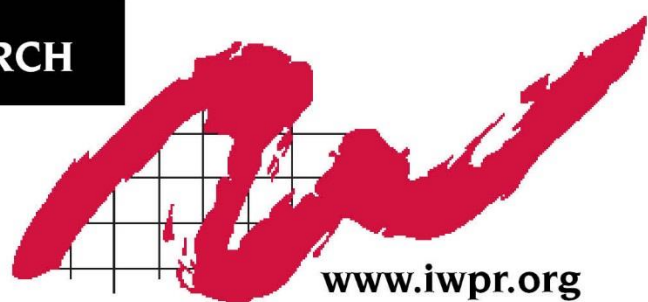


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Intersections of Stalking and Economic Security

In Focus

Stalking affects nearly one in six women and more than one in 19 men in the United States in their lifetime (Breiding et al. 2014).ⁱ The majority of stalking victimsⁱⁱ are stalked by individuals they know (Catalano 2012). Two-thirds (66.2 percent) of female victims report that the stalker was a former intimate partner (Black et al. 2011). Common stalking tactics—including physical surveillance, unwanted phone calls, other unwanted contact, and property invasion or damage (Logan 2010)—impede victims' employment and cause financial harm leading to economic insecurity (National Institute of Justice 2012). Stalking rates differ among women of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, with Native American women especially likely to experience stalking (24.5 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native women), while 13.9 percent of non-Hispanic Black women experiencing stalking (Breiding et al. 2014). Some of the groups most likely to experience stalking also have among the lowest levels of financial resources available to address the issue (Wider Opportunities for Women 2013a; Wider Opportunities for Women 2013b). Stalking threatens victims' employment and financial security in addition to their physical safety and well-being, and community and justice leaders can take affirmative steps to help ensure access to economic and other resources shown to promote safety.

Impact of Stalking on Economic Security

Stalking can jeopardize victims' economic security in multiple ways (Logan 2010). Analysis of the 2006 Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS), as a part of the National Crime Victimization Survey, found that three in 10 stalking victims accrued out-of-pocket costs such as attorney fees, damage to property, child care costs, moving expenses, or changing phone numbers, and 12.9 percent of victims incurred out-of-pocket costs exceeding \$1,000 (Baum, Catalano, and Rand 2009). Nearly one in four victims (24.4 percent) experienced property damage in conjunction with stalking (Baum, Catalano, and Rand 2009). A study of 210 victims seeking protective orders in Kentucky estimated \$1,114 in an average property loss during the six months prior to obtaining an injunction (Logan, Walker, and Hoyt 2012).

Stalking can also negatively influence victims' ability to obtain or maintain employment. Victims of stalking report higher rates of on-the-job harassment, indirect job disruption, and indirect job performance interference than other victims of intimate partner violence (IPV), commonly resulting in lower productivity and lost wages (Logan et al. 2007). Many victims of stalking are forced to take time off, change their jobs, or even alter their careers due to being stalked (Korkodeilou 2016). One study of 210 women with protective orders in Kentucky found that victims of IPV who were stalked lost an average of 78 hours of paid work during the six-month follow-up period after obtaining a protective order (Logan and Walker 2010). Analysis of data from the SVS found that 40 percent of stalking victims lost five or more days of work and 14.5 percent lost more than 25 days of work. As a

result of these disruptions, 27.8 percent of victims reported over \$1,000 in lost income with eight percent reporting losses over \$5,000 (Baum, Catalano, and Rand 2009). The same study found that about 10 percent of stalking victims changed or quit their job or school to protect themselves or stop unwanted behaviors. Losing time from work and school, or having to completely give up these activities, can have serious long-term negative effects on victims' careers, earnings, and economic security (Adams et al. 2013; Macmillan 2000).

Research has found that stalking is associated with negative physical and mental health outcomes, which can create direct costs for victims (Davis, Coker, and Sanderson 2002; Sheridan and Lyndon 2012; Logan et al. 2009). Analysis of the 1996 National Violence Against Women Survey found that being stalked is associated with current depression, chronic mental illness, and developing a chronic disease (Davis, Coker, and Sanderson 2002). For women in particular, being stalked is associated with physical injury (Davis, Coker, and Sanderson 2002). The study of women with protection orders in Kentucky mentioned above found that IPV victims experienced an average of about \$1,600 in health services costs and \$310 in mental health services costs during the six months before they received a protective order (Logan, Walker, and Hoyt 2012).

Research on the Financial Costs of Stalking

- The aggregate annual cost of stalking in the United States is estimated to be \$461 million in 2003 dollars, accounting for medical and mental health care and the value of lost productivity (Max et al. 2004), which amounts to \$604 million in 2016 dollars.*
- One federally-funded study in Kentucky found that stalking by a partner cost the state about nine million dollars annually, due primarily to health services and justice system costs (Logan et al. 2009). Survivors of IPV, including stalking, experienced an average total of \$3,968 in direct and indirect costs related to health care, victim services, legal fees, lost property, etc. during the six months before obtaining a protection order.
- One study found that stalking victims incurred an average of \$1,000 in costs, in 1998 dollars, due to moving expenses, losses in salary or having to forfeit tuition, property damage, legal fees, and taking measures to increase personal security (Brewster 1999).

Promoting Safety and Justice through Economic Security

Advocates and Service Providers

A study of 187 former intimate stalking victims in southeastern Pennsylvania found that nearly 40 percent of study participants sought help from victim service agencies (Brewster 1999). Many victims of stalking, however, face obstacles in accessing help, safety, and economic security due to scarce programming specifically dedicated to support victims of stalking, victim service providers' inconsistent responses to stalking, and a lack of awareness of best practices for serving stalking victims (Cattaneo, Cho, and Botuck 2011; Spence-Diehl and Potocky-Tripodi 2001). Service providers may also need to be educated on the use of technology in stalking and specific measures that can keep victims safe. In addition, service providers may need greater financial resources and funding flexibility to expand their ability to address victims' financial needs and provide them with the resources they need to be safe. Advocates may also need more information on stalking victims' legal rights and how they can secure economic relief through the available civil or criminal remedies.

Justice System

While the criminal justice system can improve the safety of stalking victims and direct them to critical economic relief, many victims choose not to report stalking to the police due to belief that they

police would not take action or because they fear of retribution from the stalker (Baum, Catalano, and Rand 2009). Because stalking is comprised of a series of individual actions that are often not criminal in themselves, victims may not recognize or may hesitate to report it as a crime, and law enforcement may not take reports seriously. Some justice system representatives do not understand the dangers associated with stalking and are unable to effectively serve victims (Logan et al. 2009). One study of female stalking victims found that 98 percent of women perceived that engaging with the justice system would be ineffective or not result in desired outcomes (Logan, Cole, and Shannon 2006). It also found that victims who did engage with the justice system often struggled to negotiate the complicated system and found their interactions to be harmful or unhelpful. Lack of accessibility, including system bureaucracy and limited knowledge about how to navigate the system, often prevents victims from utilizing justice system remedies (Logan, Cole, and Shannon 2006). When protection orders with economic provisions are legally available to stalking victims, economic relief is seldom requested or issued (Office on Violence Against Women 2014). In addition, almost 15 percent of female stalking victims reported that the cost of pursuing justice, including court fees and legal costs, was a barrier to seeking help (Logan, Cole, and Shannon 2006).

Communities

To cope with stalking behaviors, victims are often forced to take time off from school, which can involve costs such as forfeiting tuition or retaking classes (Brewster 1999; Baum, Catalano, and Rand 2009). These sacrifices can hinder victims' long-term economic security (Wider Opportunities for Women 2014). Stalking needs to be better addressed by campus policies or prevention efforts at many educational institutions (Stalking Resource Center 2011). In addition, a need for more supportive services on campuses, such as financial aid, child care, mental health support, and transportation assistance (Gault et al. 2014; Hess et al. 2016), may prevent victims from seeking justice, completing their education, and achieving greater economic mobility.

Stalking is the most common form of violence found in the workplace (Reeves and O'Leary-Kelly 2009). Workplaces can be unsafe or inaccessible for victims of stalking, especially when employers lack institutional responses to violence, such as policies that allow victims the flexibility they need to cope with the effects of stalking. As of 2005, less than 30 percent of employers in the United States had policies addressing violence (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006). Evidence that suggests that victims value workplace support very highly and cite it as important to allowing them to maintain employment (Swanberg, Logan, and Macke 2005).

Public Policies

Only 20 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have specific protection orders for stalking victims, and those that do often fail to offer the same explicit economic relief as domestic violence protection orders (Stalking Resource Center 2016). Crime Victim's Compensation (CVC) can help victims of crime recover the cost of victimization; however, stalking may not be a qualifying crime in some states unless it results in physical injury (National Center for Victims of Crime 2003). Similarly, many state's laws have failed to keep up with changing technology and an increase in electronic-based stalking, which can compromise the economic security of victims and limit the justice systems' ability to hold offenders accountable (Hazelwood and Koon-Magnin 2013). In addition, lack of paid sick days and other job protections prevent victims of stalking from taking time off to recover from injury, seek safety, or pursue justice.

Economic Obstacles to Safety for Specific Populationsⁱⁱⁱ

Stalking affects individuals across lines of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or location, yet some individuals face additional obstacles to safety and economic security. Those who experience discrimination, violence, and harassment by the justice system or service providers—

either on an individual or systemic level—may be especially hesitant to report (Anderson and Aviles 2006; Boggess and Groblewski 2011). In addition, data on specific populations reveal economic disparities that can make it difficult for victims to seek safety, access services, and achieve economic security.

Victims of Color

- In 2015, Black women earned 61.2 percent and Hispanic women earned 56.3 percent of White men’s median annual earnings (Hegewisch and DuMonthier 2016).^{iv}
- In 2007, Black and Hispanic women’s wealth was \$100 and \$120 respectively, compared to \$45,400 in wealth for White women (Richard 2014).
- Women of color saw large declines in median annual earnings from 2004-2014—Black women by 5.0 percent and Hispanic women by 4.5 percent (DuMonthier 2016).
- Hispanic women are much less likely than women from other major racial/ethnic groups to have access to paid sick days on their jobs, with only 49% receiving any paid sick days from their employers (Xia et al. 2016). Paid sick days can give victims time to take measures to secure their safety without losing pay or jeopardizing their employment.

Immigrant Victims

- Immigrant women are less likely than U.S.-born women to be in the labor force (56.2 percent versus 59.0 percent) (Hess et al. 2015).
- Almost one in five (19.7 percent) immigrant women live in poverty, compared with 14.7 percent of U.S.-born women (Hess et al. 2015).
- Immigrant victims may be unable to work legally or may be forced by the abuser to work illegally, increasing their risk of deportation.^v

Native Victims

- Native American women’s real median annual earnings declined by 5.8 percent between 2004 and 2014, compared with a 1.6 percent drop among all women (DuMonthier 2016).
- Over one quarter (26.7 percent) of Native American women lived in poverty in 2014—the highest poverty rate among all racial/ethnic groups of women (Hess et al. 2015).
- Native Americans are 31 percent less likely to be employed than whites of the same age, sex, education level, marital status, and state of residence (Algernon 2013).

Older Adults

- Older women are particularly at risk of financial insecurity; on average, women aged 65 and older had \$19,065 less in annual total income than their male counterparts (Fischer and Hayes 2013).
- Among baby-boomers born between 1948-1953, white men possessed nine percent greater median wealth than white women and 160 percent greater wealth than women of color in 2012 (Institute for Women’s Policy Research 2017).
- One in ten (10.7 percent) women over the age of 65 live in poverty, compared with seven percent of comparable men (Hess et al. 2015).

Adolescents

- About six percent of girls in grades 9-12 reported that they were absent at least one day during the previous month because they felt unsafe (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2016)
- Young women have higher rates of unemployment compared to older women, 12.5 percent compared to 4.6 percent, respectively (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016).
- Seven in 10 (68%) public and nonprofit college graduates in 2015 borrowed an average \$30,100 in student loans, nearly 20 percent of which were non-federal loans which have higher costs and fewer protections (Institute for College Access & Success 2016).

LGBTQ Victims

- LGBT students who experienced violence in schools had lower GPAs and were over three times as likely to miss school in the month before the survey as other students (Kosciw et al. 2014).
- Nearly 50 percent of transgender workers have experienced negative job outcome such as being passed over for a promotion, denied a promotion, or being fired (Grant et al. 2011).
- One-fifth (19 percent) of transgender or gender non-conforming individuals reported past homelessness (Grant et al. 2011).

Victims with Disabilities

- The unemployment rate for women with a disability is double that of women without a disability (10.8 percent compared with 5.2 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015).
- Women with disabilities working full-time, year-round report lower earnings (\$33,000) than those without disabilities (\$39,000; Hess et al. 2015).
- Women with disabilities report their disability (80.5 percent) and the lack of on-site job accommodations (10.3 percent) as barriers to work (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017).

Rural Victims

- Jobs remain scarce in non-metro counties—employment remains three percent lower than pre-recession rates compared to metro areas which have surpassed their pre-recession peak by nearly five percent (Economic Research Service 2017).
- In 2014, rural women earned 78.8 percent of urban women’s median annual earnings (Institute for Women’s Policy Research 2015).
- Rural victims may be more likely to be economically insecure due to limited access to resources such as medical care, legal services, and shelters (Rural Health Information Hub 2016).

Opportunities to Respond

Advocates and Service Providers

Service providers can increase outreach by developing resources and programs to address the gap in public knowledge regarding how to identify stalking and how to access safety (Logan, Cole, and Shannon 2006). Advocates can also use tools to educate victims on strategies to be secure online and to protect themselves from stalkers use of technology as part of safety planning.^{vi} Due to the impact stalking has on employment, advocates should educate victims about their workplace rights and connect them to legal aid if necessary. In addition, providing victims with information about CVC and other forms of economic relief available through the justice system will help support their economic recovery. Because stalking victims often have greater need for security measures and relocation, they will benefit if service providers have flexible financial funds or partnerships with security or moving companies. Advocates can also help victims apply to participate in Address Confidentiality Programs, available in 36 states, to keep their location secret while enabling interactions regarding finances, utilities, benefits, the justice system, and their school.^{vii}

Justice System

All justice system sectors should be regularly trained on the intersections between economic security and survivor safety, how best to respond to stalking, and the laws on stalking and technology. Each sector can work with advocates to reduce economic barriers to participating in an investigation, prosecution, or trial. Justice system professionals should be aware of how stalkers use the justice system process to locate and intimidate victims. They can act to prevent or reduce economic threats and related stalking by limiting contact between the parties, collecting evidence, or charging witness intimidation as a separate crime. Cross-sector collaboration, such as Coordinated Community Response teams, can help identify and address barriers to institutionalizing economic concerns.

Law enforcement should adopt victim-centered approaches to stalking cases.^{viii} Agencies should train officers to investigate economic crimes such as theft, fraud, or property damage when responding to stalking. First responders should include stalking screening in their initial response protocol for IPV cases as an indicator of increased risk of fatality. First responders and investigators should also thoroughly document economic evidence and impacts in reports to prosecutors and in court testimony. Officers should work with other sectors to enforce court-ordered economic relief.

Prosecutors and attorneys can use intake forms and protocol to assess economic issues, identify economic crimes, and offer appropriate resources.^{ix} Although all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government have criminalized stalking (Catalano 2012; National Center for Victims of Crime 2007), the intent of these laws is often not carried out in practice because prosecutors are more likely to charge stalking behaviors as harassment or domestic violence-related crimes (Hess et al. 2015). Prosecutors should charge the full range of criminal acts committed to hold offenders accountable and increase the amount of restitution they can request. Attorneys should request economic relief available in protection order statutes and take advantage of catch all provisions when economic relief is not explicitly outlined. Civil and criminal attorneys can also help minimize the cost of frequent appearances by considering victims' work, child care, and transportation needs.

Court officials should treat stalking seriously and judges from all dockets should be educated about the dynamics of stalking, the economic issues stalking victims encounter, and how to hold offenders accountable.^x Judges should issue specific, enforceable orders that address the scope of economic harms, such as protection orders or restitution in criminal cases. Holding regular review hearings can improve compliance, take the burden off the victim, and allow for modifications as needed. Judges overseeing plea bargains should also consider economic implications and relief.

Key Recommendations: Expanding Access to Underserved Groups

- Include cultural competency and economic considerations in training on stalking.
- Recruit diverse staff with experience in addressing barriers facing underserved groups.
- Enact policies that foster an inclusive environment for people with diverse gender identities, physical and mental disabilities, and from varying racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Build partnerships that include job training programs and community colleges to improve equity in access to good jobs.
- Support asset-building through resources such as Individual Development Accounts.
- Create mobile or satellite services to reach remote areas.

Communities

Educational institutions including universities, schools, and job training programs should have a clear policy on stalking that defines stalking behaviors and outlines victim reporting procedures and safety accommodations, such as no-contact orders, available resources for health support, and potential schedule changes (Stalking Resource Center 2011). Staff should be aware of their responsibilities regarding stalking under Title IX, the Clery Act/Campus SaVE Act, and other policies. Schools can also help victims by connecting them to supportive services, such as tuition support or child care, and making sure they understand the differences between the campus and local justice systems.

Employers can help improve the safety of staff and customers by having clear policies and procedures addressing stalking in addition to IPV and sexual assault, and educating staff about available resources and how to respond.^{xi} Employers can also support victims by implementing safety accommodations for those experiencing violence, such as changing schedules, workspaces, contact information, and automatic payroll deposits if stalkers have access. Evidence indicates that

workplace support—both informal, such as a supervisor offering emotional support, and formal, such as developing a safety plan with a survivor—is associated with victims maintaining employment (Swanberg, Macke, and Logan 2007).

Public Policy

Improved availability of and access to economic remedies, such as Crime Victim's Compensation, unemployment insurance, and protection orders, can help victims minimize and recover from the costs associated with stalking. Nondiscrimination policies ensuring employment protections for victims can help to reduce the economic impact of stalking on victims. States with paid sick, safe, and family leave can help victims seek medical care and take part in the justice system without jeopardizing their job or earnings. Finally, policymakers can address inequalities in earnings and opportunity by promoting pay equity and anti-discrimination policies, which can improve the economic security of female, LGBTQ, and minority victims.

Notes

ⁱ According to the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, stalking is defined as a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear (Office on Violence Against Women 2016).

ⁱⁱ The term victim is used throughout this research-in-brief to reflect language primarily used in available research. In many cases, victim and survivor are interchangeable.

* IWPR calculations using the CPI-U Index from the U.S. Department of Labor. The cost due to medical and mental health services needed is likely to be higher than estimated here because medical care expenditures in the CPI-U outpaced overall inflation by 27 percent between 1995 and 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ For more information, see the ESS Project's Population Policy Brief Series at www.iwpr.org.

^{iv} Earnings data are for full-time, year-round workers aged 16 and older.

^v U visas (U-1 nonimmigrant status) protect victims of qualifying crimes like IPV and allow them to work legally. Hesitancy by the justice system professionals to certify them and a low annual cap, however, prevents many from receiving protection (USCIS 2011).

^{vi} For information on technology and stalking, advocates can use the National Network to End Domestic Violence's Safety Net Project (<http://nnedv.org/projects/safetynet.html>) and the Stalking Resource Center's The Use of Technology to Stalk online course (<http://www.tech2stalk.org/>).

^{viii} For resources for law enforcement agencies, see <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/resources/for-law-enforcement>.

^{ix} For resources on best practices for prosecutors regarding stalking, see <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/resources/for-prosecutors>.

^x For examples of training and guides for judges, see <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/resources/for-judges>.

^{xi} Workplaces Respond to Domestic and Sexual Violence offers model workplace policies and information on how employers can better support employees experiencing violence. See, <http://www.workplacesrespond.org/learn/model-policy>.

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The Economic Security for Survivors (ESS) project seeks to build, protect, and restore the economic security of survivors of intimate partner and sexual violence, and stalking so that they may be safe and free of abuse. Domestic and sexual violence programs, the justice system, and communities play distinct and important roles in supporting survivors' independence and recovery from the costs of abuse, and these groups must recognize and respond to the economic barriers and costs survivors face. The Economic

Security for Survivors project—formerly of Wider Opportunities for Women and now housed within IWPR's Health & Safety initiative—identifies barriers that threaten survivor economic security and safety and offers solutions based on data and proven best practices. The project provides justice system and community professionals with strategies, tools, education, and training to improve how policies and programs respond to the economic consequences of abuse and support survivors' economic security.

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