

The following document consists of excerpts taken from a chapter which is posted on the Department of Justice Web site. For the full chapter, go to:

<http://www.ojp.gov/ovc/assist/nvaa99/chap21-2.htm>.

Categories of Stalking

SIMPLE OBSESSION STALKING

This category represents 60% of all stalking cases, including all cases arising from previous personal relationships (i.e., those between husbands/wives, girlfriends/boyfriends, domestic partners, etc.) Many simple obsession cases are actually extensions of a previous pattern of domestic violence and psychological abuse. Simple obsession is the most likely category of stalking to result in murder. Thirty percent of all female homicides were committed by intimate partners. Domestic violence victims run a 75% higher risk of being murdered by their partners. "If I can't have you, nobody will," has become all too common a refrain in cases that escalate to violence. Many of these cases end with the murder of the victim followed by the suicide of the stalker.

LOVE OBSESSION STALKING

In this category, stalkers and victims are casual acquaintances (neighbors, co-workers) or even complete strangers (fan/celebrity). Primarily, stalkers in this category seek to establish a personal relationship with the object of their obsession--contrary to the wishes of their victims. Love obsession stalkers tend to have low self-esteem and often target victims who they perceive to have exceptional qualities and high social standing. These stalkers seek to raise their own self-esteem by associating with those whom they hold in high regard.

While cases of "star stalking" often receive the most media attention, a greater number of love obsession stalkers develop fixations on "regular" people--noncelebrities.

EROTOMANIA STALKING

By definition, erotomaniacs are delusional and consequently, virtually all suffer from mental disorders--most often schizophrenia.

Unlike "simple" and "love" obsession stalkers who seek to establish or reestablish personal relationships with their victim, erotomaniacs delude themselves into believing that such a relationship *already exists* between themselves and the objects of their obsession.

Though relatively rare (comprising fewer than 10% of all cases), erotomania stalking cases often draw public attention because the target is usually a public figure or celebrity.

VENGEANCE/TERRORISM STALKING

The final stalking category is fundamentally different from the other three. Vengeance stalkers *do not* seek a personal relationship with their targets. Rather, vengeance/terrorist stalkers attempt to elicit a particular response or a change of behavior from their victims. When vengeance is their prime motive, stalkers seek only to punish their victims for some wrong they perceive the victim has visited upon them. In other words, they use stalking as a means to "get even" with their enemies.