

Stalking SLII Behaviors and Sexual Violence

Stalking is a complex crime that often co-occurs with other forms of victimization, including sexual violence. Offenders may use sexual violence as part of a stalking course of conduct, and recognizing this connection can help service providers and legal professionals provide more comprehensive responses to more effectively serve victims and hold offenders accountable.

Below are examples of how sexual violence can intersect with each of the four stalking SLII tactics (Surveillance, Life invasion, Intimidation, and Interference through sabotage or attack), which themselves overlap and build on each other. Fear is a key element of stalking and fear of sexual assault is covered under most stalking statutes.



SURVEILLANCE

Surveillance is the most commonly identified stalking tactic and includes watching and gathering information about the victim. Surveillance can intersect with sexual violence as part of planning a sexual assault, monitoring a victim after a sexual assault, voyeurism, and more. For example, the stalker could:

- Follow, watch, monitor online activity, access online accounts, use location tracking software/devices, seek information about the victim from others, repeatedly communicate, and/or unexpectedly show up while planning the sexual assault.
- Monitor what the victim does and whom they talk to after the sexual assault.
- Create fake accounts on social media to monitor the victim and/or hack into the victim's private or personal accounts, while planning the sexual assault or afterwards, or to monitor the victim's flirting, sexual activity, etc.

LIFE INVASION

Life invasion describes ways that the offender shows up in the victim's life without the victim's consent. Life invasion can intersect with sexual violence as part of a sexual assault, sexual harassment, nonconsensual distribution of intimate images, indecent exposure, sex trafficking, and more. For example, the stalker could:

- Repeatedly initiate unwanted contact and communication of a sexual nature, or about a sexual assault.
- Repeatedly and publicly embarrass the victim by treating them like a sexual object in front of other people, calling them sexist slurs, or talk about the victim's body parts.
- Send unwanted gifts or leave unwanted items of a sexual nature or about a sexual assault.
- Spread sexual rumors, publicly humiliate the victim with personal information about sexual activity or assault (or try to), and/or impersonate the victim online to discuss or share information about sexual activity.
- Force victims to touch them sexually or attempt to fondle, stroke, touch, or kiss the victim.
- Send sexual photos of themselves and/or take secret sexual photos or videos of the victim.
- Repeatedly make unwanted attempts to have sex with the victim even after they have said no.

INTIMIDATION

Many behaviors are intimidating when considered within the totality of stalking behaviors and with the victim and offender's relationship and history in mind. Intimidation can intersect with sexual violence as threats of sexual violence or sharing sexual information. For example, the stalker could:

- Threaten the victim with sexual assault, explicitly or implicitly, in-person or online, from themselves or a third party.
- Threaten family, children, friends, or others with sexual assault.
- Threaten to destroy property, harm pets, share or post sexual information, or sabotage the victim if they refuse to perform sexual acts.
- Threaten to share intimate photos or videos if they don't do what the stalker says.
- Threaten to spread sexual rumors, or publicly humiliate the victim with private sexual information.
- Blackmail the victim in exchange for sexual activity, photos, or videos.
- Engage in symbolic sexual violence like cutting up underwear.
- Retaliate or threaten to retaliate if the victim does not cooperate with their demands to send sexual pictures or respond to messages with sexual content.
- Threaten the victim to keep them from reporting the sexual assault to police or other authorities OR to make them withdraw the complaint.

INTERFERENCE THROUGH SABOTAGE OR ATTACK

Stalkers may interfere in a victim's life in many ways, affecting everything from the victim's reputation to their employment and/or physical safety. Interference can intersect with sexual violence as sexual assault or sexual harassment. For example, the stalker could:

- Sexually assault the victim.
- Sexually expose themselves to the victim.
- Sexually assault a friend, family member, child, or other person close to the victim.
- Steal sexual photos or videos.
- Share sexual photos, videos, or information with the victim's employer, colleagues, school, classmates, or friends/family to disrupt their life.
- Sexually harass the victim.
- Pose as the victim and solicit sexual activity.
- Sexually traffic the victim or force them to engage in sexual activities with others.
- Share and/or post intimate photos, videos, and/or information.

SLII Framework Attributed to: Logan, T.K. & Walker, R. (2017). Stalking: A Multidimensional Framework for Assessment and Safety Planning. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 18(2), 200-222.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2017-TA-AX-K074 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.