



Stalking Problem Facts and Statistics

Criminal harassment- Criminal harassment is the legal term (Canada) for stalking. In 1993 the Criminal Code was amended to include criminal harassment. Prior to that year, stalking behaviour was not against the law in Canada.

1999 numbers: Police forces in Canada reported a total of 5,382 incidents of criminal harassment in 1999, up 32 per cent from 1996.

Edmonton police reported 69 cases in 1999, up from 33 in 1995.

Among 10 selected cities, the lowest rates of stalking in 1999 were reported in Edmonton (11 incidents per 100,000 population), Calgary (12) and London (12). The highest rates were reported in Saskatoon (75), Montreal (73) and Vancouver (68).

In 1999, women accounted for three-quarters of all victims. Most victims knew their accused. Slightly more than half of all female victims were stalked by a current or former partner.

Offences commonly associated with criminal harassment include uttering threats, threatening or harassing phone calls, common assault and mischief.

Fewer than two per cent of criminal harassment incidents in 1999 resulted in physical injury to the victim.

There were nine stalking-related homicides in Canada from 1997 to 1999.

Each involved a female victim killed by a recently-separated husband, ex-husband or former lover.

Jail terms were imposed in 35 per cent of convicted criminal harassment cases.

The median length of prison sentences has increased from 30 days in 1994/95 to 90 days in 1998/99. Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Common traits of stalkers- Won't take no for an answer- Has an obsessive personality- Above average intelligence- No or few personal relationships- Lack of embarrassment or discomfort at actions- Low self-esteem- Sociopathic thinking- Has a mean streak
Source: Stopping A Stalker: A Cop's Guide to Making the System Work For You, by Robert L. Snow

Celebrity Stalking- Mark David Chapman stalked former Beatle John Lennon for months before he killed him in 1980.

John Hinkley Jr., the man who shot former U.S. president Ronald Reagan, was obsessed with actress Jodie Foster.

David Letterman has been stalked for years by a woman who believes she is married to the talk-show host.

The man who stalked singer Madonna was finally imprisoned after he broke into her home.

First Stalking Law- North America's first stalking law went on the books in California in 1990, a year after television actress Rebecca Schafer was shot and killed by an obsessed fan who had stalked her for months.

Detective Jeff Dunn runs the Los Angeles Police Department's threat management unit, an eight-member team that annually screens hundreds of stalking cases and investigated 165 last year. He and other experts say stalkers typically fit these profiles:

- 1) the simple obsessional stalker is mainly a former husband or wife, boyfriend or girlfriend;
- 2) the love obsessional stalker develops an obsession with an acquaintance, a co-worker, even a stranger;
- 3) the erotomaniac stalker suffers a mental disorder and is often delusional, believing that a relationship, love or marriage, exists with the victim.

Stalking in Pop Music

"Every breath you take/Every move you make/Every bond you break/Every step you take/I'll be watching you?/Oh can't you see, You belong to me?"

– The Police