

2016

Perceptions of stalking: The influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and perpetrator persistence

Ebonnie Landwehr
Edith Cowan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses>



Part of the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Landwehr, E. (2016). *Perceptions of stalking: The influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and perpetrator persistence*. Edith Cowan University. Retrieved from <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/1917>

This Thesis is posted at Research Online.
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/1917>

Edith Cowan University

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study.

The University does not authorize you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following:

- Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.
- A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. Where the reproduction of such material is done without attribution of authorship, with false attribution of authorship or the authorship is treated in a derogatory manner, this may be a breach of the author's moral rights contained in Part IX of the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).
- Courts have the power to impose a wide range of civil and criminal sanctions for infringement of copyright, infringement of moral rights and other offences under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

**Perceptions of Stalking: The Influence of Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis,
Target-Perpetrator Gender, and Perpetrator Persistence**

Ebonnie Landwehr

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of
Master of Criminal Justice by Research

School of Arts and Humanities

Edith Cowan University

Date of submission: 6 June 2016

Abstract

Stalking is a complex phenomenon that results in significant harm to victims. For this reason, it is vital that knowledge and understanding of the behaviour be continually advanced. The aim of the present study was to investigate the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and persistence on perceptions of stalking. Although psychiatric diagnoses are prevalent among clinical stalker populations, little is known about how the presence of a perpetrator mental disorder may influence perceptions of stalking. Both target-perpetrator gender and persistence have been found to have an effect on perceptions of stalking, however it is not understood if or how the presence of mental disorder may interact with these factors. An experimental $2 \times 2 \times 2$ independent factorial design was used to examine the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and perpetrator persistence on ascriptions of a stalking label, perceptions of behaviour seriousness and perceptions of responsibility. Two-hundred and eighty participants read one of eight vignettes and responded to one categorical item, five scale items, and an open-ended question pertaining to the behaviour described in the scenario. Overall, the majority of participants perceived the behaviour as stalking. Thematic analysis revealed that the repeated and unwanted nature of the behaviour and specific behaviours such as communicating with and following the target were of importance. Only mental disorder influenced ascriptions of a stalking label, with a chi-square analysis indicating that participants were significantly less likely to ascribe a stalking label in the presence of perpetrator mental disorder. Participants who did not ascribe a stalking label in the presence of mental disorder had concerns regarding the perpetrator's responsibility for the behaviour. With regard to perceptions of behaviour seriousness and perceptions of responsibility, a MANOVA found significant main effects for mental disorder and target-perpetrator gender. A mentally disordered perpetrator was perceived as less responsible for their behaviour than a non-disordered perpetrator. Furthermore, in the presence of mental disorder, the target was perceived to be more responsible for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour. In regard to target-perpetrator gender, the behaviour was perceived to be more likely to result in violence and anxiety for the target when the vignette described a man pursuing a woman in comparison to a woman pursuing a man. When no psychiatric history was provided in the vignette, participants were asked to indicate how likely it was that the perpetrator had a mental disorder diagnosis. A MANCOVA including this covariate indicated that when mental disorder was assumed as opposed to stated, responsibility was not significant but behaviour seriousness was. The influence of a perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis and target-perpetrator gender on perceptions of stalking have implications for the treatment of perpetrators and victims, both informally and within the criminal justice system. It should be acknowledged that the discrepancy in findings between an explicitly stated and an assumed mental disorder diagnosis may be due to participants imagining different mental disorders, therefore future research should include the manipulation of diagnosis type.

Author: Ebonnie Landwehr

Supervisors: Dr Adrian Scott

A/Prof Pamela Henry

Dr Jeffrey Gavin

Submitted: 6 June 2016

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;*
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of this thesis; or*
- (iii) contain any defamatory material;*

Signed:

Date: 6 June 2016

Acknowledgements

There are a number of people who I would like to thank. Firstly, I am incredibly grateful to my supervisors Dr Adrian Scott and A/Prof Pamela Henry for their constant encouragement and support throughout the development of my thesis. I would also like to extend my thanks to Jeffrey Gavin for his guidance in relation to the qualitative component of my research. To my friends, family and colleagues who have been so understanding of my research journey over the past four years, I could not have gotten through this without the support you have given me. Finally, to everyone who assisted me in the collection of my data and to those who participated in my study, thank you. This research would not have been possible without you.

Table of Contents

Title.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Declaration.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
<i>Definitional Complexity and Legal Considerations.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Prevalence of Stalking and Impact on Victims</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Demographic and Behavioural Characteristics of Stalkers</i>	<i>11</i>
Demographic: mental disorder diagnosis.....	11
Demographic: gender	15
Behavioural: perpetrator persistence.....	16
<i>Perceptions of Stalking</i>	<i>17</i>
Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis.....	17
Target-perpetrator gender.....	19
Perpetrator persistence	22
<i>Aims and Rationale</i>	<i>24</i>
Chapter 2: Method.....	26
<i>Design</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Participants.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>28</i>
Participant instructions, inclusion criteria and information letter.....	28
The vignettes.....	29
Study and demographic questions.....	31
<i>Procedure.....</i>	<i>32</i>

Chapter 3: Methodology.....	35
<i>Design, Participants, Materials and the Pilot Study</i>	<i>35</i>
Design.	35
Participants.....	36
Materials.....	37
<i>Analysis of the Quantitative Data</i>	<i>43</i>
Categorical dependent variable.....	43
Scale dependent variables.	44
Scale dependent variables and the covariate.....	50
<i>Consideration of Data Collection Modes</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Analysis of the Qualitative Data</i>	<i>53</i>
Chapter 4: Quantitative Results	56
<i>Perceptions of Stalking</i>	<i>56</i>
Chi-square analyses.....	56
MANOVA.....	57
<i>Perceptions of Likelihood of Mental Disorder.....</i>	<i>61</i>
Chapter 5: Qualitative Results.....	68
<i>Ascriptions of a Stalking Label.</i>	<i>68</i>
Participants ascribed a stalking label.	73
Participants did not ascribe a stalking label.	88
Stalking versus not stalking.	97
Chapter 6: Discussion	100
<i>Findings</i>	<i>101</i>
Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis.....	101
Target-perpetrator gender.	105
Perpetrator persistence.	106
<i>Theoretical and Practical Implications</i>	<i>106</i>
Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis.....	106
Target-perpetrator gender.	114

Perpetrator persistence.	118
<i>Limitations and Future Research</i>	121
<i>Conclusion</i>	124
References	128
Appendix A	145
<i>WA Stalking Legislation</i>	145
Appendix B	148
<i>Stalking Legislation Matrix – Elements of Australian Jurisdictions</i>	148
Appendix C	150
<i>Letter of Invitation to Participate – Online Mode</i>	150
Appendix D	152
<i>Letter of Invitation to Participate – Physical Mode</i>	152
Appendix E	154
<i>Study Vignettes</i>	154
Appendix F	160
<i>Study Items</i>	160
Appendix G	162
<i>Demographic Items</i>	162
Appendix H	164
<i>Binomial Logistic Regression Model Fit</i>	164
Appendix I	167
<i>Removal of Outliers from the Raw Dataset</i>	167
Appendix J	169
<i>Log Transformation - SPSS Output</i>	169

Appendix K.....	185
<i>Square Root Transformation - SPSS Output.....</i>	<i>185</i>
Appendix L	201
<i>Mann-Whitney U Analyses.....</i>	<i>201</i>
Appendix M	203
<i>Analysis of Variance Results.....</i>	<i>203</i>
Appendix N	204
<i>Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) – Four Dependent Variables.....</i>	<i>204</i>
Appendix O	205
<i>Data Collection Mode Comparisons.....</i>	<i>205</i>
Appendix P	206
<i>Comparison of Chi-Square Analyses for Interactions</i>	<i>206</i>
Appendix Q.....	208
<i>Chi-square Cross Tabulations</i>	<i>208</i>

Chapter 1: Introduction

Although the phenomenon of stalking has existed for hundreds of years, conceptualisations of the behaviour as an offence and scholarly consideration are recent (Racine & Billick, 2014). Early twentieth century mental health professionals treated it as an entirely female behaviour resultant of abnormal psychopathology (White, Kowalski, Lyndon, & Valentine, 2000). However, in the early 1990s attention to unwanted pursuit behaviour was substantially heightened after several high profile cases of celebrity stalking drew considerable media attention. One such case was that of Rebecca Schaeffer, an American actress who was stalked and fatally shot by an obsessive fan. Schaeffer's murder is often recognised as the catalyst event that highlighted the seriousness of stalking, ultimately leading to California becoming the first jurisdiction to criminalise it (Kinkade, Burns, & Fuentes, 2005). Some form of stalking legislation was passed in all Australian jurisdictions between 1993 and 1996 (Willis & McMahon, 2000). Although stalking was still regarded as a celebrity complaint during this period, a body of research has now shown that stalking victimisation is not limited to celebrity status, and while it is most likely to be perpetrated by men against women (Ogilvie, 2000; Purcell, Pathe, & Mullen, 2001) it is a gender-neutral behaviour (Wigman, 2009). Stalking victims can experience an array of adverse psychological consequences and interferences to their lives, such as the need to change telephone number, relocate, seek new employment, or solicit legal advice (Blaauw, Winkel, Arensman, Sheridan, & Freeve, 2002; Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2001), making the examination of stalking crucial.

An accepted definition within research characterises stalking as repeated intrusive and unwanted contact via communication (e.g., letters, telephone calls), loitering, following, spying or direct approach (Mullen, Pathe, & Purcell, 2000).

Harassing telephone calls are the most common stalking behaviour reported by victims (Nicastro, Cousins, & Spitzberg, 2000) and specific behaviours such as information gathering, following, and unsolicited telephone calls are frequently identified by research participants as being indicative of stalking (Cass, 2011). Defining stalking, whether it be academically or legally, is far from straightforward. However legal definitions have the added complication of serious ramifications for real life outcomes. Distinguishing pursuit behaviour commonly associated with establishing and maintaining romantic relationships (Dennison & Stewart, 2006; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Palarea, Cohen, & Rohling, 2000) from that which constitutes an illegal act is difficult and complex. Stalking legislation differs fundamentally from most other statutes in that the conduct needs to be repeated (Brady & Nobles, 2015) and the target is often required to have experienced fear (Gatewood Owens, 2015). This necessity of fear is problematic given that studies have reported variation among target perceptions of what constitutes stalking and engenders fear (Englebrecht & Reynolds, 2011). For example, women are more likely than men to express experiencing fear and consequently to label behaviour as stalking.

The scope of the law extends beyond the role of punishment, aiming also to provide a deterrent against undesired behaviour. Melton (1992, p. 384) describes the law as “a social glue that offers cues for behaviour consistent with respect for the community and the persons it subsumes”. That is, the law cannot function independent of the perceptions and expectations of those whom it governs (Melton, 1992). With this in mind, the impact of stalking on targeted individuals is integral to understanding and defining the phenomenon of stalking. Not only do advancements in the understanding of stalking ensure better outcomes for stalking victims (e.g. by improving help-seeking actions such as reporting stalking behaviour to police), they also impact each stage of

the criminal justice system process from police response to sentencing. Furthermore, normal human behaviour as defined collectively by a society should not be legislated against. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the factors that influence people's perceptions of what constitutes stalking.

There is a growing body of literature encompassing vignette studies that have investigated the impact of various situational and personal characteristics on perceptions of stalking. Situational characteristics that have been explored include perpetrator behaviour severity (e.g., Scott, Rajakaruna, & Sheridan, 2014), perpetrator intent (e.g., Dennison & Thomson, 2000; Dennison, 2007; Sheridan & Scott, 2010), perpetrator persistence (e.g., Dennison, 2007; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, & Sleath, 2014), target-perpetrator gender (e.g., Phillips, Quirk, Rosenfeld, & O'Connor, 2004; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, & Gavin, 2015; Sheridan, Gillett, Davies, Blaauw, & Patel, 2003), target-perpetrator relationship (e.g., Cass, 2011; Dennison & Thomson, 2000), target fear (e.g., Dennison & Thomson, 2000), and to a lesser extent perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis (e.g., Kinkade, Burns, & Fuentes, 2005). Personal characteristics examined include participant gender (e.g., Cass, 2011; Scott et al., 2015), ethnicity (e.g., Phillips et al., 2004), and self-reported victimisation (e.g., Kinkade et al., 2005; Phillips et al., 2004).

Broadly, the present study will extend the evolving body of stalking perceptions literature by investigating the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and perpetrator persistence on 1) ascriptions of a stalking label, 2) perceptions of how serious the perpetrator's behaviour is, and 3) perceptions of how responsible the perpetrator and target are for the behaviour. In regards to perpetrator mental disorder, prevalence studies indicate significant rates of diagnoses among stalkers (McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, & Ogloff, 2009; Mohandie, Meloy, Green-

McGowan, & Williams, 2006; Rosenfeld, 2004). As previous studies frequently draw samples from clinical or forensic settings, it has been argued that these estimates do not accurately reflect all individuals who engage in stalking (Racine & Billick, 2014). However, it is equally plausible to assume that these populations are reflective of those individuals who are most likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, this characteristic has been largely neglected in perception research. Target-perpetrator gender and persistence on the other hand are known to influence perceptions of stalking, but little is understood about how these factors operate in the context of perpetrator mental disorder. Furthermore, persistence has been investigated in the past by measuring behaviour frequency rather than behaviour duration.

This chapter will first look at why it is difficult to clearly define stalking. Variation among victims' perceptions of the behaviour and differences in the legal requirements set forth by legislation will be examined in order to demonstrate the complex nature of this phenomenon. The prevalence of stalking behaviour and the impact that it has on victims will then be discussed. Next, a brief summary of the demographic and behavioural stalker characteristics that are relevant to the present study will be provided. This will include the prevalence of mental disorder diagnoses, differences in characteristics between genders, and levels of persistence among stalkers. Following from this, the relevant perceptions literature will be reviewed and where appropriate, theoretical explanations will be proposed. Finally, the aims and rationale of the current study will be stated.

Within the literature, stalking-type behaviour is described via several terms including stalking, harassment, unwanted pursuit behaviour and obsessive relational intrusion. Although subtly different, they are conceptually comparable for the purpose of this study, as they can be defined as involving continual, unwanted pursuit of an

individual by a perpetrator (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000). Therefore, the term stalking will be employed throughout this thesis. Similarly, those who are pursued by stalkers are referred to interchangeably as victims and targets in the literature. The term target is used in the context of this research and the perceptions literature, whereas victim is applied only when discussing actual victimisation.

Definitional Complexity and Legal Considerations

Defining stalking from a legal perspective is complex because of a lack of legislative consensus between countries and again between jurisdictions within countries (e.g., Australia, United States). The goal of legislation is to be precise, coherent and consistent (Lamplugh & Infield, 2003). It is these principles that are challenged when creating stalking legislation. Developing legislation is inherently difficult not only because of the vast differences in victims' perceptions, but also because it must be expansive enough to encompass a wide variety of unwanted behaviours and yet specific enough to not prevent people from engaging in justifiable and reasonable conduct (Lamplugh & Infield, 2003). Further issues to be considered when developing legislation are the fact that unwanted pursuit behaviours performed in isolation or within an appropriate context are legal (Brady & Nobles, 2015; Mossman, 2007), and that motivation and intent differ between perpetrators (Lamplugh & Infield, 2003). With these considerations in mind, Racine and Billick (2014) state that most stalking legislation include the following elements: 1) the perpetrator engaging in repeated behaviour that intrudes on the victim, 2) the perpetrator making an implicit or explicit threat to the victim, and 3) the victim experiencing fear, or an expectation that a reasonable person would experience fear, as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour.

At its core, stalking legislation is unlike most other legislation, the fundamental differences being the requirement of repeated conduct (Brady & Nobles, 2015) and

victim fear (Gatewood Owens, 2015). For example, motor vehicle theft would not have to be committed on more than one occasion to be considered an offence. Likewise, assault is regarded as illegal without considering whether the victim experienced fear. The requirement of fear in stalking legislation forces victims into an active role, whereby they are often required to document and collect evidence of how the behaviour has impacted them (Brady & Nobles, 2015). Such evidence can include emails, text messages, photographs or a journal of events (Brady & Nobles, 2015).

The necessity of victim experience to legal definitions of stalking is problematic because victims' experiences and views of what constitutes stalking vary. For example, Englebrecht and Reynolds (2011) found that victims in their study reported invasion of personal space as typical of stalking, but that men and women characterised it differently. Men most often characterised it as being physical assault and women most often characterised it as home invasion. Furthermore, victims pursued by a current or ex-intimate partner are more likely to ascribe a stalking label to behaviour than those pursued by a non-intimate partner, despite being no more likely to report the behaviour to police (Menard & Cox, 2015). Women are also more likely to ascribe a stalking label (Menard & Cox, 2015), particularly when they have experienced fear (Englebrecht & Reynolds, 2011). Importantly, not all victims of stalking experience fear (Gatewood Owens, 2015). Male victims report experiencing lower levels of fear than female victims (Sheridan, North, & Scott, 2014), and they are less likely to identify their pursuer as a stalker when the perpetrator is a man (56%) rather than a woman (78%) (Tjaden, Thoennes, & Allison, 2000).

There are a number of possible explanations for the influence of gender on the recognition of behaviour as stalking, all of which are concerning given the function of victim experience within legal definitions. Firstly, male victims may fail to correctly

identify and label behaviour as illegal. Secondly, men may genuinely experience lower levels of fear, potentially as a result of gendered stereotypes portraying women as weak and unthreatening (DuPont-Morales, 1999). Alternatively, male victims may indeed experience fear, but feel reluctant about reporting their victimisation due to societal norms facilitated by the same stereotypes. Finally, gender differences among victims may result from differences in male and female stalker characteristics.

Considering the breadth of victims' interpretations of what behaviour constitutes stalking, it is perhaps not surprising that there are substantial differences between proportions of self-defined stalking victimisation and those experiences which meet the legal requirements to prosecute an individual for stalking. Studies have found that the proportion of participants who answer 'yes' when asked if they have ever been stalked is greater than when they are asked to indicate if they have experienced behaviour consistent with those depicted in relevant legislation (Englebrecht & Reyns, 2011; Tjadan et al., 2000). Variation between self-defined stalking victims and those who are legally regarded as stalking victims highlights the intricacies associated with defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

In Australia, like other parts of the world, stalking legislation differs between jurisdictions. The main distinction relates to intent (Ogilvie, 2000), but there are also differences with regard to the associated penalties (Dussuyer, 2000). The first state to pass stalking specific legislation was Queensland (QLD) in 1993 (Criminal Code Act, 1899) (S359A), while the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) was the last in 1996 (Crimes Act, 1900) (S34A). Originally introduced in 1994, Western Australia's (WA) stalking legislation is based on the general prohibition model in which the legal requirements are heavily contingent on the perceptions of the target and the onus is

placed on the perpetrator to defend the charge based on the balance of probabilities (Lamplugh & Infield, 2003).

WA's legislation defines stalking within s338D and s338E of the Criminal Code Act Compilation Act (1913) and includes two offences. There is some degree of difference between the two offences, with the common element being the requirement of pursuit. Pursuit, set out in s338D(1), includes behaviours such as communication and following. The simple offence is s338E(2), which is defined as any pursuit that could be reasonably expected to intimidate an individual, and that does in fact cause intimidation. Intimidation is defined in s338D(1) and includes outcomes such as physical or mental harm and apprehension. Under the simple offence, the victim must provide satisfactory evidence of their experience of intimidation. Intimidation is not a requirement of the indictable offence, defined in s338E(1), which specifies that the alleged perpetrator must have engaged in pursuit with the intention to intimidate their target or a third party. For example, this was applied in *Hellings v The Queen* (2003) where it was stated that an offence can be established even where the pursued is 'strong-willed or robust'. Another element of the indictable offence is the provision for circumstances of aggravation. Individuals can be prosecuted for circumstances of aggravation if they possess (or appear to possess) a weapon (S338D1a), or they breach a relevant bail condition (S338D1b). The WA stalking legislation and a matrix of the main distinct and common components of stalking legislation for each jurisdiction within Australia is provided in Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

Prevalence of Stalking and Impact on Victims

Determining the prevalence of stalking is difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly, the behaviour is under-reported to the police (Wright et al., 1996). Subsequently, prevalence statistics differ depending on whether they are drawn from

police data, court statistics or victimisation surveys. Measuring the prevalence of stalking via police data is problematic as reported victimisation is charged infrequently. Police officers' understanding of what constitutes stalking may offer some explanation for this. Pearce and Eastal (1999) found that the majority of police officers in their study advised that they would not use stalking legislation when responding to a hypothetical situation involving an ex-intimate partner, even when threats of violence were depicted. Furthermore, Lynch and Logan (2015) found that stalking was seen to be less dangerous among officers who had never made a stalking charge, and that the officers who had made a charge possessed a deeper understanding of stalking laws. An analysis of official data from the Houston Police Department over an eight year period found that stalking was under recorded in comparison to other interpersonal offences (Brady & Nobles, 2015). Of 3,756 calls for service in relation to stalking, only 66 generated an incident report (IR), which is created only once police officers establish that an offence has occurred. Of these resulting IRs and arrests (N = 12), none were made for stalking. Instead, they were generally for harassment or violation of a proactive order. In cases where police officers do charge an individual with stalking, most are not prosecuted and of those that are, few result in a conviction. Successfully prosecuted cases are generally sentenced at the more lenient end of the available penalties (Ogilvie, 2000).

Victimisation surveys indicate that women experience stalking at much higher rates than men (Blaauw et al., 2002; Englebrecht & Reyns, 2011; Narud, Friestad, & Dahl, 2014; Ogilvie, 2000; Sheridan & Roberts, 2011; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007; Tjadan et al., 2000; Wigman, 2009). The lifetime prevalence of stalking victimisation is estimated to be 4% - 10% for men and 12% - 19% for women (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Dressing, Kuehner, & Gass, 2006; Ogilvie, 2000). Victims are most

frequently pursued by someone known to them (Lyndon et al., 2011), with the majority stalked by an ex- or current intimate partner (Carabellese et al., 2012; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). The literature consistently demonstrates that stalking victims are significantly more likely to be threatened with violence (Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2001) or physically assaulted by an ex-intimate partner than by either a stranger or acquaintance (McEwan, MacKenzie, Mullen, & James, 2012; Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Mullen, Pathé, Purcell, & Stuart, 1999; Sheridan & Roberts, 2011; Thomas, Purcell, Pathé, & Mullen, 2008).

Stalking victims experience a range of adverse psychological and social outcomes (Diette, Goldsmith, Hamilton, Darity, & McFarland, 2014; Narud et al., 2014). Common target responses to anxiety include: changing telephone number; relocating; changing employment and/or daily routines; and seeking legal advice (Blaauw et al., 2002; Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2001). These actions may seem extreme, but responding to stalking behaviour can be difficult, especially when it is unrelenting and/or dangerous. For example, even trained and experienced mental health professionals struggle in managing a stalker's advances despite the pervasive victimisation of clinicians (Carr, Goranson, & Drummond, 2014; Kivisto, Berman, Watson, Gruber, & Paul, 2015).

Threatening behaviour by a stalker has been found to increase victim anxiety (Nicastro et al., 2000). Victim reports of stalker violence range from 29% - 60% (Blaauw et al., 2002; Sheridan & Roberts, 2011), with injury severity ranging from minor (e.g., cuts and abrasions) to acute (e.g., burns, fractures and in some cases disfigurement). A study by Sheridan and Roberts (2011) found that stalker violence restricted four victims (0.3%) to wheelchairs permanently. Although this is a very small percentage of the study sample, the consequences of the perpetrators' behaviour for

these victims were severe. The potentially life-threatening and debilitating impact of certain behaviours on stalking victims cannot be overstated.

Psychological and physical injuries are most likely to be experienced by women, particularly when the perpetrator is a man (Gatewood Owens, 2015; Sheridan & Lyndon, 2012; Sheridan et al., 2014). Surprisingly, despite higher levels of anxiety, female victims are more likely than male victims to both communicate with and approach their stalker (McEwan et al., 2012). This is concerning given that responding to a stalker is a significant predictor of serious violence toward the victim (Sheridan & Roberts, 2011).

Demographic and Behavioural Characteristics of Stalkers

Demographic: mental disorder diagnosis

Stalking behaviour does not automatically equate to the presence of a mental disorder, nor does the presence of a mental disorder justify stalking. In order to comprehend how stalking fits within the current mental health perspective, it is first important to understand what a mental disorder is and is not. Mental disorder is defined clinically by the World Health Organisation (1992, p. 5) as “the existence of a clinically recognisable set of symptoms or behaviour associated in most cases with distress and with interference with personal functions”. Furthermore, “social deviance or conflict alone, without personal dysfunction” is not encompassed by this definition (World Health Organisation, 1992, p. 5). There are many types of mental disorders and they can vary widely in degree of severity. Disorders include, but not limited to, depression, anxiety, personality disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and eating disorders, as well as delusional disorders such as schizophrenia (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

From a legal perspective, it is important to correctly identify delusional behaviour because of the potential to evoke a defence of diminished responsibility. Therefore, in the context of stalking and mental disorder, it is important to understand the distinction between a lack of insight and clinical delusion. A delusion is a belief that is intensely maintained in spite of contrary evidence (Cipriani, Logi, & Di Fiorino, 2012). To be considered clinically delusional, it is essential that the individual experiences a detachment from reality, and this must be clearly distinguished from impairments in personality or gross disturbances in relationships (Wright et al., 1996). Delusional behaviour may indicate the presence of a major mental disorder, such as schizophrenia (Wright et al., 1996).

The criticality of identifying the extent to which mental disorder is responsible for stalking conduct is exemplified by Catanesi, Carabellese, La Tegola, and Alfarano (2013) who provide a textbook case of a stalker's inability to recognise unacceptable behaviour. The woman in the case-study harassed her ex-partner for six months after he ended their 25-year relationship. She was arrested by police and involuntarily admitted to a psychiatric hospital where she was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. In the past, she had already been diagnosed with bi-polar disorder and prescribed medication, however at the time of her arrest she was not taking it. Shortly after her hospitalisation she entered remission. Upon discharge she confirmed that she would not harass her ex-partner, but failed to express remorse for her behaviour. In fact, despite returning to normal functioning, she resumed her harassment and maintained no recognition of her behaviour as being unlawful or unreasonable. The court was advised by clinicians to consider the influence of her mental disorder only for the initial harassment, and that diminished responsibility could not be assumed for the subsequent behaviour. This case

illustrates the importance of understanding if, how and when a psychiatric diagnosis influences behaviour; mental disorder is not tantamount to criminality.

Prior to discussing prevalence, it should be noted that the prevalence data pertaining to stalker mental disorder diagnoses reported here are reflective of the historical multiaxial system found in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR). Generally, all disorders fell under Axis I except for personality and developmental disorders which were considered within Axis II. In 2013, the updated DSM-V was released by the American Psychiatric Association and there are significant differences between this diagnostic framework and that of its predecessor.

Research suggests that the rate of any mental disorder diagnosis among stalkers is high (Mohandie et al., 2006; Rosenfeld, 2004). An early study by Meloy and Gothard (1995) comparing a group of mentally disordered stalkers with a group of mentally disordered offenders (not stalkers) found that antisocial personality disorder occurred significantly less often among stalkers. This is not an unexpected finding as stalkers generally develop attachments to their target and antisocial personality disorder is characterised by the inability to form emotional attachment and interpersonal bonds. Sandberg, McNiel, and Binder (1998) found significant rates of personality and psychotic disorders among patients who persisted with their stalking behaviour after discharge from psychiatric facilities; the majority were men. More recent clinical studies have found rates of mental disorder present in over 80% of stalkers (McEwan, Mullen, & MacKenzie, 2009; McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, et al., 2009).

Despite a high prevalence of mental disorder diagnoses among stalkers, little research has investigated the relationship between stalker mental disorder and violent behaviour. Rosenfeld (2004) argues that stalkers suffering from psychotic disorders are

less likely to engage in violence towards others. In contrast, McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, et al. (2009) showed that the absence of psychosis was a predictor of violence. However, when removing ex-intimate partner stalkers from analyses, no difference in levels of violence between psychotic and non-psychotic stalkers were observed.

While stalking is currently considered as a cluster of behaviours and not as a mental disorder, an archaic conceptualisation of stalking did define the behaviour in terms of mental disorder and female gender. Kraepelin (1921) postulated the behaviour to be Erotomania, a mental disorder suffered exclusively by “lovesick” women who held delusions that older and higher status men loved them. Understanding of this disorder has changed and current research shows that both genders suffer from this disorder (Meloy & Gothard, 1995), although it is more commonly diagnosed among women in stalker populations (Carabellese et al., 2012). Erotomania has been frequently linked with stalking and violent sexual jealousy, both of which are most often exhibited by men (Cipriani et al., 2012). However, this disorder is generally uncommon in clinical stalker samples (McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, et al., 2009). Diagnostically, Erotomania is now considered a subtype of delusional disorder, characterised by a false belief that a specific individual is in love with them (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; World Health Organization, 2011).

Despite the historical conceptualisation of stalking as a specifically female mental disorder, few studies have investigated the prevalence of mental disorder diagnoses in relation to stalker gender. Research to date indicates that the overall frequency of mental disorder diagnoses is comparable between male and female stalkers (Purcell et al., 2001). However, mental disorders are not homogenous and gender may influence what types of disorders are suffered by stalkers. For example, findings

indicate that delusional and personality disorders are common among female stalkers (Meloy & Boyd, 2003; Meloy, Mohandie, & Green, 2011; Purcell et al., 2001).

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) has also been found to be significantly more likely to occur among female stalkers than male stalkers (Strand & McEwan, 2012), although it is not known if this is only a reflection of the high prevalence (~75%) of BPD among women in the general population (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

Demographic: gender

Studies investigating the influence of gender on stalking behaviour are limited and the findings have been inconsistent. For example, although Nobles, Fox, Piquero, and Piquero (2009) found that women engaged in stalking behaviour more frequently than men, the majority of the literature suggests that stalking is perpetrated predominantly by men, and that male ex-intimate partner stalkers are most common overall (Meloy & Boyd, 2003; Ogilvie, 2000; Purcell et al., 2001; White et al., 2000). Likewise, while Purcell et al. (2001) reported that women did not differ from men in their stalking, other studies have shown that women are least likely to stalk a stranger (Meloy & Boyd, 2003; Purcell et al., 2001) and men are most likely to stalk an intimate partner (Palarea, Zona, Lane, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999). It should be noted that the research conducted by Nobles et al. (2009) utilised a self-report study, and the inconsistency with the literature could have resulted from gender differences in reporting by participants.

With regard to behaviour type and severity, women are significantly more likely to telephone and less likely to follow their victims in comparison to men (Purcell et al., 2001), yet they are equally likely to make threats against their victim (Purcell et al., 2001). Meloy and Boyd (2003) found that more than half of the female stalkers in their

sample (N = 82) had engaged in threatening behaviour. Although women are less likely than men to escalate to assault (Purcell et al., 2001), violence is not infrequent. One in four female stalkers in Meloy and Boyd's (2003) study had progressed to physical violence and three of the victims died as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour. The risk of violence by a female stalker is amplified by the existence of a prior intimate relationship (Meloy & Boyd, 2003) or presence of erotomania (Carabellese et al., 2012).

Behavioural: perpetrator persistence

Overall, the literature indicates a modal stalking duration of four weeks, and that strangers and ex-intimate partners persist for shorter and longer periods of time respectively (Mohandie et al., 2006; Purcell, Pathé, & Mullen, 2002). McEwan, Mullen, and MacKenzie (2009) found that stalking episodes ceased within two weeks in only 12.5% of cases, however almost half ceased within 12 weeks (47%). Behaviour that ceased within two weeks was most often perpetrated by stalkers who were strangers, possessed a predatory nature, used violence, and were primarily motivated by sexual gratification. In fact, the relationship between violence and persistence was found to be such that as persistence increased the risk of violence decreased.

When considering persistence in the context of gender, the literature indicates that women persist in stalking for longer than men. Early research by Meloy and Boyd (2003) found that more than half of their sample (54%) of women persisted for between one and five years, while Meloy et al. (2011) reported a modal stalking duration of two months and an average episode duration of 17 months. More recent research found that the frequency of stalking episodes did not differ between genders, however the average episode duration was longer for women than men, at two years and one-and-a-half years respectively (Gatewood Owens, 2015).

Perceptions of Stalking

A growing body of literature has identified a number of factors that influence people's perceptions of stalking. For example, prior relationship has been found to influence whether or not behaviour is labelled as stalking, necessitates police intervention, and requires criminal conviction (Cass, 2011; Duff & Scott, 2013; Hills & Taplin, 1998; Scott, Lloyd, & Gavin, 2010; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, & Sleath, 2014; Scott & Sheridan, 2011; Weller, Hope, & Sheridan, 2013) while the perpetrator's intent influences the likeliness of behaviour being labelled as stalking, as illegal, and as requiring police intervention (Dennison, 2007; Dennison & Thomson, 2002; Scott, Rajakaruna, & Sheridan, 2014; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014). Perception research typically manipulates different situational and personal characteristics depicted in hypothetical vignettes. The following section summarises the perception literature relevant to this research, and where appropriate theory, relevant to the present study.

Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis

Although a number of studies have addressed the prevalence of stalker mental disorder, the influence of this factor on perceptions of stalking has been largely ignored. Only one published study appears to have manipulated the presence of perpetrator mental disorder. Kinkade et al. (2005) examined the influence of 20 situational and personal characteristics on ascriptions of a stalking label, across a total of 40 short paragraph vignettes. The authors hypothesised that a perpetrator with a psychiatric history would be perceived as stalking more often than an individual without such a history. However, the findings showed that a psychiatric history did not significantly influence whether or not a stalking label was ascribed to the perpetrator's behaviour.

It is important to understand how the presence of perpetrator mental disorder influences perceptions of stalking because of the integral nature of victim experience to

stalking legislation. The literature indicates that in general, mentally disordered people are viewed more negatively than those without disorders, and that they are consciously avoided (Burdekin, Guilfoyle, & Hall, 1993; Corrigan et al., 2002). Furthermore, mentally disordered people have been perceived as dangerous, unpredictable, and with a propensity for violence by both the general community, and by police and lawyers (Minster & Knowles, 2006; Ruiz & Miller, 2004). Given the nature of these findings, it is reasonable to suggest that such views may affect the recognition of the behaviour as being stalking when mental disorder is present. Although this issue is important within the context of stalking legislation, it has yet to be examined within the literature.

It is also important to investigate perpetrator mental disorder in relation to potential legal implications associated with perpetrator culpability. Literature indicates that individuals with a mental impairment of some type are often perceived as ‘not in control’ of their criminal behaviour or unable to appreciate that it is wrong, and therefore are treated more leniently than offenders without mental impairment (Barnett, Brodsky, & Price, 2007; Garvey, 1998). Qi, Starfelt, and White (2016) found that lack of control was an important factor in their study, as participants assigned less blame to the perpetrator of a sexual assault when the scenario depicted them as being under the influence of a substance. It was perceived that the perpetrator had less appreciation of the wrongfulness of their behaviour.

In a study by Berryessa, Milner, Garrison, and Cho (2015), participants were not only more empathetic towards an offender after being given information about their Autism diagnosis, they also perceived the offender as less dangerous. It is important to note that although participants in this study believed that the offender was less responsible morally, ultimately they held that the offender was still legally culpable for their behaviour. Similar responses were provided by participants in a study by Sabbagh

(2011), where a schizophrenic defendant was treated more leniently than a non-mentally disordered individual. In theory, judgements of how much control an individual has over a situation are related to perceptions of responsibility, which in turn is understood to precede attributions of blame. Therefore, it is important to understand how perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis may influence perceptions of responsibility in cases of stalking, as this has implications for the experience of the victim and the perpetrator within the criminal justice system.

Clearly, negative stigmas and stereotypes regarding mentally disordered individuals, whether they be related to dangerousness or lack of control, continue to prevail in spite of deinstitutionalisation bringing about significant changes in the management and understanding of mental disorder (Newton, Rosen, Tennant, & Hobbs, 2001; Ruiz & Miller, 2004). This is largely attributable to sensationalised media reporting in which mental disorder, especially psychosis, is inextricably linked with violence (Shain & Phillips, 1991). Such reports are often overstated or misleading. For example, one study found that of individuals convicted for interpersonal violence, a schizophrenia diagnosis was reported in 0.5% of men and just 0.005% of women (Wallace, Mullen, Burgess, Palmer, Ruschena & Brown, 1998). Given that a large body of literature has found that public perceptions of criminal behaviour are shaped considerably by media representations (Marsh & Melville, 2009), the association of mental disorder with violent behaviour is concerning.

Target-perpetrator gender

The influence of target-perpetrator gender on perceptions of stalking has received considerable attention within the literature. Several studies have found that behaviour is equally likely to be labelled as stalking regardless of target-perpetrator gender (Cass, 2011; Finnegan & Fritz, 2012; Phillips, Quirk, Rosenfeld, & O'Connor,

2004; Sheridan, Gillett, Davies, Blaauw, & Patel, 2003). Despite this, behaviour perpetrated by a man is perceived as more serious and requiring police intervention more often than when perpetrated by a woman (Dennison & Thomson, 2002; Finnegan & Fritz, 2012; Hills & Taplin, 1998; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, & Gavin, 2015; Sheridan et al., 2003). Perceived target distress and fear of violence have also been found to be greater when the perpetrator is portrayed as a man and the target is portrayed as a woman (Phillips et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2015; Sheridan et al., 2003; Sheridan & Scott, 2010). Conversely, when the target is portrayed as a man and the perpetrator as a women, the target is perceived as more able to manage the perpetrator's behaviour (Sheridan et al., 2003) and to cope with threats (Sheridan & Scott, 2010), and is more responsible for the perpetrator's behaviour (Sheridan et al., 2003). Sheridan et al. (2003) reported that the gender of the victim and perpetrator had no influence on perceptions of likely persistence (Sheridan et al., 2003), however noted that ceiling effects were present and that their study should be replicated with 'a vignette that is intrusive but more ambiguous'.

The influence of target-perpetrator gender can be considered within the context of gender role stereotypes. In their work on gender and stalking myth acceptance Dunlap, Lynch, Jewell, Wasarhaley, and Golding (2015) define gender role stereotypes as "characteristics that individuals believe are more attributable to one gender over another" (p. 237). Women are frequently stereotyped as weak, submissive and vulnerable (Grabe, Trager, Lear, & Rauch, 2006; Leonard, 1982). Conversely, men are assumed to be naturally aggressive, cold and requiring enforced restraint (Whitley, Adeponle, & Miller, 2015), and subsequently expected to be independent and dominant (Hetherington & Parke, 1993). Gender role stereotypes encourage people to perceive women as victims and men as aggressors.

It is also important to consider potential interactions between the target-perpetrator gender and the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis. From a theoretical viewpoint female criminality is often considered in one of two ways: bad or mad. Bad women are considered an abhorrent contradiction to acceptable femininity while mad women are victims of their own inescapable biology or an external trauma (Ballinger, 1996). That is, they are an 'evil woman' or mentally unstable. This dichotomy was evidenced by the highly publicised and polarised media depictions of Rosemary West and Sanna Sillanpää respectively (Berrington & Honkatuia, 2002).

In line with gender role stereotypes, the chivalry hypothesis and 'evil woman' theory postulate that female offenders are rebuked not for the offence they have committed, but rather for contravening societal norms of how women are expected to behave (Chase, 2008; Grabe et al., 2006). A body of work by feminist criminologists has found that women receive harsher sentences than their male counterparts for equivalent crimes, particularly when the offences involve violence (Grabe et al., 2006), illustrating the propensity for female offenders to be considered 'bad'.

Another perspective proposes that female offenders are treated as 'mad'. For example, Chase (2008) posits that women are held less accountable for their offending behaviour because they are perceived as too weak to undergo severe punishment and incapable of controlling their emotions. She reviewed several cases of filicide in the United States and found that in both of the cases where mothers killed their children, mental disorder was a focus in both the courtroom and the media. Both women escaped the death penalty, and their cases focused heavily on the presence of mental disorder. One was found not guilty by reason of insanity. The other elaborately attempted to conceal her crime and yet mental disorder still mitigated her sentence. By comparison, Chase reported a case involving a father who murdered his children and was sentenced

to death despite the fact that he was almost certainly suffering from severe mental impairment. Additionally, strong mitigating evidence was presented suggesting that he had orchestrated but not executed the murders. In the context of gender role stereotypes, this example draws attention to the generalisation that men are innately uncaring and aggressive (Whitley et al., 2015).

Interestingly, Cavaglioni's (2008) review of media coverage involving mothers who killed their own children found that rhetoric often centred on themes of mental instability and mitigation, but only where the women fit traditional wife-type roles. Also congruent with gender role stereotypes, participants have been found to perceive mothers who kill as more mentally disordered, less deserving of punishment, and more in need of care than fathers who killed (Shepon, 2004).

As stated previously, there is a paucity of research regarding perceptions of perpetrator mental disorder in the context of stalking. However, Phillips et al. (2004) considered it when they manipulated target-perpetrator gender and asked participants to indicate whether a perpetrator's stalking behaviour was caused by mental disorder or if mental health treatment was necessary; target-perpetrator gender had no influence for either question.

Perpetrator persistence

Before examining the literature, it is important to establish what is meant by persistence as considerable variation exists in how this term is employed. Stalking perception studies examine the influence of persistence by manipulating the frequency of the perpetrator's behaviours in the vignettes (Dennison, 2007; Dennison & Thomson, 2002; Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014; Scott & Sheridan, 2011). For example, Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al. (2014) depicted high persistence as the perpetrator having telephoned the target 'frequently' while the low persistence condition portrayed

it as ‘occasionally’. Likewise, Dennison and Thomson (2002) described moderate persistence as making four phone calls in a month, whereas the telephone calls were omitted from the low persistence condition. However, forensic and clinical studies of stalker populations often use the term persistence to refer to the duration of a perpetrator’s stalking episode (James et al., 2010; McEwan, Mullen, & MacKenzie, 2009). McEwan, Mullen, and MacKenzie (2009) refer to persistence as continued behaviour even after intervention, irrespective of the intensity of the behaviours displayed.

The stalking perception literature, where persistence refers to frequency or intensity of behaviours, indicates that greater persistence results in an increased likeliness of ascribing the behaviour a stalking label (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014; Scott & Sheridan, 2011) and perceiving the behaviour to be illegal (Dennison, 2007). Additionally, police intervention and criminal conviction are seen to be more necessary when persistence is greater (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014). Persistence has also been linked to perceptions of the target being less responsible and the perpetrator more responsible for the behaviour (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014).

It is important to understand how persistence in relation to behaviour duration influences perceptions of stalking, as protracted stalking episodes are associated with negative psychological outcomes, such as increased anxiety, for the victims (James et al., 2010). Clinical studies show that persistence beyond two weeks is crucial to demarcating more severe behaviour in stalking episodes (e.g., monitoring, threats, assault) and is associated with a significantly greater negative impact on the victim (James & Farnham, 2003; Purcell, Pathé, & Mullen, 2004). Moreover, compositions of stalker samples have been found to be influenced by applying different definitions of

persistence, being either behaviour frequency or behaviour duration (Thompson & Dennison, 2008). As stalking perceptions literature has largely overlooked persistence with regard to perpetrator behaviour duration, little is known about how it influences perceptions of stalking.

Aims and Rationale

The aim of the present study is to examine the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender and persistence on 1) ascriptions of a stalking label and 2) perceptions of seriousness and responsibility. Research that generates a greater understanding of how people perceive stalking is important because the law cannot function independently of the perceptions and expectations of those whom it governs (Melton, 1992). Furthering the existing knowledge of stalking is important to all aspects of the criminal justice system process, from reporting behaviour to police through to prosecuting and sentencing. Although a substantial amount of research has been conducted on perceptions of stalking, few studies have considered the influence of perpetrator mental disorder. Given that mental disorder is prevalent among populations of known stalkers (McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, et al., 2009; Mohandie et al., 2006; Rosenfeld, 2004), there is a significant gap in the literature between studies investigating the frequency of stalker mental disorder diagnoses and perception research.

The influence of target-perpetrator gender on ascriptions of a stalking label and perceptions of stalking and responsibility has been considered within a growing body of literature (Cass, 2011; Finnegan & Fritz, 2012; Phillips et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2015; Sheridan et al., 2003; Sheridan & Scott, 2010). However, the present study aimed to build on this research by considering the way in which target-perpetrator gender may operate within the context of perpetrator mental disorder and persistence. Likewise,

although prior research has found persistence to influence ascriptions of a stalking label and perceptions of stalking and responsibility (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014; Scott & Sheridan, 2011), these studies have measured persistence in terms of behaviour frequency rather than behaviour duration.

In order to address these gaps in the existing body of stalking perception research, the following research questions were proposed:

- 1) Do perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, or perpetrator persistence influence ascriptions of a stalking label?
- 2) Do perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, or perpetrator persistence influence perceptions of behaviour seriousness?
- 3) Do perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, or perpetrator persistence influence target or perpetrator responsibility for the behaviour occurring?

The present study also considered the possibility that participants might assume that the perpetrator had a mental disorder diagnosis, even when psychiatric history was not provided in the vignette. To control this extraneous factor, another question was proposed:

- 4) To what extent is perpetrator mental disorder assumed when it has not been explicitly stated as present?

Chapter 2: Method

Design

The experimental design utilised was a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ independent factorial design. Independent variables were perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis (mental disorder present; mental disorder absent); target-perpetrator gender (female-male; male-female); and perpetrator persistence (2 weeks; 12 weeks). For the sake of brevity the independent variables will be referred to as mental disorder, gender and persistence. Table 1 presents the manipulation of the three independent variables that form the eight study conditions.

Table 1

Contingency Table of Independent Variables within Eight Conditions

Persistence	Mental disorder	Gender	
		Female-male	Male-female
2 weeks	Present	Condition 1	Condition 3
	Absent	Condition 2	Condition 4
12 weeks	Present	Condition 5	Condition 7
	Absent	Condition 6	Condition 8

There were six dependent variables and one covariate item. The first dependent variable was whether or not the perpetrator's behaviour was perceived to be stalking and this was measured categorically. An open-ended qualitative question, 'Why', was asked after this item. The next five dependent variables and the covariate item were measured on a 0-10 point Likert-type scale. They were: the likeliness that the perpetrator would use violence against the target; the likeliness that the target was experiencing anxiety or fear as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour; the likely

duration of the perpetrator's behaviour; the extent to which the target was responsible for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour; and the extent to which the perpetrator was responsible for their own behaviour. The covariate item was the likeliness that the perpetrator had a diagnosed mental disorder and it was provided only to the participants in the mental disorder absent conditions.

Participants

Two-hundred and eighty participants took part in this research. To be eligible for participation, participants were required to 1) be over 18 years of age and 2) currently live in Australia or to have done so on a permanent basis within the past five years. An incentive was provided to be involved with the study, with participants being offered the chance to win one of four Coles/Myer vouchers (1 × \$200; 3 × \$50). All data collection was approved by the Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Two hundred and seventy-nine participants provided demographic information. Of those, 113 (40.4%) were male and 166 (59.3%) female. The mean age of all participants was 37 (SD = 13.5) and ranged from 18 years to 86 years. Just over half of the participants (51.4%) indicated that they had professional and/or personal experience with mental health, while 132 (47.1%) stated that they did not have any professional and/or personal experience with mental health. Professional and personal experience were described as being a mental health professional or having had personal experience with someone with a mental disorder.

With regard to participants' highest education level attained, 1 (0.4%) participant had not completed 10th grade, 17 (6.1%) had completed up to 10th grade, 36 (12.9%) up to 12th grade, 67 (23.9%) held a certificate or diploma, 90 (32.1%) held a

bachelor degree, and a further 68 (24.3%) had a postgraduate degree. With regard to participants' employment characteristics, 23 (8.2%) worked in administration, 28 (10.0%) in police / courts / corrections, 37 (13.2%) worked for government but were not police officers, 38 (13.6%) worked in the mining / oil / gas industry, 7 (2.5%) within finance or insurance, 10 (3.6%) in hospitality, 15 (5.4%) in science or research, and 42 (15.0%) participants were students. A further 79 participants (28.2%) stated that they were employed in an 'other' industry.

Missing demographic information included the mental health experience status of four (1.4%) participants, the gender of one participant (0.4%), the highest education level attained for one (0.4%) participant, and the employment characteristics of one (0.4%) participant.

Materials

Data was collected via two collection modes. The online-mode was conducted via Qualtrics Online Survey Software, a web-based data collection software product. Participants accessed the study via an electronic link and viewed the materials on successive screens comparable to sheets of paper in a traditional questionnaire. The offline-mode data was collected on paper. Generally the content of the materials used was the same for both data collection modes, however minor differences are highlighted. The online-mode information letter, offline-mode information letter, study vignettes, study items and demographic items are provided in Appendices C, D, E, F, and G respectively.

Participant instructions, inclusion criteria and information letter.

Participants were provided with the information letter and instructions to read it carefully prior to consenting to the study. They were advised not to leave self-

identifying comments or their name within their responses and that their consent would be implied as a result of completing the research. The participants were advised of two inclusion criteria. The first criterion was that participants were aged 18 years or over. The second was that they either currently lived in Australia, or had done so on a permanent basis at any point within the past five years. This information was conveyed in a written format via the first screen of the study for online-mode participants and on paper for off-line mode participants. The only difference between the online-mode and offline-mode information letters was that the former made a specific reference to being an online study.

Participants were provided with an information letter that introduced the researcher and then outlined the intention and future application of the study. The letter imparted contact details for the researcher and principal supervisor, as well as an additional independent contact at the Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee. A contact telephone number for Lifeline, a telephone counselling service, was also provided in the unlikely case of a participant experiencing an adverse psychological response as a result their involvement in the study. Participants were informed of an incentive offering them the chance to go into a prize draw in return for participating.

The vignettes.

The experiment utilised a questionnaire that contained one of eight possible vignettes. The eight versions of the vignette were composed by manipulating the levels of the independent variables mental disorder (present; absent), gender (female-male; male-female), and persistence (2 weeks; 12 weeks), so that all combinations were represented. The vignettes described the unwelcomed pursuit of a university staff member by a new employee to a campus café. The vignette below demonstrates the

mental disorder present, female-male target-perpetrator, and two weeks persistence condition:

Every morning Gillian visits a particular café at the university campus where she works and has done so for several years. Two weeks ago John introduced himself to Gillian as a new employee to the café while preparing her coffee order. He complimented Gillian on her appearance and then asked her out. Gillian declined.

When she left the café her colleague advised her that John had a diagnosed mental disorder and was employed as part of a program to put mentally disordered individuals in employment.

During the subsequent two weeks John told Gillian that she was attractive every time she visited the café and asked her out repeatedly. Gillian always declined. John also phoned Gillian's office on several occasions, always asking how she was and whether there were any academic opportunities in her department. Each phone call ended with John asking Gillian why she would not go out with him, and Gillian telling John that she was not interested and that he should not call again. A couple of times John became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on Gillian. Gillian occasionally noticed John walking a short distance behind her on her way to the university car park. Each time, Gillian got in her car and quickly drove away.

Mental disorder was manipulated by omitting the second paragraph in half of the vignettes and gender was varied by inverting the characters in the vignette so that John became the staff member and Gillian became the café employee. Persistence was manipulated by describing the behaviour as occurring over a period of either two weeks (as above) or 12 weeks. The construction of the vignettes is described in more detail in the methodology section. This includes the chosen setting (a university campus) in

which the behaviour has occurred, the characters involved (a university staff member and a café employee), and how Australian anti-stalking legislation relates to the behaviours portrayed by the perpetrator within the vignettes.

Study and demographic questions.

Perceptions of stalking was measured by the dependent variables which comprised five scale items measured on an 11-point Likert-type scale; one categorical item; and one optional open-ended qualitative item. Participants in the mental disorder absent conditions were asked a sixth scale item. The scale items were:

1. How likely is it that Gillian/John will use violence against John/Gillian?
(‘Highly unlikely’ to ‘Highly likely’).
2. How likely is it that John/Gillian is experiencing fear or anxiety as a result of the behaviour? (‘Highly unlikely’ to ‘Highly likely’).
3. How long do you think this situation will continue for? (‘Not long at all’ to ‘A very long time’).
4. To what extent do you consider John/Gillian to be responsible for encouraging Gillian’s/John’s behaviour? (‘Not responsible at all’ to ‘Totally responsible’).
5. To what extent do you consider John/Gillian responsible for his/her own behaviour? (‘Not responsible at all’ to ‘Totally responsible’).
6. How likely is it that John/Gillian has a diagnosed mental disorder? (‘Highly Unlikely’ to ‘Highly Likely’)

Possible responses to the categorical question were ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘do not know’. An opportunity to provide an optional statement to support why the response had been chosen was offered. The question was:

1. Do you think John's/Gillian's behaviour is stalking?

The demographic information that was collected included gender, age, highest level of educational attainment, employment industry, and professional and/or personal experience with mental health. As stated in the participants section, professional and personal experience were described as being a mental health professional or having had personal experience with someone who has a mental disorder. Finally, participants were asked to provide their email address if they wanted to either 1) enter the optional prize draw or 2) receive a copy of the final study results.

Procedure

A snowball sampling method was employed and data were collected in two ways. An electronic link or paper questionnaire was sent to the researcher's personal network for circulation. The network then distributed the survey to their contacts via face-to-face, social media and email recruitment. This method of sampling is a non-probability technique (Portney & Watkins, 2000). An additional eighteen responses were collected from a class of first year psychology students at Edith Cowan University. During a lecture, these students were invited by the researcher to participate in the study. Those who indicated an interest in participating were provided with a paper questionnaire to complete. The students did not receive credit for their participation however they were entered into the prize draw.

Prior to commencing the study participants were required to respond to two screening questions. Offline-mode participants were asked and responded to these questions verbally. Online-mode participants selected the relevant checkboxes. First, participants were asked to indicate their age group. If a response of 'Under 18 years of age' was selected, the online-mode survey terminated. Next, participants were asked if

they currently lived in Australia, or had done so on a permanent basis within the past 5 years. Where a 'No' response was selected, the online-mode survey terminated. When a termination occurred participants were shown a screen that thanked them for their interest in the study. Offline-mode participants were thanked verbally. Satisfaction of the inclusion criteria was dependent on participant honesty.

The online data collection mode of the study was commenced by 366 participants and completed by 246 participants, resulting in a completion rate of 67.2%. As explained in more detail in the methodology section, 238 of the 246 responses completed online were retained in the final sample. An additional five people terminated their participation as they failed to meet the inclusion criteria above. A further 42 participants completed their responses on paper. It is not possible to calculate a response rate, as the number of people who declined either the link or a paper questionnaire remains unknown.

Online-mode participants received the electronic link via email or social media inviting them to be involved in the study. On clicking the link, participants were presented with a short paragraph explaining that the survey was anonymous and not to leave potentially identifying information within their responses. Participants were advised of two minimum criteria to participate, that completing the survey would be considered informed consent to participate in the study, and to read the information letter carefully. The next screen presented the participant with the information letter. For offline-mode participants the information letter was the first document in their pack.

On the third and fourth screens participants responded to the screening criteria. Offline-mode participants were asked and responded to this information verbally. Each aspect of the questionnaire was presented to the participant on a separate screen or sheet of paper, for online-mode and offline-mode participants respectively. That is, the

vignette, the five scale items, the categorical item and qualitative component, the item relating to likeliness of mental disorder (for participants in the mental disorder absent conditions only), and demographic questions were presented on five or six different screens or sheets of paper, and in that order. Participation took an average of 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the depth of the optional qualitative responses provided by participants.

Participants were assigned sequentially to a condition. In the online-mode, the first time the electronic questionnaire link was clicked, the participant was presented with condition one. For each subsequent click, the participant was allocated to the next condition. The sequence was repeated, with the ninth participant being assigned to condition one until the desired number of participants was achieved. Paper questionnaires were compiled in the same sequential manner prior to being distributed to potential participants.

In both data collection modes the final question asked the participants to provide an email address if they wanted to a) receive the results of the final study, or b) go into the prize draw. Online-mode participants were thanked for their participation in the study on the final screen after they submitted their responses. Offline-mode participants handed their completed questionnaire to the delegate they had received it from. The delegate then returned it to the researcher.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology explains the processes behind selecting a suitable research design, recruiting participants, developing the study materials, and selecting appropriate analyses for the collected data. This chapter also details some of the problems that were encountered during the study and how they were subsequently managed. The participants, materials and pilot study are covered first. This section is followed by the quantitative analyses section which explains the choice of tests and satisfying the relevant assumption testing. Next, the impact of using two data collection modes is reported. Finally, the qualitative analysis process is explained in detail. Where possible, the present study has aimed to be consistent with the extant body of literature investigating perceptions of stalking and this is evidenced where applicable.

Design, Participants, Materials and the Pilot Study

Design.

The primary focus of the study was to investigate how mental disorder influenced perceptions of stalking. For consistency and ease of comparing the results of the present study with prior research, an independent factorial design was selected as it is extremely common in the stalking perceptions literature. The independent variables gender and persistence, and the dependent variables (with the exception of the covariate item) were selected on the basis of prior research. As discussed earlier, a body of research has examined the influence of target-perpetrator gender. In regard to persistence, perceptions literature has investigated behaviour frequency rather than duration. The present study manipulated the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour (2 weeks; 12 weeks) on the basis of a clinical study showing that only a small number of

stalkers persisted for less than 2 weeks (12.5%), and almost half ceased their behaviour before 12 weeks elapsed (46.5%) (McEwan, Mullen, & MacKenzie, 2009).

Participants.

Participants were obtained by using a snowball-type recruitment method. This is also known as chain-referral. This form of recruitment is often regarded as a convenience sample as in practice obtaining a truly random sample can be difficult (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Marczyk, DeMatto, & Festinger, 2005). Snowball sampling relies on recruited participants to identify potential participants. In the present study, members of the researcher's network (referred to in statistical terms as seeds) were provided with the study pack (either as an electronic link or in paper format) and encouraged to forward the materials to their own networks. The researcher's network included family, friends, colleagues, and professional contacts. It should be noted that only the initial seeds were specifically asked to forward the study materials to their extended network. The incentive for this secondary network to forward the materials was sharing the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw in return for participating.

Snowball recruitment has been criticised for having limited external validity due to selection biases that arise from the initial seed selection (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Kendall et al., 2008; Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004). However, this method is also recognised as having the advantage of increasing a sample size (Wheeler, Shanine, Leon, & Whitman, 2014). Snowball recruitment was selected because it provided a sample size large enough to meet adequate statistical power levels and because it diversified the sample beyond just university students. The noted limitations were carefully considered when disseminating the study materials so that the demographic composition of the study participants was broadened beyond the researcher's immediate personal and professional network.

The sample did not predominantly consist of a student population. This was done in order to increase the generalisability of the findings from this study. It has long been widely accepted that although students are commonly relied on as research participants, especially in the US, student populations can and do differ from the general population in many areas (Carlson, 1971; Jung, 1969). A number of studies have shown that differing patterns of results or levels of significance emerge when a study conducted with student participants is replicated with a non-student sample (Gainsbury & Blaszczyński, 2011; Gordon, Slade, & Schmitt, 1986). Another aspect to consider is that research has demonstrated that 17-19 year olds tend to have less crystallised attitudes regarding social issues, and that their views are more changeable and inconsistent than later in life (Sears, 1986).

These factors need to be considered because sample selection should be linked strongly to the purpose of the study (Stevens, 2011), and the present study investigates perceptions. Yet students are a valid component of the general population. Gordon et al. (1986) recommends that where students are to be included in a sample, and they are not the sole population of interest, that researchers actively include other population types in the study sample. Therefore it was not seen as problematic to include a small number of students in the current sample. Students comprised just 15.0% (N = 42) of the sample in the present study. Over 40.0% (N = 18) of these students were over the age of 24. Furthermore, just 2.5% (N = 7) of the participants in the current study were 18 or 19 years of age.

Materials.

Information letter.

The term ‘stalking’ was not utilised within the information letter. This is because knowing the purpose of a study can lead participants to adjust their responses (Marczyk

et al., 2005). To minimise participant exposure to bias prior to reading the vignette, the information letter employed the term 'unwanted pursuit behaviour' in place of 'stalking' when describing the purpose of the study. As discussed within the literature review, the term 'stalking' is associated with stereotypes based on sensationalised media reports that 1) emphasise risks to personal safety and 2) often associate the behaviour with mental disorder. The purpose of this study was to elicit perceptions of stalking as a result of manipulating the independent variables mental disorder, gender and persistence. By introducing the scenario as stalking, participants could potentially be biased. For example, participants were required to indicate whether they believed the scenario depicted by the vignette specifically constituted stalking behaviour. Using the term stalking to introduce the study could confound the data.

Construction of the vignettes.

Vignettes are used in research to obtain opinions, beliefs, attitudes and perceptions about the scenario described. Barter and Renold (1999) provide some guidelines on creating vignettes suitable for research. They advise that the narrative should be believable, clear and easy to understand, but still be somewhat open to interpretation. This allows participants to make conclusions based on additional information that they have deduced. The scenarios should also be of an everyday nature, avoiding salient people and events. Vignettes are commonly used in perception research and are used frequently in stalking perception research (Kamphuis et al., 2005; Scott et al., 2010; Scott & Sheridan, 2011). Therefore vignettes were employed in the present study to maintain consistency with the literature.

The vignettes were designed to incorporate the elements of anti-stalking legislation that were common to all Australian jurisdictions. This was because the sample consisted of participants from eight different jurisdictions within Australia and

although anti-stalking legislation is similar between jurisdictions, subtle differences do exist. For example, the majority of jurisdictions specifically state that placing the target under surveillance is a stalking behaviour, whereas WA, QLD and NSW do not. It was important to determine which aspects of anti-stalking legislation were shared by all jurisdictions in order to protect against differences in participants' perceptions of stalking being due to variation between legislation rather than the manipulation of the independent variables.

The study vignette encompassed the three behaviours that are detailed in legislation Australia wide. 'Loitering or besetting the workplace, home or other location frequented by the target' and 'following the target' are explicitly listed with the legislation, while 'communicating' with the target is specifically listed in legislation for all jurisdictions except NSW. The NSW Police Force however (<http://www.police.nsw.gov.au>) interprets the legislation as including repeated phone calls, emails, text messages and a number of other methods of communication. As stated previously, a matrix of Australian jurisdictions and the elements specified in the relevant stalking legislation is provided in Appendix B.

For the most part, stalking legislation in all Australian jurisdictions requires the alleged perpetrator to have intended to cause physical or psychological/mental harm. In this context, intent can include behaviour of which a reasonable person would be aware, or the perpetrator ought to be aware, would cause harm to or apprehension in the target. The legislation in WA addresses intentional behaviour and behaviour that could reasonably be expected to intimidate within two different offences. The indictable offence requires that the perpetrator intended to cause apprehension but does not require intimidation to have occurred. In contrast, the intent element of the simple offence includes any behaviour that a reasonable person ought to expect would intimidate and

that in fact does intimidate. The potential for the target to be experiencing harm or apprehension was conveyed in the study vignette by the perpetrator repeatedly communicating with and possibly following the target. The vignettes were purposefully constructed in such a way that target apprehension or fear of harm was not explicit. That is, it was not stated that the target definitely was or definitely was not experiencing fear or apprehension. This is because one of the dependent variables measured perceptions of the likeliness that the target was experiencing anxiety or fear as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour.

Communication behaviour was described in the vignette as the perpetrator telephoning the target in their office on more than one occasion despite the target requesting the behaviour to cease. Possible following behaviour was indicated by the target noticing the perpetrator walking a short distance behind them as they walked to the university car park on more than one occasion. Some aspects of the scenario were intentionally undetailed to allow participants to extrapolate their own interpretation of the behaviour. For example, it was not stated explicitly that the perpetrator was following the target. Other behaviours, such as loitering, were altogether absent from the scenario. In Scott and Sheridan (2011) loitering behaviour was depicted in the study vignette to indicate a higher offence level condition. Therefore, loitering behaviour was excluded from the vignette as offence level was not manipulated as a part of this study.

The unwanted nature of a perpetrator's behaviour is crucial to anti-stalking legislation. In the vignette the target repeatedly asked the perpetrator not to telephone again, implying that the behaviour was unwanted. Secondly, each time the target spotted the perpetrator walking behind them, they *quickly* got into their car and drove away. This sentence was designed to indicate that the target may be concerned about their safety. Finally, the perpetrator is described as becoming agitated and verbally abusive

towards the target during more than one unsolicited telephone call. The perpetrator then hangs up on the target. Again, this behaviour was portrayed in the vignette in order to allow the participant to identify possible threats, and therefore potential target anxiety or apprehension.

The vignette was described as taking place at a university location because a university campus is a large area comprising of a large number of individual workplaces, not all of which are academic in nature. The target and the perpetrator did not work together, however they did work on the same university campus. This was designed so as to allow a participant to extrapolate their own interpretation of the invasion of personal space and impingement upon privacy. For example, participants could consider the perpetrator and target approaching the carpark at the same time in isolation and perceive it as a coincidence. Alternatively, they could consider the behaviour together with other actions presented in the scenario and regard it as important in defining stalking.

Study questions and pilot study.

As with the vignette, the study questions were developed so as to maintain consistency with the existing stalking perceptions literature. Perceptions of stalking are frequently measured with scale items (Kamphuis et al., 2005; Scott et al., 2010; Scott, Nixon, & Sheridan, 2013; Scott & Sheridan, 2011; Weller et al., 2013), categorical questions (Cass, 2011; Dennison & Thomson, 2000) and qualitative responses (Cass, 2011; Scott, Gavin, Sleath, & Sheridan, 2014). The present study included one closed categorical question. This type of question generally allows participants to provide prompt responses (Roberts, 2010), however can lead to participants selecting a response even when they do not have adequate knowledge of the topic. For this reason, participants were given the option of responding ‘yes’, ‘no’ and ‘I don’t know’.

Although the information letter did include the researcher's contact details so that participants had an avenue to ask questions regarding the study, such clarification is not as simple as it might be during an interview. In order to ensure the study materials were clear (Groves et al., 2009) a pilot study was undertaken prior to conducting the main study. Performing a pilot study is not a surety of success in the main study, however it is strongly recommended as part of any research (Beebe, 2007). When materials are being developed a pilot study gives the researcher an opportunity to discuss potential ambiguity with the participants and to review questionnaire items (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001) that may ultimately result in missing data or inconsistent responses (Groves et al., 2009). Additionally the purpose of the pilot study was simply to ensure that the study materials were clear and that the independent variables had been adequately manipulated.

Two main concerns of pilot studies is the inclusion of pilot data in the final results and resurveying participants from the pilot in the main study (Peat, 2002). Since the final study is not independent of the pilot study, the data from each should not be combined (Eldridge & Kerry, 2012). The data from this pilot study was not included in the final results. The pilot study was administered to the researcher's immediate family and friends ($N = 20$) and these participants were not resampled for the main study. The questionnaire was completed by the participant with the researcher present, during a confidential interview that lasted an average of 20 minutes. During this time, the participant could ask questions for clarification or make comment on the questionnaire and the researcher recorded these remarks.

Each participant completed the study questions for two different pairs of vignettes. For example, the participant read the vignette in which mental disorder was present and responded to the study questions. Next they read the vignette where mental

disorder was absent and again responded to the study questions. The levels of the other two independent variables (gender and persistence) were held constant between the two vignettes so that the mental disorder factor could be reviewed in isolation. The order of presentation was counterbalanced among the participants. The responses to each pair of vignettes were compared and no ceiling or floor effects were found. Participants repeated this process with a second pair of vignettes. Due to the small sample size, inferential analyses were not undertaken.

A number of minor changes were made to the study materials as a result of the participant feedback and questions. These included: specifying that the target was asked out ‘repeatedly’; increasing ‘two occasions’ to ‘several’; the addition of ‘asking the target about their day prior to enquiring after academic opportunities during the phone calls; the addition of the perpetrator being verbally abusive and hanging up the phone call to the target; specifying that the car park in which the target noticed the perpetrator walking a short distance behind was the university car park; and the inclusion of a demographic question asking participants to identify if they were a mental health professional, or had personal experience with mental health.

Analysis of the Quantitative Data

The following section discusses the methodology for the quantitative analyses and includes a rationale for why each statistical test was chosen in the final results chapter, and the associated assumptions of each procedure.

Categorical dependent variable.

The categorical item, ‘Do you think [the perpetrator’s] behaviour is stalking?’ consisted of three response options; ‘yes’, ‘don’t know’, and ‘no’. Due to the small number of responses in the latter two categories a single classification of ‘no/don’t

know' was created. The two categories essentially became presence of a belief that the behaviour was stalking and absence of a belief that the behaviour was stalking.

Binomial logistic regression was initially chosen to analyse this item because unlike linear discriminant function analysis, it does not require multivariate normality and it is a common method of analysing dichotomous present/not present variable outcomes (Peng & So, 2002). However, the resulting model was a poor fit, as there was no change between the null model and the model fitted with predictors (see Appendix H). Therefore, a chi-square analysis was performed, as detailed in the results chapter. The assumptions of the chi-square analysis as detailed by McHugh (2013) are that: the data within each cell is independent; that both variables are categorical; that the data is count data; that each subject is counted only once; that levels of the variables are mutually exclusive; and that the percentage of expected frequencies that is less than five does not exceed 20.0%. These assumptions were met. McHugh also states that the data should be random however the analysis is commonly used with convenience samples.

Scale dependent variables.

There are a number of multivariate analyses suitable for analysing scale items however MANOVA was utilised to ensure consistency with the existing stalking perceptions literature. Chartier and Allaire (2007) highlight several advantages to performing MANOVA. Firstly, conducting a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests results in an over-inflated risk of committing a Type I error. MANOVA is also more powerful than several ANOVAs as the overall effect combines groups. Unlike ANOVA, MANOVA takes into account the relationship between dependent variables, making it possible to examine interactions between them.

To conduct a MANOVA, several assumptions need to be met. The assumptions of interval level data, categorical independent variables, and independent samples were

met. Reviewing a matrix scatterplot of the five dependent variables showed that the linearity assumption had also been met. Histograms and analysis of z-score above ± 3 revealed that for some conditions the assumption of normality was violated. Further investigation showed that the raw data for several conditions contained univariate outliers. Calculation of Mahalanobis distance showed that there were also multivariate outliers, likely due to the non-normality of the data. Meeting all the assumptions of MANOVA in practice is improbable (Bray & Maxwell, 1985), however a number of procedures including non-parametric testing and data transformation were undertaken to ensure the justification of utilising MANOVA in the final analysis. Each procedure is detailed below.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was significant at $\alpha < .001$ for all conditions, indicating that the distributions were not normal. The majority of the conditions had a skewness and kurtosis statistic that fell within the range of -1 to 1 for each dependent variable, which is considered acceptable (Osborne, 2008). For most of the conditions, the dependent variables target responsibility and perpetrator responsibility deviated from this. The most extreme deviation occurred for perpetrator responsibility where mental disorder was absent (skewness = -2.87, kurtosis = 10.17). The K-S test is often regarded as highly sensitive and Field (2009) recommends that the K-S test be applied in conjunction with a visual inspection of all data.

Histograms, normal q-q plots, and de-trended normal p-p plots showed that normality was violated at differing degrees across the conditions. Comparing the histograms of perpetrator responsibility across the different levels of the independent variables showed that while the distribution was highly negatively skewed for the mental disorder absent conditions, it was more evenly distributed in the mental disorder present conditions. Outliers were present in boxplots for most conditions. Extreme

outliers existed in the mental disorder absent conditions for the dependent variable target responsibility, and in the two weeks behaviour persistence conditions for the items target responsibility and perpetrator responsibility.

In total there were 48 outliers in the raw dataset. Removing all outliers from the raw data was ineffective. Each time the outliers were removed from the dataset, boxplots showed that more outliers had been generated in the newest iteration of the dataset. It took 18 iterations before no outliers existed in the dataset, however just 18 cases remained. A similar effect of creating outliers occurred when only the extreme outliers were removed. After four iterations of removing extreme outliers only, 39 other outliers still remained. For more detail see Appendix I.

There are many opinions regarding outliers within the literature. Orr, Sackett, and DuBois (1991) support retaining outliers as they believe that doing so results in a dataset that is more typical of the population being sampled. This is only the case if the outliers are not as a result of data entry errors. The data was checked to ensure that no mistakes had occurred while manually entering the data. Data entry errors were not present. Stevens (1984) suggests that Cook's values are reviewed for any greater than one in order to determine whether or not an outlier is an influential point. The dataset did not contain any values greater than one. Norman and Streiner (2008) offer three options for dealing with non-normality resultant of outliers: removing the outliers by trimming the data; using ranks in place of the raw data; and reporting the result of multiple univariate tests rather than a single MANOVA.

A common method for dealing with outliers and non-normality is to transform the data to another scale (Coolican, 2004). Data that has been successfully transformed allows for the assumption of normality to be met and for outliers to be retained in the analysis (Osborne, 2008). It is crucial to be aware that transforming data can make the

results more difficult to interpret, because the original measurement scale has been altered (Osborne, 2008). For this reason, Finney (1989) suggests that data transformation should only be utilised when there is a clear justification for doing so. Because data transformation has the advantage of clarifying patterns in the data that might not otherwise be easily identified (Roberts, 2008) it was attempted.

Both log and square root transformations worsened the skewness and kurtosis statistics of the five dependent variables overall. Histograms confirmed that the transformation did not improve the distributions. Furthermore, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic remained significant in all conditions for both transformation types. The results of the log and square root transformations are detailed in Appendix J and Appendix K respectively. When a data transformation is applied it must be applied across all data. For example, it would not be correct to transform one variable within the MANOVA model, but analyse the remaining four variables in the raw form. Therefore, if the transformations are inadvertently having a negative effect on distributions that were normal in the raw data, the researcher must decide whether a transformation is the best way of handling the data (Laerd Statistics, 2014).

Central Limit Theorem states that when sample sizes are equal to or greater than 30 cases per condition, the sampling distribution of the means are normally distributed irrespective of the distribution of the variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). When analysing grouped data, a normal distribution is required of the sampling distribution of the means. Therefore retaining cases was more pertinent than removing all outliers. Heterogeneity of the variance-covariance matrix is not a concern when cell counts are equal (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The condition with the smallest cell count was equal to 35 participants. Therefore the most extreme cases ($N = 8$) were removed from each condition until cell counts all equalled 35, leaving an overall sample size of $N = 280$.

This resulted in the greatest equal-sized cell count possible while removing the most extreme outliers.

MANOVA is said to be robust to violations when non-normality is moderate (Lesaffre, 1983). This claim was tested by conducting a series of non-parametric tests and comparing the results with that of the MANOVA, as recommended by Stevens (1984). A Mann Whitney-U test was run for each combination of independent variable and the five dependent variables for the reduced sample of 280 participants. The results were consistent with that of a MANOVA. As the assertion that MANOVA is robust to violations of the assumptions was supported by the results from non-parametric testing, the MANOVA was utilised in the final analysis. The Mann Whitney-U results are reported in Appendix L.

The dependent variables in a MANOVA should be conceptually associated with each other and usually limited to less than seven (Norman & Streiner, 2008). Highly related variables should not be present but the dependent variables should be mildly correlated with each other (Meyer, Gampst & Guarino, 2006). Multicollinearity was not an issue as the tolerance statistics were greater than .3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014) for all the dependent variables. The correlation matrix for the five dependent variables is presented in Table 2 below.

As the dependent variables in the present study were replicated from previous stalking experiments (Phillips et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2010; Scott & Sheridan, 2011) it was expected that they would be related. All of the combinations except one were moderately related. The strongest relationship was between likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety and likeliness of the target experiencing violence, $R^2 = .53$. The weakest relationship existed between likeliness of the target experiencing violence and target responsibility $R^2 = .02$. The correlation matrix was examined to determine which

of these two variables should be removed. In comparison with likeliness of the target experiencing violence, target responsibility was less correlated with the other dependent variables. Therefore it was eliminated from the model and a second MANOVA including four dependent variables was conducted.

Table 2

Correlation Coefficients of the Scale Items

Variable	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Violence	-				
Anxiety	.53**	-			
Duration	.38**	.33**	-		
Target	-.02	-.21**	-.11	-	
Perpetrator	.25**	.16**	.26**	.21**	-

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

** $p < .01$.

The significance level of Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices (Box's M) was set to .001 rather than .05 as is generally recommended (Mayers, 2013). The test was not significant, $M=116.26$, $p = .001$, suggesting homogeneity of variance within the dependent variable covariance matrix. Levene's test of equality of error variances was non-significant for all dependent variables except responsibility of perpetrator ($p < .001$). Norman and Streiner (2008) recommend performing multiple univariate analyses when the Levene's test is significant. As both ANOVAs (see Appendix M) and Mann-Whitney tests (see Appendix L) produced the same pattern of results as the MANOVA, analysis continued with the latter.

Using Pillai's Trace statistic the $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (mental disorder \times gender \times persistence) MANOVA with four dependent variables (see Appendix N) yielded the

same pattern of results as a MANOVA with all five dependent variables. Past research has shown that target responsibility influences perceptions of stalking (Beebe, 2007; Scott et al., 2010) therefore it made conceptual sense to include the item. As a consequence of this together with the MANOVA outcome and the mild correlations between target responsibility and three other dependent variables, it was retained within the final analysis.

Although inclusion of target responsibility caused a significant Box's M statistic ($M=174.75, p < .001$) no significant results were lost as a consequence of including the fifth dependent variable. In fact an additional significant finding relating to target responsibility emerged. Box's M is a highly sensitive test (Olson, 1974) and the outcome of violating the assumption of homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrix is a minor decrease in statistical power (Norman & Streiner, 2008). Some experts state that when sample sizes are equal, as is the case in the current study, that Box's M can be ignored entirely (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). This is because the Hotelling and Pillai statistics are considered to be robust in spite of the violation (Field, 2009). Pillai's Trace statistic was used to report the final MANOVA model in the results chapter.

Scale dependent variables and the covariate.

The participants in the mental disorder absent conditions were asked an additional question to account for any assumption of the presence of mental disorder. Not considering an extraneous variable can lead to less confident claims regarding the result of a study (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). The question was 'how likely is it that [the perpetrator] has a diagnosed mental disorder?' and it was measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (highly unlikely) to 10 (highly likely). The covariate item will be referred to as 'likeliness of mental disorder'. Almost three quarters (72.9%)

of the responses were rated 5 or higher. This indicated a tendency for participants to extrapolate a mental health diagnosis when the perpetrator's mental health information was absent from the scenario.

A MANOVA and MANCOVA including the covariate were conducted on the mental disorder absent conditions (N = 140). This dataset was drawn from the data previously used in the MANOVA (N = 280) that included all conditions within the study. An assumption of MANCOVA is that the dependent variables are moderately correlated with the covariate. As shown in Table 3, this assumption was met for three of the dependent variables, therefore a MANCOVA was conducted with only likeliness of violence, likeliness of anxiety, and likely duration of the behaviour. The pattern of results was the same as a MANCOVA that included all the dependent variables. For consistency, target responsibility and perpetrator responsibility were retained in the final analysis.

Table 3

Covariate-Dependent Variable Correlation Matrix

Variable	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder (covariate)					
M = 5.53 SD = 2.35	.30**	.27**	.26**	.02	-.05
Violence	-	.51**	.45**	-.07	.14
Anxiety		-	.24**	-.26**	.06**
Duration			-	-.04	.16
Target				-	-.14

Note. Mental Disorder = Likeliness of Mental Disorder; Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

** $p < .01$.

A non-significant Box's M ($p = .177$) test confirmed that the correlations were consistent regardless of the level of the independent variable. All Levene's test statistics were non-significant. A further assumption of MANCOVA is independence of the covariates. That is, the scores of the covariate should not be different at each level of the independent variables. To check this, a t -test was conducted with the covariate for each of the independent variables. For gender there was no significant difference in the covariate scores between the female-male target-perpetrator ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 2.17$) and the male-female target-perpetrator ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 2.45$) conditions, $t(137) = .90$, $p = .332$. For persistence there was no significant difference in the covariate scores between the 2 weeks persistence ($M = 5.87$, $SD = 2.25$) and the 12 weeks persistence ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 2.35$) conditions, $t(137) = 1.53$, $p = .877$. Therefore this assumption was satisfied. The results of the MANCOVA are reported in the results chapter.

Consideration of Data Collection Modes

A number of analyses were undertaken comparing the different data collection modes. These analyses were not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to show that the data collection mode did not influence the pattern of findings reported in the results chapter. Initially data was collected completely online. Evans and Mathur (2005) give a variety of reasons for utilising online study materials including: greater participant recruitment; the participants can complete the study in their own time and at a preferred pace; the ability to present the order of questions in a controlled manner; forced answer completion to reduce missing data; a reduction in data collection duration; and a reduction in data entry on the part of the researcher. They also note the potential limitation of low response and completion rates as many people who are sent an electronic link do not go on to start or complete the questionnaire. Achieving an

adequate number of online-mode participants proved difficult. To complete data collection in a timely manner, offline-mode participants were recruited to the study.

For the most part there was little difference between the two data collection modes. However one major variation was that participants completing the latter were able to go back and review previous aspects of the materials while completing the study questions. Those who participated online were not able to do this. The main reason for not including a back button on the online survey was to avoid context effects, where participants can alter their answers based on previous elements of the questionnaire. To test whether data collection mode influenced the responses, analyses were conducted to compare the two modes. Due to the small number of participants who completed the study offline, it was not possible to conduct two separate MANOVAs for comparison. Instead, all quantitative analyses reported in the results section were replicated with the offline-mode responses excluded. A MANOVA including all conditions; MANOVA and MANCOVA including only the mental disorder present conditions; and chi-square analyses for all conditions were replicated for the online-mode participants. The results were consistent with the final analyses reported in the results chapter. They are detailed in Appendix O.

Analysis of the Qualitative Data

The principles of thematic analysis were applied to the qualitative data. This approach is currently used within the stalking perceptions literature (Cass, 2011; Scott, Gavin, et al., 2014). A thematic analysis was conducted because this method is flexible and it aids in explaining a phenomenon by identifying patterns within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). The patterns, known as themes, should relate back to the research question and be meaningful, as opposed to a collection of quotes made by participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The qualitative

question was intended to discover what information the participant's used when forming their decision regarding perceptions of stalking.

Rather than simply analyse how often each theme occurred, the thematic analysis also investigated variations in the way each theme was presented and understood by the participants. Thematic analysis is a recursive process (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2006) whereby the data is constantly re-read and examined in an iterative manner, requiring an intimate knowledge and understanding of the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). The present study followed the guidelines set out by Braun and Clarke (2006). The study item was an open-ended 'Why?' question to the dependent variable 'Do you think [the perpetrator's] behaviour is stalking?'. The following process was observed.

To start the analysis the participant comments were compiled into a spreadsheet. The condition to which each participant had been assigned was not included. This was to avoid any potential bias on the part of the researcher while coding the data. The relevant participant number was attached to each comment so that the study conditions could be separated after coding was completed. Next, the data was read through twice without taking notes. This was to ensure that the researcher was familiar with and had a solid understanding of the data prior to coding. Coding then commenced. A bottom-up approach was utilised to generate the codes and over 100 codes were identified for each dataset in the initial coding stage. Coding is the process of organising the data into easily identifiable groups (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). It involved taking notes on individual words, salient phrases and meaningful expressions. The number of times a word or phrase occurred was not measured at this point, as Braun and Clarke (2006) specifically state that the frequency with which a code occurs does not necessarily make it any more or less important in theme development.

Once the data was coded the codes were organised into potential themes, and then further into sub-themes. These were then applied to the raw data in order to understand how well they represented the dataset. Where themes were deficient or crossed over with other themes, they were refined and redefined until concise and clear themes without overlap remained. This process took place two times before the themes were clean and ready for use. A codebook was created, and each theme was given a name and a definition. The codebook was used as a reference when applying the developed themes.

After the themes had been applied by the researcher the number of times each theme occurred was tallied. This procedure of applying the themes to the dataset and tallying was then repeated by a second individual to ensure an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability was achieved. A Cohen's kappa of .92 was obtained, showing an excellent level of agreement. It is important to note that the use of the kappa statistic was not to confirm that the themes reported within the results chapter were the only themes that existed within the data. Rather, this test was used to show that the codebook containing the definitions of the reported themes was coherent and concise, and able to be applied meaningfully by a second rater. The thematic analysis is reported within the results chapter.

Chapter 4: Quantitative Results

The results of this study are presented in two separate chapters. This chapter details the quantitative analyses. First, the findings for the categorical question measuring perceptions of stalking are presented. The second analysis provided is for the five scale items that pertain to the behaviour depicted in the vignette. Finally, perceptions relating to the likeliness of perpetrator mental disorder are assessed by examining the covariate scale item. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 20.

Perceptions of Stalking

Chi-square analyses.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted for each of the independent variables: mental disorder \times gender \times persistence. The dependent variable was ‘do you think [the perpetrator’s] behaviour is stalking?’. There were originally three response categories of ‘yes’, ‘no’ and ‘don’t know’. Due to small counts in the latter two options, these were combined to form the single category ‘no / don’t know’, thereby resulting in a dichotomous response. Testing of the assumptions of chi-square analysis and justification for using this technique over binomial logistic regression are provided within the methodology chapter.

The relationship between the behaviour being perceived as stalking was significant for the variable mental disorder, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = 8.61, p = .003$. Participants in the conditions where mental disorder was absent were more likely to perceive the behaviour to be stalking (92.1%) compared to participants in the conditions where mental disorder was present (80.0%). The relationship between the variables gender,

$\chi^2(1, N = 280) = .27, p = .605$, and persistence, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = .27, p = .605$, and the behaviour being perceived as stalking were non-significant. A three-layer cross-tabulation (see Appendix Q) confirmed that the direction of the result was consistent among the conditions, and that no interactions between the independent variables were present (see Appendix Q). The descriptive statistics are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceptions of the Behaviour in the Scenario Constituting Stalking (N and %)

Independent Variable	Yes		No / Don't Know		$\chi^2(1)$
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Mental Disorder					8.61**
Absent	129	92.1	11	7.9	
Present	112	80.0	28	20.0	
Gender					.27
Female-male	119	85.0	21	15.0	
Male-female	122	87.1	18	12.9	
Persistence					.27
2 weeks	122	87.1	18	12.9	
12 weeks	119	85.0	21	15.0	

** $p < .01$.

MANOVA.

Using Pillai's Trace statistic a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (mental disorder \times gender \times persistence) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted on the five scale items. Testing of the assumptions of MANOVA are provided within the methodology chapter. The results indicated significant main effects for mental disorder, $F(5, 268) = 12.76, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$, and gender, $F(5, 268) = 7.63, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$ on the combined scale items. The main effect of persistence was non-significant, $F(5, 268) = .71, p = .618, \eta^2 =$

.01. The interaction effects were also non-significant. As recommended by Norman and Streiner (2008) a Bonferroni-type adjustment was applied to consequent univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) tests, reducing the alpha level to .01. The purpose of this adjustment is to protect against making a Type I error. The means and standard deviations of the scale items across each level of the three independent variables mental disorder, gender and persistence, are displayed in Table 5. Table 6 displays the MANOVA and ANOVA ratios and significance levels for mental disorder, gender and persistence.

Mental disorder was found to influence participants' perceptions of target responsibility, $F(1, 272) = 7.56, p = .006, \eta^2 = .03$, and perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 272) = 58.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$. Mental disorder did not influence participants' perceptions of likeliness of violence towards the target, $F(1, 272) = 5.13, p = .024, \eta^2 = .02$, likeliness the target was experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 272) = 3.64, p = .057, \eta^2 = .01$, or the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 272) = .97, p = .326, \eta^2 = .00$. The target was more likely to be perceived as responsible for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour when mental disorder was present ($M = 1.23, SD = 1.67$) than when mental disorder was absent ($M = .76, SD = 1.13$). Conversely, the perpetrator was less likely to be perceived as responsible for their own behaviour when mental disorder was present ($M = 7.56, SD = 2.13$) than when mental disorder was absent ($M = 9.24, SD = 1.47$).

Gender was shown to influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of violence towards the target, $F(1, 272) = 14.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .05$, and likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 272) = 33.66, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$. Gender did not influence participants' perceptions of the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour,

$F(1, 272) = .73, p = .395, \eta^2 = .00$, level of perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 272) = 1.52, p = .218, \eta^2 = .01$, or level of target responsibility, $F(1, 272) = .03, p = .868, \eta^2 = .00$.

The target was perceived to be more likely to experience anxiety as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour when the target-perpetrator gender was female-male ($M = 8.81, SD = 1.37$) than when it was male-female ($M = 7.73, SD = 1.75$). The target was also perceived as more likely to experience violence by the perpetrator when the target-perpetrator gender was female-male ($M = 6.36, SD = 1.82$) than when it was male-female ($M = 5.48, SD = 2.11$).

Persistence did not influence participants' perceptions of likelihood of violence, $F(1, 272) = .24, p = .625, \eta^2 = .00$, likelihood of anxiety, $F(1, 272) = .05, p = .819, \eta^2 = .00$, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 272) = .84, p = .360, \eta^2 = .00$, the responsibility level of the target, $F(1, 272) = .07, p = .795, \eta^2 = .01$, and the responsibility level of the perpetrator, $F(1, 272) = 1.36, p = .245, \eta^2 = .00$.

Table 5

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Scale Items by Mental Disorder, Gender and Persistence

	Violence		Anxiety		Duration		Target		Perpetrator	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Mental disorder										
Absent	6.19	2.02	8.45	1.52	6.94	1.69	.76	1.13	9.24	1.47
Present	5.66	1.99	8.09	1.78	6.72	1.92	1.23	1.67	7.56	2.13
Gender										
Female-male	6.36	1.82	8.81	1.37	6.92	1.93	.98	1.43	8.54	1.90
Male-female	5.48	2.11	7.73	1.75	6.74	1.69	1.01	1.47	8.26	2.11
Persistence										
2 weeks	5.98	2.18	8.25	1.74	6.93	1.83	.89	1.46	8.37	2.15
12 weeks	5.86	1.85	8.29	1.59	6.73	1.80	1.09	1.43	8.43	1.87

Note. Target = target responsibility; Perpetrator = perpetrator responsibility

Table 6

Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance for Perceptions of Stalking

Variable	ANOVA $F(1, 272)$					
	MANOVA $F(5, 268)$	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder (M)	12.76***	5.13	3.64	0.97	7.56**	58.78***
Gender (G)	7.63***	14.41***	33.66***	0.73	0.03	1.52
Persistence (P)	0.71	0.24	0.05	0.84	1.36	0.07
$M \times G$	0.53	1.82	1.68	0.43	0.11	0.11
$M \times P$	0.40	0.14	0.21	0.04	0.69	1.08
$G \times P$	0.41	1.65	0.29	0.52	0.06	0.04
$M \times G \times P$	1.02	2.34	2.33	0.00	0.84	0.11

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Perceptions of Likelihood of Mental Disorder.

Participants in the mental disorder absent conditions were asked ‘how likely is it that [the perpetrator] has a diagnosed mental disorder?’. Likelihood of mental disorder was included to address whether or not participants assumed that mental disorder was present even when it was not stated in the vignette. This covariate item will be referred to as ‘likelihood of mental disorder’. It was measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (highly unlikely) to 10 (highly likely). Almost three quarters (72.9%) of the responses were rated 5 or higher, indicating that when the perpetrator’s mental health information was missing from the vignette, the majority of participants believed a mental disorder diagnosis was extant.

In order to investigate the impact of this belief on perceptions of stalking and responsibility the scale items were re-analysed for the conditions where mental disorder was absent. A MANOVA was conducted first and this was followed by a MANCOVA that incorporated the covariate item. Testing of the assumptions that underlie MANCOVA is reported in detail within the methodology chapter.

MANOVA.

Using Pillai's Trace statistic a 2×2 (gender \times persistence) MANOVA found a significant main effect for gender, $F(5, 132) = 2.43, p = .038, \eta^2 = .08$ on the combined scale items. The main effect of persistence was non-significant, $F(5, 132) = .78, p = .569, \eta^2 = .03$. The interaction between gender and persistence was also non-significant, $F(5, 132) = .51, p = .766, \eta^2 = .02$. As with the previous analyses, a Bonferroni-type adjustment was applied to subsequent univariate ANOVAs, reducing the alpha level to .01. Table 7 displays the MANOVA and ANOVA ratios and significance levels for gender and persistence.

Table 7

Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance – Manipulation Check MANOVA

		ANOVA $F(1, 136)$				
Variable	MANOVA					
	$F(5, 132)$	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Gender (G)	2.43*	2.82	11.48**	0.02	0.20	0.21
Persistence (P)	0.78	0.03	0.35	0.30	3.24	0.13
G \times P	0.51	0.23	0.56	0.30	0.36	0.45

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Gender was found to influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 136) = 11.48, p = .001, \eta^2 = .08$. Gender did not influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of violence towards the target, $F(1, 136) = 2.82, p = .096, \eta^2 = .02$, how long the behaviour was likely to persist, $F(1, 136) = .02, p = .882, \eta^2 < .01$, level or target responsibility, $F(1, 136) = .20, p = .654, \eta^2 < .01$, or level of perpetrator responsibility $F(1, 136) = .21, p = .644, \eta^2 < .01$. The target was perceived to be more likely to experience anxiety as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour when the target-perpetrator gender was female-male ($M = 8.87, SD = 1.37$) than when it was male-female ($M = 8.03, SD = 1.55$). The means and standard deviations of the scale items across each level of the independent variables gender and persistence are displayed in Table 9 in the following section.

Persistence did not influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of the likeliness of violence towards the target, $F(1, 136) = .03, p = .863, \eta^2 = .00$, the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 136) = .35, p = .558, \eta^2 = .00$, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 136) = .30, p = .587, \eta^2 = .00$, level of target responsibility, $F(1, 136) = 3.24, p = .074, \eta^2 = .02$. or level of perpetrator responsibility $F(1, 136) = .13, p = .719, \eta^2 = .00$.

MANCOVA.

The MANOVA was followed up with a MANCOVA that included the covariate item. Using Pillai's Trace statistic, the combined dependent variables were significantly related to the covariate, likeliness of mental disorder, $F(5, 131) = 5.16, p < .001, \eta^2 = .16$. A significant main effect was found for gender, $F(5, 131) = 3.13, p = .010, \eta^2 = .11$, on the combined scale items. The main effect of persistence was non-significant, $F(5, 131) = .83, p = .532, \eta^2 = .03$. The interaction effect was also non-significant. As with the MANOVA detailed earlier, a Bonferroni-type adjustment was

applied to consequent univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), reducing the alpha level to .01. Gender was shown to influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 135) = 15.12, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$. Gender did not influence participants' perceptions of likeliness of violence to the target, $F(1, 135) = 4.41, p = .038, \eta^2 = .03$, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 135) = .20, p = .663, \eta^2 = .00$, level of target responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .17, p = .681, \eta^2 = .00$, or level of perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .16, p = .686, \eta^2 = .00$. When likeliness of a perpetrator having a diagnosed mental disorder was taken into account a female target pursued by a male perpetrator ($M = 8.87, SD = 1.37$) was perceived to be more likely to experience anxiety than a male target pursued by a female perpetrator ($M = 8.03, SD = 1.55$). However this influence was greater than when the assumption of mental disorder was not accounted for.

Table 8 displays the MANOVA and ANOVA ratios and significance levels for gender and persistence.

The covariate, likeliness of mental disorder, was shown to influence participants' perceptions of likeliness of violence to the target, $F(1, 135) = 14.39, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$, the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 135) = 14.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$, and the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 135) = 9.52, p = .002, \eta^2 = .07$. The covariate did not influence the level of perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .20, p = .652, \eta^2 = .00$, or level of target responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .27, p = .606, \eta^2 = .00$.

The likeliness of a perpetrator having a diagnosed mental disorder was positively correlated with the likeliness of violence to the target, the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety and the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour. When the likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder was greater, the target was

perceived to be more likely to experience violence and anxiety by the perpetrator, and the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour was perceived to be greater.

Gender was shown to influence participants' perceptions of the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 135) = 15.12, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$. Gender did not influence participants' perceptions of likeliness of violence to the target, $F(1, 135) = 4.41, p = .038, \eta^2 = .03$, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 135) = .20, p = .663, \eta^2 = .00$, level of target responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .17, p = .681, \eta^2 = .00$, or level of perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .16, p = .686, \eta^2 = .00$. When likeliness of a perpetrator having a diagnosed mental disorder was taken into account a female target pursued by a male perpetrator ($M = 8.87, SD = 1.37$) was perceived to be more likely to experience anxiety than a male target pursued by a female perpetrator ($M = 8.03, SD = 1.55$). However this influence was greater than when the assumption of mental disorder was not accounted for.

Table 8

Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Covariance With Likelihood of Mental Disorder as the Covariate

Variable	MANCOVA $F(5, 131)$	ANOVA $F(1, 135)$				
		Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder (covariate)	5.16***	14.39***	14.51***	9.52***	0.20	0.27
Gender (G)	3.13**	4.41	15.12***	0.20	0.16	0.17
Persistence (P)	0.83	0.04	0.06	0.05	3.36	0.17
G × P	0.57	0.17	1.03	0.14	0.39	0.40

Note. Mental Disorder = Likeliness of Mental Disorder; Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Persistence was found to be non-significant in participants' perceptions of likeliness of violence, $F(1, 135) = .04, p = .847, \eta^2 = .00$, likeliness of anxiety, $F(1, 135) = .06, p = .810, \eta^2 = .00$, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour, $F(1, 135) = .05, p = .828, \eta^2 = .00$, level of target responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .336, p = .069, \eta^2 = .02$, and level of perpetrator responsibility, $F(1, 135) = .17, p = .679, \eta^2 = .00$.

Table 9

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Scale Items by Gender and Persistence

	Violence		Anxiety		Duration		Target		Perpetrator	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Gender										
Female-male	6.47	1.92	8.87	1.37	6.96	1.78	.71	1.12	9.27	1.53
Male-female	5.90	2.09	8.03	1.55	6.91	1.61	.53	1.15	9.14	1.73
Persistence										
2 weeks	6.92	1.98	8.47	1.45	7.01	1.76	.59	1.04	9.26	1.76
12 weeks	6.09	2.06	8.43	1.59	6.86	1.64	.93	1.20	9.16	1.50

Note. Target = target responsibility; Perpetrator = perpetrator responsibility.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Results

This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative component of the study where participants were asked to indicate why they believed the perpetrator's behaviour was or was not stalking. This analysis was carried out to identify the aspects of the vignette that were salient to participants. The quantitative analysis (presented in Chapter 4) showed that only the presence or absence of mental disorder was significantly associated with the belief that the behaviour was stalking. As the open-ended question was included to help explain why participants perceived the behaviour in the vignette to be stalking, this section focuses on the analysis of this experimental condition only. Significantly more participants perceived the behaviour to be stalking when mental disorder was absent compared to present.

First within this chapter, each theme and sub-theme is introduced and clearly defined. They are then considered in detail, and supported by participant quotes. The findings for when participants perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking are considered first, followed by those for when participants did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking. The chapter concludes by comparing the main differences between participants who did and did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking.

Ascriptions of a Stalking Label.

One-hundred and sixty-six participants provided a written response to the open-ended question asking why the behaviour was or was not perceived to be stalking. The majority of participants ascribed a stalking label to the behaviour described in the vignette irrespective of the presence or absence of mental disorder (N = 140, 84.3%). Overall, most participants emphasised the importance of *repeated behaviour* (N = 106, 75.7%) to form their decision and more than half recognised the significance of *unwanted behaviour* (N = 92, 65.7%). *Specific behaviour* was also highlighted

frequently within responses (N = 83, 59.3%). Across all conditions, few participants did not ascribe a stalking label to the perpetrator's behaviour (N = 26, 15.7%). Overall, the majority of these participants emphasised the importance of *mitigation* (69.2%) in forming their decision and over a quarter raised the theme *escalation* (26.9%).

In the absence of mental disorder 71 participants (89.9%) perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking and eight participants (10.1%) did not perceive it to be stalking. In the presence of mental disorder 69 participants (79.3%) perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking and 18 participants (20.7%) did not perceive it to be stalking. Analysis of this data distinguished seven distinct themes relating to either the target, the perpetrator or stalking legislation. Table 10 contains the names and definitions for each of these themes. For the most part, stalking was characterised in the same way in the absence and presence of mental disorder. However, some subtle variations did exist, the most notable difference being for the theme *mitigation*. These similarities and differences will be explored.

Within this chapter, percentages are shown to demonstrate the proportion of participants articulating perceptions consistent with a particular theme. Table 11 contains the number of participants drawing on each theme. Caution should be exercised when considering percentages relating to participants who did not ascribe a stalking label to the behaviour due to the small numbers in these conditions. For this reason, the number of participants indicating a theme or sub-theme has also been provided throughout the chapter.

All codes were discretely aligned with a single theme with a single exception. By definition, harassment means to 'disturb and impede by repeated raids' or 'to annoy continually' (Merriam-Webster Inc, 2003). By using the term harassment participants were able to concisely convey multiple themes including *repeated behaviour*, *unwanted*

behaviour and *target detriment*. Therefore, this term was coded to each of these themes accordingly.

Table 10

Theme Names and Definitions - Stalking

Theme	Definition
<i>Relating to the target</i>	
Unwanted behaviour	<p>The perpetrator's behaviour was unwanted by the target. There were two sub-themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Target communication in which the target communicated to the perpetrator to stop their behaviour. 2) Lack of encouragement in which the target was viewed as not encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour.
<i>Relating to the perpetrator</i>	
Mitigation	<p>The actions of the perpetrator were considered to be appropriate or justified, or the perpetrator deemed their own actions to be appropriate. There were three sub-themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Romantic motivation in which the perpetrator's advances were considered to be romantically driven. 2) Mental disorder in which the perpetrator's mental disorder either partially or fully mitigated their behaviour. 3) Coincidence in which the actions undertaken by the perpetrator were seen to be coincidental in nature.
<i>Relating to stalking legislation</i>	
Repeated behaviour	The perpetrator's behaviour was persistent and occurred on more than a single occasion.
Specific behaviour	<p>Identification of a specific behaviour. Specific behaviours were classified into two sub-themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Direct conduct including contacting, telephoning and following the target. 2) Indirect conduct including information gathering and monitoring of the target.

Theme	Definition
Target detriment	<p>There was a detrimental impact on the target. This theme was classified into three sub-themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Perpetrator actions including intimidation, harassment, threats and aggressive behaviour. 2) Target experience including anxiety, psychological damage and fear. 3) Invasion of privacy, defined as an intrusion into the target's life. References to the use of protective and violence restraining orders were included.
Escalation	<p>Attention was drawn to a change in the perpetrator's behaviour. This theme was classified into two sub-themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Escalation that had occurred. 2) Further escalation required.
Legislation	<p>An explicit reference was made to law, legislation or the criminal code.</p>

Table 11

Proportions of Themes Cited by Mental Disorder and Ascription of a Stalking Label

Theme	Stalking Label	Absent (N = 79)		Present (N = 87)		Overall (N = 166)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Pertaining to the Target</i>							
Unwanted Behaviour	Yes	45	63.4	47	68.1	92	65.7
	No	0	0.0	2	11.1	2	7.7
	Total	45	57.0	49	56.3	94	56.6
<i>Pertaining to the Perpetrator</i>							
Mitigation	Yes	3	4.2	7	10.1	10	7.1
	No	4	50.0	14	77.8	18	69.2
	Total	10	12.7	21	24.1	31	18.7
<i>Pertaining to Stalking Legislation</i>							
Repeated Behaviour	Yes	59	83.1	47	68.1	106	75.7
	No	0	0.0	2	11.1	2	7.7
	Total	61	77.2	49	56.3	110	66.3
Specific Behaviour	Yes	46	64.8	37	53.6	83	59.3
	No	1	12.5	3	16.7	4	15.4
	Total	47	59.5	40	46.0	87	52.4
Target Detriment	Yes	25	35.2	20	29.0	45	32.1
	No	1	12.5	6	33.3	7	26.9
	Total	26	32.9	26	29.9	52	31.3
Escalation	Yes	11	15.5	4	5.8	15	10.7
	No	4	50.0	3	16.7	7	26.9
	Total	15	19.0	7	8.0	22	13.3
Legislation	Yes	1	1.4	2	2.9	3	2.1
	No	1	12.5	5	27.8	6	23.1
	Total	2	2.5	7	8.0	9	5.4

Note: Mental disorder absent: Total Yes (N) = 71, Total No (N) = 8; Mental disorder present: Total Yes (N) = 69, Total No (N) = 18. Some percentages will not total to 100 due to rounding.

Participants ascribed a stalking label.

In the absence of mental disorder the three most widespread themes were *repeated behaviour*, *specific behaviour* and *unwanted behaviour*. Due to the dominance of these themes, they are discussed first. *Target detriment* and *escalation* are discussed next, as although these themes were less prevalent among participant responses each played an important role in participant reasoning. Finally, the themes *mitigation* and *legislation* are examined briefly. Each theme is presented first for when mental disorder was absent, then when mental disorder was present. As the dominant themes below demonstrate, recognition of a pervasive interference with the target's privacy and psychological well-being was integral to participants' reasoning. The perpetrator was perceived by participants to be stalking the target primarily because of an established and unrelenting pattern of behaviour.

Repeated behaviour

An overwhelming majority of participants emphasised the importance of the theme *repeated behaviour* when mental disorder was absent (N = 59, 83.1%). The perpetrator was perceived to be unrelentingly persistent in their pursuit of the target. *Repeated behaviour* was always referenced in conjunction with other themes and it was predominantly employed as an adjective to describe *specific behaviour* and *unwanted behaviour* (e.g., "Repeatedly approaching, contacting...", P171, absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 weeks).

Repeated behaviour was also the most commonly cited theme in the presence of mental disorder (N = 47, 68.1%). Once again, this theme was rarely present independently, but rather it was highlighted in the context of other dominant themes:

She is consistently harassing John...

(P216; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

[He has] continued contact...

(P076; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week)

Specific behaviour

Almost two thirds of participants drew attention to the theme *specific behaviour* when mental disorder was absent (N = 46, 64.8%), compared to just over half (N = 37, 53.6%) when mental disorder was present. This theme was divided into two sub-themes, *direct conduct* and *indirect conduct*. *Direct conduct* included telephoning, following, and contacting the target. When mental disorder was absent, telephoning (N = 26, 36.6%) and following (N = 28, 39.4%) the target were cited in similar proportions. Contact (N = 12, 16.9%) was also used to describe the perpetrator's behaviour. This could refer to either the café interactions with, telephone calls to, or following of the target. It was not uncommon for telephoning and following to be addressed within the same response in the absence of mental disorder (N = 19, 26.8%), however participants often distinguished telephoning the target's office from the constant pursuit attempts in the café:

Asking Gillian out every time she comes by *could* be playful or non-threatening, but the phone calls to her office and contacting her outside of the cafe, let alone following her, indicate a clear behaviour of stalking.

(P082; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

The vignette did not explicitly state that the perpetrator was following the target, but rather that they were walking behind the target to the car park at the same time. Participants tended to infer that the perpetrator was deliberately following the target to their car, and that there was an underlying pathology driving this behaviour:

He's following her around ... every day. Classic stalking right there.

(P089; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

... [She] follows him.

(P210; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

Because she won't stop following him/obsessing over him...

(P218; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

The sub-theme *direct conduct* was prominent in the presence of mental disorder, with participants often drawing attention to the telephone calls (N = 19, 27.5%) and perceived following of the target (N = 27, 36.2%). Of the participants who mentioned the telephone calls to support their response more than half highlighted the alleged following, with 17.4% (N = 12) of participants drawing attention to both of these behaviours:

Combination of phone calls and car park following.

(P032; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

...phone calls to the victim's office, following him etc.

(P243; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

The second sub-theme of *specific behaviour* was *indirect conduct*. When mental disorder was absent 11.3% (N = 8) of participants explicitly questioned how the perpetrator came to be in possession of the target's contact information, alluding to information gathering and monitoring behaviour. There was a notable elevation in seriousness attached to these comments. Participants insinuated that the perpetrator was not 'normal', or that they were unable to control their own actions due to an obsessive nature:

... Finding out his phone number and calling it.

(P262; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

... He's studying her movements and overstepping the line of what is normal behaviour...

(P028; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Calling her with a number he obviously didn't receive from her is stalking and obsessive behaviour.

(P022; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Very few participants (N = 3, 4.3%) discussed the sub-theme *indirect conduct* in the presence of mental disorder, however there was no shift in the emphasis that was placed on monitoring behaviour and how the perpetrator came to have knowledge of specific information relating to the target:

... gathering information on where he works and what his car looks like.

(P165; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

... hasn't given her his contact details.

(P232; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

... checking up on her.

(P030; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Unwanted behaviour

The theme *unwanted behaviour* was prevalent within participant responses when mental disorder was absent (N = 45, 63.4%) and present (N = 47, 68.1%). For the most part, participants specified why the perpetrator's behaviour was perceived to be unwanted (e.g., 'It is unwanted attention where John told Gillian "no".', P225; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week), in both conditions. This elucidation occurred via two sub-themes: what the target did do (*target communication*) and what they did not do (*lack of encouragement*).

In the absence of mental disorder over a third of participants drew attention to the sub-theme *target communication* (N = 29, 40.8%) and in some cases this was the only justification provided. Participants emphasised that the target had been unambiguous about their lack of interest, and subsequently labelled the perpetrator's behaviour as stalking:

John asked her to stop and she has refused.

(P228; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

Because Gillian told him she was not interested.

(P050; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Target communication remained important when mental disorder was present (N = 34, 49.3%), and the focus stayed on the lack of ambiguity in the target's

communication. It was important to participants that the target had adequately conveyed their disinterest to the perpetrator, indicating that the target was seen as somewhat responsible for managing the perpetrator's advances:

... even after being clearly told not interested.

(P125; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Because john has ... made it quite clear that the attention he is getting is not welcome.

(P265; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

The second sub-theme of *unwanted behaviour* was *lack of encouragement*.

Whereas the sub-theme *target communication* required an active rejection of the perpetrator that was explicitly voiced, *lack of encouragement* was characterised by the target being viewed as having done nothing to encourage the perpetrator. In the absence of mental disorder this sub-theme was raised by only a small proportion of participants (N = 5, 7.0%), suggesting that actively discouraging a perpetrator is more salient than simply ignoring the perpetrator's unwanted advances:

Unwanted sustained contact, being where [she] is not invited nor warranted...

(P181; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

Stalking is unwanted attention ... it sounds as though [she] has never given him a reason to think that she would [go out with him].

(P092; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

The sub-theme *lack of encouragement* was even less frequent when mental disorder was present (N = 3, 3.4%) but it was discussed in much the same way as when mental disorder was absent. Participants perceived that the target had not given the perpetrator a reason or excuse to engage in their chosen course of conduct:

[It is] without invitation...

(P114; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

John has not exhibited any interest in Gillian...

(P116; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

Target detriment

The theme *target detriment* was cited by 35.2% (N = 25) and 29.0% (N = 20) of participants when mental disorder was absent and present respectively. It was often inextricably tied in with the themes *repeated behaviour*, *unwanted behaviour* and *specific behaviour*. *Target detriment* was categorised into three sub-themes: *perpetrator actions*, *target experience*, and *invasion of privacy*. All three sub-themes appeared in both conditions.

The first sub-theme, *perpetrator actions*, was aligned with behaviour by the perpetrator that would likely result in a negative impact on the target. This included the perpetrator intimidating, harassing, or threatening the target. This sub-theme was common when mental disorder was absent (N = 17, 23.9%). The variety of actions the perpetrator engaged in within the vignette and the subsequent impact on the target was often condensed by labelling the conduct as harassment (e.g., 'He is harassing her in many ways', P065, absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week). Four participants (5.6%) suspected the perpetrator was driven by a more sinister motivation, describing

violence or threats in their response. For example, the following example demonstrates how John (perpetrator) is seen to pose an immediate threat to Gillian's (target) safety:

John is only concerned with his ownership/obtainment of her; hence the fact that in his mind, making her feel uncomfortable is secondary to him attaining her.
(P072; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

The proportion of participants who raised the sub-theme *perpetrator actions* was similar in the presence of mental disorder (N = 14, 20.3%). Additionally, perceptions did not shift, with just a few participants raising severe or extreme behaviours such as threatening behaviour or potential violence on the part of the perpetrator (eg., '... intimidating and threatening...', P157, present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week). The term harassment was also employed in the same way, encompassing multiple facets of the perpetrator's behaviour:

He is continuing to harass Gillian...
(P085; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

No one should be allowed to harass another person in this way.
(P280; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

The second sub-theme of *target detriment* was *target experience*. This included the target experiencing anxiety, psychological damage or fear as a result of the perpetrator's behaviour. Other than declining the perpetrator's requests for a date and asking them not to call their office again, the target's feelings about the situation were not explicitly stated in the vignette. Despite this, the perceived feelings of the target

were highlighted within *target experience* when mental disorder was absent (N = 4, 5.6%), even if it was not widespread.

Participants who addressed *target experience* surmised that the target was experiencing at least mild anxiety as a direct result of the perpetrator's behaviour. Furthermore, it was this psychological duress that made the behaviour unacceptable and socially inappropriate. For example, the following participant differentiated potential dating behaviour from predatory pursuit by examining the conduct in the context of Gillian's (target) emotional response to John's (perpetrator) actions:

If Gillian is in anyway feeling fearful, intimidated or threatened then yes John's behaviour is stalking. The initial request to ask out on dates, complementing her etc are not deemed criminal activities however when coupled with any form of harassment or threatening behaviour towards another individual then yes this is stalking.

(P047; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Target experience was also recognised minimally in the presence of mental disorder (N = 2, 2.9%). It was presented in the same manner as when mental disorder was absent, however it is difficult to generalise given that only two participants addressed this sub-theme. Stalking was alleged to have occurred due to the target experiencing fear and this was regardless of whether the perpetrator was perceived to have intended to cause that fear. In the following examples, participant P066 suggests that John's (perpetrator) behaviour has incidentally caused fear for Gillian (target), while participant P104 specifies John's intent to cause fear:

He is infringing upon her workplace and personal space, is persisting beyond what is reasonable, and is not accepting boundaries. This is likely causing fear and distress for the victim.

(P066; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

He was also acting in a manner to cause fear ...

(P104; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

The final sub-theme of *target detriment* was *invasion of privacy*, and this included recommendations for the target to seek a protective order of some kind. This sub-theme was raised by 9.9% of participants (N = 7) when mental disorder was absent. The perpetrator's behaviour was not seen to be problematic until it started to occur in places that were beyond the target's ability to control. Specifically, the perpetrator's behaviour in the café was perceived to be acceptable, however calling the target's workplace was not. This was perhaps due to an assumption that the target did not feel apprehensive about the café interactions, which is reasonable given the target's patronage each day at the café. The target was seen to be in control of their choice to continue visiting the café but this changed when the perpetrator was seen to gain control of the situation. That is, once they started to approach the target outside of the cafe, speculation regarding the target's privacy occurred:

Beginning to invade her life after being rejected.

(P012; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

I think tracking down someone in their workplace is crossing the stalking line.

(P168; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

In the presence of mental disorder the sub-theme *invasion of privacy* continued to be important to a small proportion of participants (N = 7, 10.1%). The perception that the target was not in control of the situation, and that their rights were being impinged by the perpetrator's actions remained pivotal:

John is stalking Gillian. Considerations to a VRO need to be made.

(P119; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

He is breaching her personal space and privacy.

(P135; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Escalation

The theme *escalation* was addressed by 15.5% (N = 11) of participants in the mental disorder absent condition and 5.8% (N = 4) of participants in the mental disorder present condition, and was very closely aligned with the theme *target detriment*.

Escalation was categorised into two sub-themes: *escalation that had occurred* and *further escalation was required*.

The sub-theme *escalation that had occurred* was stated by 14.1% (N = 10) of participants when mental disorder was absent. There was an undertone of a sense of fear for the target, and that continued escalation after being turned down would ultimately result in a severe outcome for the target:

Her behaviour is escalating...

(P162; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

This sub-theme was stated by just 4.3% (N = 3) of participants when mental disorder was present, and it was characterised specifically by a shift in either the location of the perpetrator's behaviour or the perpetrator's demeanour:

Because she has ... escalated it to his work...

(P245; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

The second sub-theme of *escalation* was that *further escalation was required*. In the absence of mental disorder this was raised only once (1.4%) making generalisability difficult. While the majority of participants in the mental disorder absent condition viewed the café as separate from the target's workplace, this participant identified the entire university campus as a single location. The perpetrator's behaviour was deemed not to have escalated due to a need for the behaviour to occur in multiple locations. Despite this, the participant still perceived the behaviour to be stalking:

To a certain extent, although he is keeping it to work and hasn't progressed yet!!!

(P083; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

When mental disorder was present this sub-theme was again expressed by just one participant (1.4%), however for this individual the need for the behaviour to persist for a greater length of time was important. This implies that the participant considered the behaviours depicted in the vignette to be stalking and expected the perpetrator's behaviour to continue:

It's almost stalking. If this continues, it is definitely stalking.

(P254; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

Mitigation

In the absence of mental disorder the theme *mitigation* was mentioned minimally (N = 3, 4.2%). This theme included three sub-themes: *romantic motivation*, *mental disorder*, and *coincidence*. The sub-themes *mental disorder* and *coincidence* were not stated in the absence of mental disorder. Only *romantic motivation* (N = 3, 4.2%) was extant in these participant responses. Here, the interactions that took place in the café were mitigated because they were perceived to be romantically inclined. This behaviour was however clearly differentiated from predacious behaviour that was deemed to be stalking. This is demonstrated in the following example, where the theme *mitigation* was overshadowed by that of *escalation*:

...Being friendly and flirtatious when John stops by is mostly harmless but calling his work etc. and following him is unacceptable.

(P147; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

The theme *mitigation* was twice as common in the presence of mental disorder (N = 7, 10.1%), largely due to a shift in the reason for mitigating the perpetrator's behaviour. Here, *romantic motivation* was raised once (N = 1, 1.4%) to excuse the behaviour (eg., '... Her advances are 'romantic' in nature', P1946; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week). The sub-theme *coincidence* was again not stated. Rather, the remaining responses referred to the sub-theme *mental disorder* (N = 6, 8.7%). This sub-theme focused on the perpetrator's diagnosed mental disorder as described in the

vignette. When mental disorder was absent this sub-theme was not raised. Two comments referred to an anti-social disposition but not a psychological disorder.

Whereas the participants in the mental disorder absent conditions were able to clearly distinguish between the behaviours that they did and did not perceive to constitute stalking and then mitigate accordingly, in the presence of mental disorder the participants who drew attention to the perpetrator's mental disorder distinguished between the behaviours and the perpetrator's intent. In the following example reasoning was fuzzy. Gillian's (perpetrator) behaviour was initially perceived to be stalking however her level of responsibility for it was diminished solely on the basis of her mental disorder. Lessening the perpetrator's responsibility had no influence on the perception that the actual behaviour was stalking, only their culpability for it:

However she clearly suffers from a mental disorder so is not 'stalking' in the true sense.

(P146; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

This belief that the perpetrator should have a clear and purposeful intent to engage in an unlawful pursuit of the target was consistent among responses that highlighted the *mental disorder* sub-theme. These participants considered the behaviour of stalking and the intent driving the behaviour separately when supporting their responses. Ultimately however, the behaviour itself was perceived to be stalking, regardless of the perpetrator's alleged culpability and accountability for their actions:

She may not understand it but the actual behaviour is...

(P275, present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

...problem being, he is not fully mentally capable of understanding...

(P023; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Although she can't help it, she is still stalking...

(P231; present, male target /female perpetrator, 2 week).

One participant (1.4%) approached the sub-theme *mental disorder* from a slightly different angle, believing that John's (perpetrator) behaviour could not be considered in isolation of his mental status and intent. This participant suggested that further investigation of whether the mental disorder was indeed relevant, and raised the issue of past criminal history. This supported the finding that a stalking label was generally applied because of an established pattern of behaviour rather than isolated incidents. The contradiction between advising of a need for more information yet indicating that the behaviour is stalking suggests that when mental disorder is relevant to the situation, it would serve to mitigate the perpetrator's responsibility. This in turn would result in not applying a stalking label:

It needs more research on his mental illness background and also history check before concluding yes or no.

(P122; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Legislation

In the absence of mental disorder the theme *legislation* was rarely discussed (N = 1, 1.4%). A single participant directly linked the perpetrator's conduct to the criminal code. In their response they identified two integral elements of the majority of stalking legislation in Australia. The first, that the behaviour occurred more than once, was

stated within the vignette. The second aspect was the negative psychological impact on the target. Given that the target's feelings were not defined in the vignette, this information was inferred on the basis of the repeated nature and specific acts of the perpetrator's conduct:

From a criminal/legal point of view John is continuing to behave in an intimidating manner over a prolonged period of time, repeatedly intimidating her.

(P281; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

When mental disorder was present references to *legislation* continued to be negligible (N = 2, 2.9%) and again served to confirm that the conduct described in the scenario satisfied the legal definition of stalking when it was raised. Both of the participants who indicated that they had relied on their knowledge of the law were confident that the behaviour portrayed in the vignette was encompassed by anti-stalking statutes. They did not however specify how:

As defined by the Western Australia Criminal Code.

(P064; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Because it follows the definition of what stalking is.

(P176; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

Participants did not ascribe a stalking label.

Fewer participants did not perceive the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking when mental disorder was absent compared to present. In order to maintain consistency

with the previous section, the results for each theme are presented first for the mental disorder absent conditions, followed by the mental disorder present conditions. When mental disorder was absent the two most prevalent themes were *mitigation* and *escalation*, therefore these are discussed first. Next, the themes *specific behaviour*, *target detriment* and *legislation*, all of which were mentioned minimally and in similar proportions, are explored. The themes *unwanted behaviour* and *repeated behaviour* were not raised when mental disorder was absent, and remained uncommon in the presence of mental disorder, therefore they are presented last.

Mitigation

In the absence of mental disorder, *mitigation* was one of two most commonly cited themes (N = 4, 50.0%). It was expressed via two of the three sub-themes, with the exception of a single participant comment that did not fit within these sub-themes (e.g., ‘He just needs to grow up’, P052, absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week). The sub-theme *mental disorder* was not highlighted. Given the small number of participants who indicated this theme overall, it is difficult to examine the sub-themes in depth. Just one participant stated *coincidence* (12.5%) which was used to excuse the behaviour in the absence of better evidence, and two raised *romantic motivation* (25.0%). The opposition within the following participant’s reasoning warrants mentioning however. This individual stated that the behaviour was “starting to show signs of stalking”, yet claimed that Gillian (perpetrator) had merely engaged in a “determined attempt at affection”, suggesting that for some participants it was difficult to define the exact point at which the behaviour diverged from acceptable to stalking:

She is definitely infatuated ... the information does not indicate anything more than a determined attempt at affection.

(P209; absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

In the presence of mental disorder the theme *mitigation* was again the most common (N = 14, 77.8%). Although all three sub-themes appeared, *romantic motivation* (N = 1, 5.6%) and *coincidence* (N = 2, 11.1%) were stated in very small numbers. Generalising is problematic, but the content of the comments that were provided was consistent with those given when mental disorder was absent. For example, *coincidence* still indicated a need for more incriminating information to be provided in the vignette:

Too subjective, very borderline though, but could still be coincidental.

(P027; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

They work at the same university, it's hard to not see the same people every day...

(P077; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

The influence of the perpetrator's mental disorder manifested overtly within the sub-theme *mental disorder* (N = 10, 55.6%), extant only in the mental disorder present condition. For participants who did not believe the behaviour was stalking, the perpetrator's mental health status was integral and the impact of the perpetrator's stated mental disorder on reasoning was so profound that it overpowered all the other information given within the vignette:

There was mention of a mental disorder.

(P100; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Diagnosed mental disorder.

(P203; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

The assumption that a diagnosed mental disorder removed culpability and therefore the perpetrator could not engage in inappropriate conduct, or at least could not be held responsible for it, was widespread. In the presence of mental disorder, participants considered culpability to be critical in applying a stalking label. In the following example Gillian (perpetrator) is absolved of any wrongdoing despite perceiving John (target) to be at least uncomfortable with the behaviour and more than likely viewing Gillian as a stalker. Gillian's mental state and subsequent needs were considered more important than John's. It was assumed that stalking could only occur when the perpetrator could be held accountable for understanding their own conduct:

Her behaviour could be influenced by her mental condition. She may not be aware of what she is doing. I am sure that John would perceive her behaviour as stalking.

(P238; present, male target / female perpetrator, 12 week).

At times, participants displayed a considerable amount of empathy for the mentally disordered perpetrator, who was often perceived as the victim in place of the target; they were thought to be at the mercy of their own mental state:

Mental health is something that acts in a mind of its own. Certain behaviour is hard to control and at times they do not know they are doing anything wrong until there is intervention.

(P102; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

The issue of mental disorder sometimes went beyond the situation described in the vignette. The following participant response was distanced from the characters within the scenario. It focused on the stigma attached to mental disorder broadly within society and defended the position of those who suffer from a mental disorder:

It is certainly not pleasant. However interpersonal relationships can be misunderstood between parties when one is known to have a mental disorder.

The other completely unaware of what that disorder might [be]. From experience most people with mental issues try to hide it from others because of the public's reaction to this ailment.

(P284; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Questioning the relevance of the perpetrator's mental disorder did not discourage participants from indicating that the behaviour was not stalking, as this lack of information was used to avoid a stalking label until additional information was known:

Depends on his mental state.

(P059; present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

Escalation

Escalation was the second of two most commonly referenced themes when mental disorder was absent (N = 4, 50.0%). Both sub-themes were addressed however the numbers were very small. A single participant (12.5%) raised the sub-theme *escalation that had occurred* (e.g., ‘...her pursuit is beginning to show signs of stalking...’ P209, absent, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week). The majority required more intense behaviour and on a more frequent and persistent basis, as expressed within the sub-theme *further escalation was required* (N = 3, 37.5%). For example, the following participant held the position that John’s (perpetrator) behaviour needed to intensify to the point of being entirely unrelenting before it could be considered stalking. This perspective was driven by common media depictions of stalking rather than a sound knowledge of the offence:

I imagine stalking to be following/watching her 24/7.

(P011; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

In the presence of mental disorder the proportion of participants who stated the theme *escalation* was much smaller, however the number of participants was similar (N = 3, 16.7%). When it was indicated, the focus remained on the sub-theme *further escalation required*, with participants indicating the need for a more overt demonstration of the perpetrator’s potential to harm or impact the target.

Specific behaviour

In the absence of mental disorder, the theme *specific behaviour* (N = 1, 12.5%) was addressed only within the sub-theme *direct conduct*. The sub-theme *indirect*

conduct was not discussed. While this theme was stated, it is important to note that it was used to indicate that particular conduct should occur in order to apply a stalking label, rather than highlighting something that had happened:

I imagine stalking to be following/watching her 24/7.

(P011; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 weeks).

In the presence of mental disorder *specific behaviour* was stated by 16.7% (N = 3) of participants. The responses again focused only on the sub-theme *direct conduct*; *indirect conduct* was not raised. Of the three responses indicating *specific behaviour*, following behaviour was stated once, and this was by a participant who believed that John's (perpetrator) behaviour should continue beyond the work environment before being potentially considered as stalking (e.g., '...if he starts following her home...', P077, present, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week). Telephoning was acknowledged twice when mental disorder was present, however in the absence of mental disorder it was not mentioned at all.

Target detriment

In the absence of mental disorder the theme *target detriment* was raised only via one of the three possible sub-themes. A single (12.5%) participant addressed the potential impact on the target, albeit as an after-thought, within the sub-theme *invasion of privacy*. This participant fixated on the needs of the perpetrator, believing that the target should need to seek a restraining order before a stalking label should be applied. This response also referenced *romantic motivation*, a sub-theme of *mitigation*. The

ability to generalise the findings is restricted, however it is an interesting example of how mitigating factors overcame other information in the vignette.

John's (perpetrator) inability to control his behaviour was highlighted by raising legally enforceable intervention measures and asserting "this is wrong". Yet despite the potential threat posed by John, his behaviour was mitigated due to the perceived romantic motivation and by shifting the blame to Gillian, having extrapolated that she was enjoying the attention. Even having proposed an extreme measure such as a restraining order, defending John's actions took priority over the rights of Gillian.:

This is wrong but this is human nature. Love is the strongest emotion. Some people like devotion. Interventions and restraining orders can always be used. Then [you] could intervene.

(P282; absent, female target / male perpetrator, 2 week).

In the presence of mental disorder, the theme *target detriment* (N = 6, 33.3%) was discussed slightly more often and it was expressed via different sub-themes. The sub-theme *invasion of privacy* was not highlighted. Instead, participants focused on the other two possible sub-themes; *target experience* (N = 3, 16.7%) and *perpetrator actions* (N = 3, 16.7%). In the sub-theme *target experience* participants described the target as experiencing "discomfort" and "distress", while *perpetrator actions* was concerned with the nature of the perpetrator's conduct. For example:

...there would be grounds for intimidation...

P10; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Legislation

The theme *legislation* was considered by only one (12.5%) participant in the absence of mental disorder. The participant acknowledged that they did not know what the relevant legislation contained, and refrained from indicating that the behaviour was stalking on this basis (e.g. 'Not sure what stalking is defined as, but I think it comes close.', P061, absent, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week). There was however, hesitancy within their decision. This participant stated that they did not know exactly how to define stalking, yet went on to conclude that the conduct described in the vignette 'comes close'. Given that only one participant raised *legislation*, generalisability is limited.

When mental disorder was present, the theme *legislation* (N = 5, 27.8%) was slightly more common, and it described the complexities of legislating against pursuit behaviour, rather than the behaviour satisfying legal criteria. Participants advocated a case-by-case approach rather than a catch-all mandate. Consistent with the overall tendency for those who did not believe the behaviour was stalking to stress the needs of the perpetrator, they concentrated on the impact that applying a stalking label to this kind of behaviour would have on the perpetrator:

Because it is not always black and white and can make the law with 'flirting' very complicated for others...

(P266; present, male target / female perpetrator, 2 week).

Repeated behaviour

In the absence of mental disorder the theme *repeated behaviour* was not discussed. When mental disorder was present it was stated by only two (11.1%)

participants, making generalisability difficult. Conflicting themes, such as mitigation, were presented alongside this theme. For example, the following participant mitigated all the repeated contact initiated by the perpetrator because the target continued to visit the café of their own volition:

The fact that he has gone out of his way to contact her repeatedly is, but not the fact that Gillian visits his café daily.

(P006; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Unwanted behaviour

In the absence of mental disorder the theme *unwanted behaviour* was not discussed; the target's refusal to date the perpetrator and requests for the phone contact to cease were entirely overlooked. In the presence of mental disorder just two (11.1%) participants raised this theme, one directly and one within the sub-theme *target communication*. Again, generalising the findings is not recommended given the small number of quotes:

... John has requested she stop...

(P006; present, female target / male perpetrator, 12 week).

Stalking versus not stalking.

The most significant differences between participants who did perceive the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking and those who did not was demonstrated by the themes *repeated behaviour*, *unwanted behaviour*, and *specific behaviour*. In the absence and presence of mental disorder these themes were raised by the majority of participants

who perceived the behaviour to be stalking. Conversely, participants either did not state these themes at all or they did so infrequently when they had indicated that the behaviour was not stalking. Although this occurred in both the absence and presence of mental disorder the difference in proportions was most profound in the former. *Indirect conduct*, a sub-theme of *specific behaviour*, was only discussed by participants who perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking, indicating that information gathering was only recognised when a stalking label was applied.

The rationale for discussing the theme *escalation* altered between participants who did and did not perceive the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking. In the absence and presence of mental disorder, participants who perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking were more likely to indicate that the behaviour had escalated sufficiently for the conduct to be labelled stalking. However for participants who did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking, the focus was centred on the need for further escalation to occur before any such label could be applied.

Participants who perceived the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking often emphasised that the conduct was detrimental to the target, as described within the theme *target detriment*. Conversely, participants who did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking were less inclined to discuss the impact on the target. Instead, they advocated the rights of the perpetrator. This was best demonstrated by the increased proportion of participants who emphasised *mitigation* when they did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking. Participants who did not perceive the behaviour to be stalking tended to concentrate on mitigating factors that could explain the perpetrator's actions or excuse their culpability for them. Only these participants discussed the sub-theme *coincidence*. However, participants who did perceive the behaviour to be stalking rarely brought up *mitigation*, and in the absence of mental disorder they only did so within the sub-theme

romantic motivation. When mental disorder was present, *mitigation* distinctly centred on the perpetrator's *mental disorder*, regardless of whether the behaviour was perceived to be stalking or not.

Finally, the theme *legislation* was raised more often by participants who did not perceive the perpetrator's behaviour to be stalking, however this was done only to indicate lack of understanding and knowledge in stalking legislation. The participants who perceived the behaviour to be stalking introduced the theme *legislation* to support their view of the behaviour as being adequately aligned with a legal definition of stalking.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, target-perpetrator gender, and perpetrator persistence on 1) ascriptions of a stalking label and 2) perceptions of seriousness and responsibility. Stalking is a complex phenomenon that causes considerable negative consequences for the victims (Blaauw et al., 2002; Diette et al., 2014; Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2001; Narud et al., 2014). The law and criminal justice system extend beyond delivering punishment, also providing a framework of expected and acceptable behaviours, which is not possible without considering the perceptions of those within the community it governs (Melton, 1992). Despite a high prevalence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnoses within clinical populations of stalkers (McEwan, Mullen, & MacKenzie, 2009; McEwan, Mullen, MacKenzie, et al., 2009; Mohandie et al., 2006; Rosenfeld, 2004) and the potential legal implications associated with diminished responsibility, this characteristic has been largely neglected within the stalking perceptions literature. Furthermore, although a growing body of research has addressed the influence of target-perpetrator gender on perceptions of stalking, gender has received little attention within the context of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis. Finally, despite several clinical studies identifying stalking episode duration as influential to victim experience, the perception literature has neglected behaviour duration when investigating the influence of persistence.

This chapter provides a discussion of the present study's findings in relation to the current literature, and considers theoretical and practical implications. The findings and implications are each presented in three sub-sections: perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis; target-perpetrator gender; and perpetrator persistence. Within each sub-section ascriptions of a stalking label are discussed first, followed by perceptions of

responsibility and behaviour seriousness. The qualitative findings are discussed only in relation to perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis. Given that the purpose of the qualitative analysis was to better understand why participants chose to or not to ascribe a stalking label, the discussion of these findings will be integrated with the quantitative findings. The limitations of the present study and recommendations for future research are also provided, before concluding with a summary of the key findings.

Findings

Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis.

Participants in the present study were given vignettes that depicted a perpetrator engaging in continued pursuit of a non-reciprocating target. The perpetrator, who made repeated requests for a date and telephoned the target at their office, was described as becoming agitated and verbally abusive in response to the target advising that they were not interested and not to call again. The vignette also stated that the target saw the perpetrator walking behind them on several occasions. Overall, the majority of participants ascribed a stalking label to the behaviour that was depicted.

With regard to the influence of mental disorder, participants were significantly less likely to ascribe a stalking label to the behaviour described in the vignette when the perpetrator was portrayed as having a mental disorder diagnosis compared to when they were not. This finding is inconsistent with the study by Kinkade et al. (2005) who demonstrated that psychiatric history had no influence on stalking label ascriptions. When asked why they had provided their response, participants who ascribed a stalking label in the present research rarely mitigated the perpetrator's behaviour. Instead, they overwhelmingly emphasised the target's experience of victimisation. This occurred both when mental disorder was present and absent.

Irrespective of the presence or absence of a perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, participants who ascribed a stalking label were concerned about the physical safety and psychological welfare of the target. They most commonly raised the fact that the perpetrator's behaviour was persistent and had occurred on multiple occasions, and that the target wanted the behaviour to end. The unwanted nature of the behaviour was most often highlighted as the target having explicitly communicated their disinterest to the perpetrator, however not having encouraged the perpetrator's behaviour was also addressed. Participants frequently identified specific behaviours that the perpetrator had engaged in to support their ascription of a stalking label. These behaviours were generally direct conduct such as contacting, telephoning and following the target. To a less extent, participants were also perplexed by indirect conduct, such as the means by which the perpetrator came to be in possession of the target's contact information. The impact that the behaviour had on the target was also important to one third of participants. This issue was addressed in a number of ways and included the perpetrator being intimidating and threatening, the target experiencing anxiety or psychological damage, and the perpetrator breaching the target's privacy. Mitigating the perpetrator's behaviour was uncommon. However, in the presence of mental disorder, the perpetrator's lack of responsibility for the behaviour was stressed despite the stalking label being applied. This is consistent with previous research showing that even when an offence is perceived to have occurred, mentally impaired offenders are held less accountable for their behaviour (Berryessa et al., 2015; Sabbagh, 2011).

The participants who did not ascribe a stalking label to the perpetrator's behaviour generally considered the conduct to be appropriate or justified, or perceived that the perpetrator deemed their own actions as appropriate. In the absence of mental disorder the perpetrator's behaviour was infrequently excused, but when rationalisation

did occur it was because the conduct was viewed as romantically motivated or as a coincidence. In contrast, when mental disorder was present, participants raised the issue of culpability and focused heavily on the aspect of the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis. Here, lack of responsibility was one of the primary reasons given for not ascribing a stalking label, as the perpetrator was perceived to be less in control of and responsible for their behaviour. This is consistent with studies showing that mentally impaired offenders are often treated more leniently and perceived as unable to control their behaviour or appreciate the wrongfulness of it compared to those without impairment (Barnett et al., 2007; Garvey, 1998). It is important to note that responsibility was a strong theme among responses pertaining to a mentally disordered perpetrator irrespective of whether a stalking label was ascribed or not. Interestingly, attention was only directed to the perpetrator's mental health when they were explicitly described as having a mental disorder diagnosis. Furthermore, when mental disorder was present, participants drew attention to the need for the behaviour to escalate further before a stalking label could be ascribed, indicating that the perpetrator's behaviour was not considered to be serious in nature.

In regards to perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis and responsibility, participants were significantly less likely to perceive the mentally disordered perpetrator as responsible for their behaviour compared to a perpetrator who was not described as having a disorder. This finding is similar to that of past studies indicating that offenders who are in some way impaired in their mental functioning are perceived as less in control of their behaviour (Barnett et al., 2007; Garvey, 1998; Qi et al., 2016). Interestingly, participants apportioned responsibility for the behaviour described in the vignette between the perpetrator and the target. That is, when the perpetrator was perceived as being less responsible for their behaviour, their target was in turn seen as

more responsible. The target was perceived as significantly more responsible for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour when a mental disorder diagnosis was present compared to when it was absent.

Perceptions of seriousness were not influenced by the presence or absence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis. A mentally disordered perpetrator was seen to be no more likely to act violently towards the target or to cause the target to experience anxiety as a result of the behaviour than a non-disordered perpetrator. Likewise, the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour was perceived to be the same regardless of whether the perpetrator was described as having a mental disorder diagnosis or not. The lack of influence that mental disorder diagnosis had on behaviour seriousness is inconsistent with literature indicating that mentally disordered individuals are perceived negatively and as more dangerous than those who are not disordered (Burdekin et al., 1993; Corrigan et al., 2002; Minster & Knowles, 2006; Ruiz & Miller, 2004).

In considering whether participants assumed a mental disorder diagnosis where the vignette did not include information about the perpetrator's psychiatric history, a different pattern of results was observed. The likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder diagnosis was not correlated with perceptions of either the perpetrator's level of responsibility for their own behaviour or the target's level of responsibility for encouraging the behaviour. With regard to the perpetrator's responsibility, this finding contrasts with research indicating that mentally impaired offenders are perceived to be less responsible for their crimes (Berryessa et al., 2015; Qi et al., 2016).

The likeliness that the perpetrator had a diagnosed mental disorder was associated with an increase in perceived behaviour seriousness. As the likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder diagnosis increased, so too did the likelihood of the target experiencing anxiety or the perpetrator engaging in violence towards the target.

Furthermore, the likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder was also positively correlated with the likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour. These findings are consistent with literature indicating that people with a mental disorder are perceived as more dangerous and violent than non-disordered individuals (Minster & Knowles, 2006; Ruiz & Miller, 2004).

Target-perpetrator gender.

With regard to target-perpetrator gender, participants' ascriptions of a stalking label did not differ between genders. Consistent with past studies (Cass, 2011; Finnegan & Fritz, 2012; Phillips et al., 2004; Sheridan et al., 2003), a stalking label was as likely to be ascribed to a male perpetrator pursuing a female target as a female perpetrator pursuing a male target. Also consistent with previous studies (Phillips et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2015; Sheridan et al., 2003; Sheridan & Scott, 2010), participants were significantly more likely to perceive a female target pursued by a male perpetrator as likely to experience anxiety or perpetrator violence as a result of the behaviour. In contrast with previous research (Sheridan et al., 2003), the target-perpetrator gender had no effect on how responsible the target was perceived to be for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour. Furthermore, target-perpetrator gender did not influence perceptions of perpetrator responsibility or how likely the perpetrator's behaviour was to continue.

There were no interactions found between the target-perpetrator gender and the presence of perpetrator mental disorder on any of the dependent variables. This is consistent with the findings of Phillips et al. (2004), who reported that target-perpetrator gender did not influence either perceptions of whether the perpetrator's behaviour was caused by mental disorder, or whether psychiatric treatment was recommended. However, in the present study, taking the assumption of perpetrator mental disorder into

consideration did produce a subtle change in the pattern of results. Firstly, the significance of participants' perceptions that a female target pursued by a male perpetrator was more likely to experience anxiety increased after accounting for the likeliness of a mental disorder diagnosis. Furthermore, the influence of target-perpetrator gender on the likeliness of the perpetrator causing violence to the target was no longer evident after the assumption of perpetrator mental disorder was accounted for.

Perpetrator persistence.

Perpetrator persistence had no influence on ascriptions of a stalking label, perceptions of behaviour seriousness, or perceptions of responsibility. Regardless of whether the perpetrator persisted for 2 weeks or 12 weeks, participants equally ascribed the behaviour described in the vignette a stalking label. They were also equally likely to perceive the behaviour as: likely to cause the target anxiety; likely to result in violence by the perpetrator; and likely to continue. Moreover, perpetrator persistence did not significantly influence participants' perceptions of the perpetrator's and target's responsibility for the situation.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis.

As stated previously, the only factor to influence ascriptions of a stalking label was mental disorder diagnosis. Although the majority of participants perceived the behaviour to be stalking in the presence (92.1%) and absence (80.0%) of a perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, participants were significantly less likely to ascribe a stalking label to the behaviour when perpetrator mental disorder was present. This was predominantly due to perceived mitigating factors. Therefore, in order to discuss how these ascriptions of a stalking label differed, it is first important to consider the reasons that participants provided when the behaviour was ascribed a stalking label, regardless

of the presence or absence of mental disorder. Collapsing across all conditions, the majority of participants ascribed a stalking label to the behaviour depicted in the study vignettes. The repeated and unwanted nature of the perpetrator's behaviour was highlighted frequently, as were behaviours such as telephoning and following the target and gathering information on the target. The impact of the perpetrator's behaviour on the target was concerning for participants, with many participants addressing the target's psychological health and physical safety.

Although participants rarely stated criminal law within their responses, these commonly stated themes generally align with the elements of stalking legislation in Western Australia (WA). With regard to specific behaviour, participants discussed both direct behaviour and indirect behaviour. Direct behaviour referred to the perpetrator's communication with and following of the target, behaviours that are defined in the legislation within the definition of what it means to pursue. This is also where it is stipulated that the behaviour must be repeated. Indirect behaviour related to information gathering and monitoring tactics and was only stated by a minority of participants. While the legislation in Western Australia specifies against watching and besetting, methods of obtaining information about the target that do not fall within this definition are not covered. Furthermore, the legislation specifies repeated behaviour, but not unwanted behaviour. However, the simple offence requires that intimidation has been experienced. It is logical to assume that if the target condoned the perpetrator's behaviour, it would not cause such intimidation.

In contrast, participants who refrained from ascribing a stalking label to the behaviour depicted in the vignette were predominantly focused on mitigation, then the need for further escalation of the behaviour. Mitigation was expressed in varying ways, including the behaviour being romantically motivated, the behaviour being coincidental,

and the behaviour being excusable due to the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis. Interestingly, the perpetrator's diagnosis was only ever raised by participants who were given vignettes that explicitly stated the perpetrator had a mental disorder diagnosis, and here it was pivotal to the reasons that were provided for not ascribing a stalking label. Participants also frequently highlighted the necessity for the perpetrator's behaviour to further escalate in seriousness before a stalking label could be applied.

The finding that perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis significantly influenced ascriptions of a stalking label is inconsistent with that of Kinkade et al. (2005). In their study, the perpetrator's psychiatric history had no influence on ascriptions of a stalking label. However, there are several differences in methodology that could be accountable for this discrepancy. Firstly, while Kinkade et al. assessed ascriptions of a stalking label with a scale item, the present study utilised a categorical response of 'yes', 'no' or 'don't know', with the latter two being collapsed into a single group. Secondly, the vignette in the present study described a third party, the target's colleague, disclosing the perpetrator's psychiatric information. Kinkade et al. used a vignette in which it seems that the perpetrator has divulged their psychiatric history of their own volition to the target. It is possible that participants in that study perceived the severity or the relevance of the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis differently as a result of how the information came to be known. For example, participants may have believed that any mental health history that the perpetrator was comfortable discussing with their target did not warrant concern. Finally, in the present study the perpetrator was described by a third party as being in a programme specifically designed to put mentally disordered individuals into employment. Therefore, while the perpetrator in the study by Kinkade et al. was described as having had mental health problems, the perpetrator in the present study was portrayed as having current mental health issues for which they

were receiving specialised help in a programme. Further research is needed to investigate whether these subtle differences had any influence of the ascription of a stalking label.

In the present study, the qualitative responses provided by participants who did not ascribe a stalking label in the presence of mental disorder emphasised the view of the mentally disordered perpetrator being unable to comprehend the wrongfulness of their behaviour. The belief that the perpetrator was either not in control of their actions as a direct result of their mental disorder diagnosis, or that they were unable to appreciate that what they were doing was, in the least, socially inappropriate, was widespread. This sentiment was evident even when participants recognised that the target would perceive the behaviour as stalking. Given the role of target experience, specifically intimidation, in Western Australia's stalking legislation, this is concerning. If individuals are able to identify that the target has experienced intimidation and yet fail to label the behaviour as stalking, this could have serious consequences for victims within the criminal justice system. For example, the indictable offence requires that the perpetrator intended to cause intimidation, but the experience of the victim is not considered. Therefore, regardless of the perceived impact on the victim, if the presence of a mental disorder causes people to perceive the perpetrator as incapable of forming intent, it could be used as a defence to this charge. The simple offence is commonly charged where perpetrator intent cannot be proved, as the behaviour need only be of a manner that could be reasonably expected to cause intimidation. Whether or not the perception that a mentally disordered perpetrator is less culpable for their behaviour could influence jury members in relation to the reasonable person element of the legislation requires further investigation.

It is worth noting that the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis was addressed regardless of whether or not a stalking label had been ascribed. Participants questioned how much insight the perpetrator had into their own behaviour, even when they ascribed a label. The way in which understanding of the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis differed among the participants indicates that consideration of psychiatric information may be a complex issue that requires further investigation. For example, the response "she may not understand it but the actual behaviour is..." (P275) was provided by a participant who ascribed a stalking label. The comment "she may not be aware of what she is doing" (P238) was similar to this, however it came from a participant who did not ascribe a label. This shows that responsibility was understood in at least two different ways. Some participants believed that if the perpetrator was not responsible for their behaviour then they could not have committed an offence. This perception has serious implications for the role of intent to criminal proceedings. For instance, the indictable offence in Western Australia requires proof that the perpetrator intended to cause apprehension when they pursued their target. A perpetrator may be able to avoid being charged with or found guilty of this offence if they are perceived as incapable of forming intent due to their mental disorder diagnosis.

In relation to responsibility, the perpetrator was perceived to be significantly less responsible for their behaviour when they had a mental disorder diagnosis compared to a perpetrator who did not. This supports the findings from a study by Berryessa et al. (2015) who found that an offender's levels of moral and legal responsibility for their behaviour were discrete. This distinction between how morally accountable and legally culpable a perpetrator is should be further investigated in relation to the present study. Participant comments such as 'but is it not stalking in the true sense' when a stalking label was applied indicate that sentencing outcomes may differ from the ascription of a

stalking label according to the presence of a perpetrator mental disorder. Again, this perception has implications for reporting and court outcomes. It may be that people believe that a perpetrator who is not in control of or culpable for their behaviour should not be reported or charged based on the perception that it is not their fault, therefore they are not really doing anything wrong. Where a stalking case does proceed through the court, the element of intent may again come into question.

Given that neither the specific mental disorder nor the degree to which the perpetrator's mental disorder directly resulted in their pursuit of the target was ever stated within the vignette, the belief that the presence of mental disorder was the sole cause of the behaviour is problematic. As highlighted in the case study described by Catanesi et al. (2013), it is critical to correctly identify the extent to which a stalking perpetrator's psychiatric status is responsible for their illegal behaviour in order to achieve just criminal justice outcomes. Their work clearly demonstrates that merely having a mental disorder diagnosis does not automatically equate to irrational behaviour, diminished self-control or lack of insight. To what degree a mental disorder influences the stalking behaviour should be thoroughly deliberated by the court, especially in circumstances where a defence of diminished responsibility is being used to respond to a stalking charge.

Further implications of the mentally disordered perpetrator being perceived as less responsible for the behaviour than a non-disordered perpetrator relate to the fact that responsibility for the behaviour depicted in the scenario was apportioned by participants. That is, when the perpetrator was perceived as being less responsible, the target was perceived as more responsible. This is concerning for a number of reasons. Firstly, the target may receive less support from those who they approach for informal advice on how to handle the behaviour if they are perceived as more responsible for it.

Police and the courts may also place more blame on the victim. Secondly, the fact that participants needed to blame someone for the situation may imply that someone should be punished. A number of participants suggested that the target in the vignette should alter their behaviour in order to prevent further contact from the perpetrator. Stalking victims are already vulnerable due to the necessity of documenting their own victimisation. The majority of stalking legislation includes an element that hinges heavily on the experience of the victim, therefore victims are generally required to provide convincing evidence of being harmed or of feeling apprehensive. Increasing their burden with the expectation of self-managing their stalker's pursuit by altering their routine and habits places further pressure on the victim. It is likely that placing a level of responsibility with the victim would result in negative psychological outcomes for them. Furthermore, there are jurisdictions in Australia that specifically legislate against behaviour that either prevents the victim from 'doing an act that they are lawfully entitled to do' or results in the victim changing their routine.

Regardless of the presence or absence of mental disorder, the behaviour depicted in the vignette was perceived as equally serious. The fact that a stalking label was less likely to be ascribed to a mentally disordered perpetrator in spite of mental disorder having no influence on perceptions of behaviour seriousness requires further examination as it has ramifications for correctly labelling behaviour as stalking. It is possible that when the perpetrator has a known mental disorder diagnosis, victims, their friends and family, and the criminal justice system might not identify their behaviour as stalking, irrespective of how serious that behaviour is. Although the mentally disordered perpetrator was rated as equally likely to be violent, cause anxiety and to continue their behaviour, they were considered to be significantly less responsible for their conduct than a perpetrator who did not have a disorder. Participants who did not ascribe a

stalking label to the mentally disordered perpetrator focused heavily on the belief that the perpetrator was unable to control their behaviour or that they were unaware that their behaviour was wrong, therefore mitigating them of any responsibility. It is important to note that the vignettes used in the present study did not depict a high level of severity, and the perceptions of behaviour seriousness may have reflected this, therefore further research is required.

Participants who were given vignettes that did not contain information regarding the perpetrator's psychiatric history provided ratings of how likely the perpetrator was to have a diagnosed mental disorder. Whereas the explicitly stated mental disorder diagnosis influenced perceptions of responsibility but not behaviour seriousness, the likeliness of a mental disorder diagnosis was related to behaviour seriousness but not responsibility. That is, the likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder diagnosis was significantly associated with the likeliness of violence, anxiety and of the behaviour continuing. It was not however, associated with either perpetrator responsibility or target responsibility. As previously highlighted, these findings are consistent with literature that indicates mentally disordered individuals are negatively stereotyped as violent, dangerous and unpredictable and inconsistent with studies showing that mentally impaired offenders are seen as less responsible (Berryessa et al., 2015; Qi et al., 2016).

There are a number of explanations for the discrepancies between stated and assumed perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis. When mental disorder was explicitly stated within the vignette, the perpetrator was described as being in a programme designed specifically to put mentally disordered individuals into employment. Therefore, it is likely that participants believed that although the perpetrator had a mental disorder, they were unlikely to be dangerous to the public. Indeed, several of the

qualitative participant responses supporting why a stalking label had not been ascribed included this reasoning. Conversely, participants likely drew upon negative stereotypes of mental disorder, such as being associated with violence and unpredictable behaviour (Burdekin et al., 1993; Corrigan et al., 2002; Minster & Knowles, 2006; Ruiz & Miller, 2004), when no contextualising information was provided. Furthermore, a perpetrator who is taking steps to manage their disorder by being involved in a programme may be perceived more favourably. Alternatively, participants may have imagined very different types of disorders in the context of the employment programme compared to when no contextual information was provided (e.g., learning disability vs schizophrenia).

An increased perception of behaviour seriousness could have a considerable impact on the way a perpetrator who is suspected of being mentally disordered is managed by the criminal justice system. For example, there may be a greater chance of perceiving intent, which could in turn influence whether or not the perpetrator is prosecuted for an indictable or a simple offence. Similarly, in regard to the simple offence, people may be inclined to automatically perceive that the victim experienced intimidation due to the belief that the perpetrator is more violent and will continue their pursuit for a longer period of time. This may mean that less compelling evidence of intimidation is required on the part of the alleged victim. Further investigation is required to identify how the assumption of a mental disorder impacts on criminal justice outcomes.

Target-perpetrator gender.

With regard to target-perpetrator gender, the finding that the perpetrator's behaviour was equally likely to be ascribed a stalking label is in line with previous research (Cass, 2011; Finnegan & Fritz, 2012; Phillips et al., 2004; Sheridan et al.,

2003). A man who pursued a woman was no more likely to be labelled as stalking than a woman pursuing a man. However, participants' perceptions of the seriousness of the behaviour differed according to target-perpetrator gender. Not only was behaviour perpetrated by a man against a woman considered more likely to continue for a greater length of time, it was also seen as more likely to result in the target experiencing violence and anxiety. The influence of target-perpetrator gender related to perceptions of the target's and the perpetrator's characteristics, rather than the actual behaviour, that were impacted by target-perpetrator gender. These findings may result from gender role stereotypes, in which women are depicted as helpless and weak (Grabe et al., 2006; Leonard, 1982), while men are portrayed as cold aggressors (Whitley et al., 2015). Relying on these stereotypes allows participants to attribute more potential harm to a woman pursued by a man than a man pursued by a woman. Interestingly, attributions of responsibility were not influenced by target-perpetrator gender. Regardless of gender, the target was seen to be almost blameless for the situation while the perpetrator was considered very responsible.

There are several implications of gender role stereotyping to perceptions of stalking. Research has found that men and women engage in stalking behaviour at comparable rates (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000), however the victimisation surveys consistently indicate that the majority of victims are women (Blaauw et al., 2002; Englebrecht & Reyns, 2011; Narud et al., 2014; Ogilvie, 2000; Sheridan & Roberts, 2011; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007; Tjadan et al., 2000; Wigman, 2009). Also, women are more likely than men to report experiencing anxiety as a result of stalking behaviour (McEwan et al., 2012). This may be at least partially attributable to gender role stereotypes. The fact that men are considered to be at less risk of harm, be it physical or psychological, trivialises their experience of victimisation. This can impact

upon help-seeking behaviour in a number of ways. Firstly, men may fail to recognise behaviour perpetrated against them by a woman as stalking because women are believed to be unthreatening and weak. For the same reason, men may perceive themselves as more able to handle any unwanted attention from women even when they do identify the behaviour as stalking. Second, men who are victims of female stalkers may refuse to seek help because they fear being ridiculed. When help is sought, they may encounter a lack of support if their friends, family or colleagues underestimate the seriousness of stalking behaviour that is perpetrated by a women. In turn, these victims may experience adverse psychological repercussions as a result of being unsupported and may choose not to officially report the behaviour to law enforcement.

Where an official complaint is made by a male victim, there is potential for police to minimise the seriousness of a female stalker's behaviour. Such treatment of female stalkers may extend to other aspects of the criminal justice system. For example, court outcomes will differ according to target-perpetrator gender if magistrates and juries take a more lenient approach towards female stalkers. Any belief that behaviour perpetrated by a woman is inherently unthreatening and poses no danger to the male victim, or that the male victim is strong and capable enough of defending themselves against a woman without requiring intervention, would be detrimental to the criminal justice process. This is especially important in regard to the simple offence of stalking in WA, in which the target must provide sufficient evidence of their intimidation in order for an offence to have taken place. Likewise, if there is a perception that a woman is not capable of possessing intent to harm the target she pursues, this has implications for prosecuting the indictable offence as it requires proof of the perpetrator's intent. Given that studies have shown female stalkers can and frequently do engage in violent behaviour (Meloy & Boyd, 2003), it is crucial that the influence of gender on

perceptions of stalking seriousness be acknowledged and addressed at all stages of the criminal justice system in cases of stalking.

In contrast with gender role stereotypes, feminist criminology and theories such as the chivalry hypothesis and 'evil woman' theory indicate that female stalkers may be perceived more negatively than male stalkers because of societal norms violations (Chase, 2008; Grabe et al., 2006). From this perspective, women are sentenced more harshly than men who commit comparable offences, especially when those offences involve violence (Grabe et al., 2006). Although the present study found that behaviour was considered more serious when perpetrated by a man, these results need to be considered within the boundaries of the methodology used to obtain them. The vignettes provided to participants were of a low severity level, as they contained limited verbally threatening behaviour and no physical violence. Furthermore, the target was not depicted as having definitely felt intimidated. Therefore, it is possible that the female stalker was not perceived as having broken any gender norms because the behaviour was not of a violent nature. Although violence was not described in the vignette, the perpetrator was portrayed as being verbally abusive towards the target via the telephone. Whether or not verbal abuse breaks gender norms or not requires further examination.

The present study was not able to support the findings of Sheridan et al. (2003) in relation to a male target being perceived as more responsible for the situation than a female target. It must be noted that this difference in results is potentially due to the floor and ceiling effects found in the present study's data for the responsibility items. Across all conditions ratings of target responsibility were generally very low. Conversely, ratings of perpetrator responsibility were very high. Although the data did not reach statistical significance, the pattern of results was in a direction consistent with that of Sheridan et al. (2003). Also consistent with Sheridan et al. (2003) was the

finding that target-perpetrator gender had no influence on participants' perceptions of how long the behaviour was likely to continue for. In fact, other than the likeliness of a diagnosed mental disorder covariate, none of the factors examined within the present study significantly influenced perceptions of likely persistence. Given that research has shown protracted stalking behaviour affects victims adversely (James et al., 2010), further research is required to establish the factors that are considered most important to people when deciding if a stalking episode is likely to continue. From a practical point of view, this has relevance to magistrate and jury decisions.

Although no interactions were observed between the target-perpetrator gender and the presence or absence of a perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis, the assumption of perpetrator mental disorder was important. After accounting for the likeliness of the perpetrator having a mental disorder, a male perpetrator was perceived as even more likely to cause the female target anxiety. However, the perception that a man pursuing a woman was more likely to result in violence to the target than a woman pursuing a man disappeared. This indicates that the assumption of perpetrator mental disorder was more influential to perceptions of perpetrator violence than the target-perpetrator gender. The assumption of a perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis in the context of target-perpetrator gender requires further examination.

Perpetrator persistence.

Perpetrator persistence had no influence on participants' ascriptions of a stalking label, or perceptions of behaviour seriousness or responsibility. The behaviour was equally likely to be ascribed a stalking label regardless of whether the perpetrator pursued the target for two weeks or 12 weeks. Likewise, perpetrator persistence had no influence on perceptions of behaviour seriousness, with the likeliness of the perpetrator causing the target violence, the likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, and the

likely duration of the perpetrator's behaviour consistent between conditions. In regards to responsibility, the perpetrator and target were seen as very responsible and not very responsible respectively, regardless of the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour. Although it is easy to conclude that the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour has no influence on how participant's perceive stalking, there are a number of factors that should be considered before making such a determination.

Maintaining the same frequency for each of the behaviours described in the vignette regardless of whether the behaviour persisted for two weeks or 12 weeks was a deliberate element of the study design. This was intended to ensure that the influence of the duration of the behaviour was isolated from the frequency of the behaviour. However, the fact that the frequency of the behaviours did not increase when the duration increased may have actually caused participants to perceive the behaviour as less intense. This means that although the frequency was consistent and the duration changed, participants potentially perceived the frequency of the behaviour to have changed rather than the duration. For example, the vignette described the perpetrator as having called the target on several occasions. Over a period of two weeks, several phone calls would occur with less time elapsing between calls. However, over 12 weeks, these calls could be spaced out considerably. Alternatively, it is possible that perceptions of stalking are influenced by the frequency of the perpetrator's behaviour but not by the duration. Given that a number of studies have found that greater behaviour frequency influences ascriptions of a stalking label (Scott, Rajakaruna, & Sheridan, 2014; Scott & Sheridan, 2011), perceptions of illegality (Dennison, 2007), necessitation of police intervention and criminal conviction (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014), and perceptions of perpetrator and target responsibility (Scott, Rajakaruna, Sheridan, et al., 2014), this requires further examination. Future research could include behaviour

frequency, behaviour duration and level of threat within the study design in order to separate the influence of each factor.

It is important to understand the intricacies of how persistence influences perceptions of stalking because of the association between longer stalking duration and more severe perpetrator behaviour and adverse victim outcomes. If the impact of stalking episode duration does not align with actual victim experiences of stalking, this may influence the way the victim is treated by the criminal justice system. Despite studies showing that different degrees of behaviour duration and frequency both effect the characteristics of clinical sample of stalkers (Thompson & Dennison, 2008), it is entirely possible that perceptions are more heavily influenced by intent than persistence. The most extreme behaviour depicted in the vignettes in the present study described the perpetrator as becoming verbally abusive over the phone, however no threats were made. In relation to the likeliness of the perpetrator engaging in violence against the target, participants in the present study may have required explicit information indicating that the perpetrator had engaged in severe behaviour before any threat to the target could be perceived. This would be consistent with the findings of Scott and Sheridan (2011), who reported that persistence was less important to perceptions than threatening intent. The average rating participants provided for the likeliness of violence when the behaviour persisted for two weeks and 12 weeks was equivalent, at just above the midpoint.

In contrast, the average participant rating of the likeliness of target anxiety was very high in both the two weeks and 12 weeks conditions. The vignettes did not explicitly state that the target was experiencing fear or concern, however participants generally inferred this. The target's experience of the behaviour was a dominant theme when participants supported their decision to or not to label the behaviour as stalking.

This aligns with the simple stalking offence within the legislation in WA, as s338E(2) of the legislation does not require that the perpetrator had intent to intimidate, but rather that the behaviour could be reasonably expected to cause intimidation. Intimidation includes causing physical or mental harm (s338D1[a]) and causing apprehension or fear (s338D1[b]). It is possible that the influence of target anxiety was more influential than the duration of the behaviour in regard to determining the behaviour to be stalking. Although the vignettes used in the present study were intentionally ambiguous, there were key sentences that allowed participants to infer that the target was concerned about the perpetrator's behaviour. It is unclear as to whether or not the target's experience would be as influential in situations where the target's perceived level of fear was less easily extrapolated from the vignette. This requires further investigation as the Western Australia legislation only requires that the target had felt intimidation as a result of the perpetrator's pursuit within the simple offence, where perpetrator intent is not necessary.

Limitations and Future Research

There are a number of limitations within the present study that must be acknowledged. In relation to the perpetrator's mental disorder diagnosis, the present study is limited by the fact that the type of mental disorder was not stated. It is likely that participants were imagining a wide range of disorders when they provided they interpreted the vignette and provided their responses. One of the primary aims of the present study was to investigate how the presence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis broadly influenced participants' perceptions of stalking, therefore a single type of mental disorder was not stated in the vignette. Furthermore, it was beyond the scope of the study to also manipulate different types of disorders. Future research could investigate whether manipulating the perpetrator's diagnosis elicits differences in

perceptions of stalking. It is possible that particular stereotypes of mental disorder are associated more frequently with certain disorders.

Additionally, the discrepancy between perceptions associated with an explicitly mentally disordered perpetrator compared to a perpetrator who was assumed to have a mental disorder diagnosis requires further investigation. Based on the findings of the present study, it is possible that the presentation of the perpetrator's diagnosis in the vignette influenced perceptions of the perpetrator favourably. The psychiatric information was disclosed by a third party who explained that the perpetrator was employed as a part of a programme for the mentally disordered. Relatedly, it is possible that people rely on negative stereotypes of mental disorder perpetuated by the media (Shain & Phillips, 1991) when imagining an offender with mental disorder in the absence of contextualising information. If and how these factors may influence perceptions of stalking behaviour should be examined within future studies.

With regard to perpetrator persistence, there are two limitations that should be acknowledged. The first relates to the choice of the time intervals. The episode durations (two weeks; 12 weeks) were chosen on the basis of clinical research. These studies have found persisting for a minimum of two weeks to be the point that demarcates between nuisance and more serious stalker behaviour (James & Farnham, 2003; Purcell et al., 2004), therefore this was the lowest duration utilised in the present. It is unclear if perceptions aligned with the reality of clinical studies, and that all behaviour of greater length than two weeks was perceived to be equivalent, or if duration genuinely had no influence on perceptions of stalking. Furthermore, although the episode durations in the present study were selected on the basis of research by McEwan, Mullen, and MacKenzie (2009), it could be argued that these periods are too similar to elicit differences in perceptions. The influence of behaviour duration on

perceptions of stalking was exploratory, and it was beyond the scope of the present study to expand episode duration in the study design. However, future research could include stalking episodes of less than two weeks and more than 12 weeks to further establish the influence of behaviour duration on perceptions of stalking. Additionally, the role of persistence requires further investigation in order to understand how behaviour frequency and behaviour duration operate separately and together. It is currently unclear as to whether behaviour duration simply does not influence perceptions of stalking, or if maintaining the frequency of the behaviours over different episode durations inadvertently translates to differing levels of behaviour intensity. Furthermore, the impact of the perceived target experience and the severity of the perpetrator's behaviour should be considered in order to isolate the impact of persistence.

A second limitation of perpetrator persistence is concerns the way the information was presented. The duration of the stalking episode was described twice in each scenario; once during the introduction and once within the conclusion. Although care was taken with regard to the study design, it must be acknowledged that the manipulation of persistence may have been subtle enough that participants failed to recognise and/or consider the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour when providing their responses. Relatedly, the statements about duration may have been overlooked because other information provided in the vignettes was more salient. As discussed earlier, this could include the perception that the target was experiencing anxiety. Future research should ensure that the duration of the perpetrator's behaviour is presented to participants in a more prominent manner and a manipulation check question is included.

A final limitation of the present study relates to the interpretation of the themes provided within the qualitative responses of participants who did not ascribe a stalking

label. As the majority of participants overall perceived the behaviour depicted in the vignettes to be stalking, the number of participant comments was low. Although the sample size within the present study was sufficient, the generalisability of the qualitative findings could be improved by employing a greater sample size. Future research should endeavour to address this limitation.

Conclusion

Stalking is a complex phenomenon that is difficult to define and manage. Stalking victims, most commonly women, can experience anything from mild interference with their daily routine to significant adverse physical or psychological injury as a consequence of their stalker's pursuit. Given the negative impact that stalking behaviour has on victims, it is important to extend knowledge and understanding regarding stalking. Although stalking perception literature has investigated a number of factors associated with the behaviour, including severity, intent, target-perpetrator gender, and persistence, the impact of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis has received little attention. This is despite a high prevalence of mental disorder among populations of stalkers within clinical and forensic studies. Therefore, the influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis was examined by the present study. In addition to this, target-perpetrator gender and persistence were investigated.

The present study found that the perpetrator's behaviour was less likely to be ascribed a stalking label when a mental disorder diagnosis was present. The most influential themes given by participants to support the ascription of a stalking label aligned with the stalking legislation in WA. Responses predominantly focused on the perpetrator's behaviour being repeated and unwanted, as well as specific behaviours such as communicating with and following the target. The experience of the target was

also important to participants. The reasons given for ascribing a stalking label indicate that the participants' perceptions of what constitutes stalking generally reflected elements of the current law. The major theme highlighted by participants who did not ascribe a label of stalking to the behaviour related to mitigation and justification. When mental disorder was present this was often expressed in relation to the perpetrator's lack of control and responsibility. This perception has serious ramifications for the indictable offence, as perpetrator intent is an essential element. Potentially, a perpetrator with a mental disorder may be viewed as incapable of forming intent if they are not able to appreciate the wrongfulness of their behaviour. In this case, only the simple offence would be relevant and the victim's experience of intimidation would become integral to the outcome of the case.

Although participants' perceived the disordered perpetrator as less responsible than the non-disordered perpetrator, perceptions of behaviour seriousness were equivalent. Furthermore, when the perpetrator was perceived to be less responsible for their own behaviour, the target was perceived to be more responsible for encouraging the perpetrator's behaviour. Participants' distinction between moral and legal responsibility has implications for reporting and sentencing, and therefore requires further examination. It is imperative that the extent to which mental disorder is influencing the pursuit behaviour be ascertained where any defence of diminished responsibility is evoked. The criminal justice system may fail to find a perpetrator culpable for their behaviour if mental disorder is assumed to be the sole cause of the pursuit of the target, even when it has no bearing on the conduct.

The likeliness that the perpetrator had a mental disorder diagnosis when no psychiatric information was given in the vignette was associated with an increased perception of behaviour seriousness, with the perpetrator viewed as more likely to be

violent, to cause the target anxiety and to continue their behaviour. The assumption of mental disorder was not correlated with level of responsibility for either the perpetrator or the target. The difference in findings between a stated and an assumed mental disorder may be due to the evocation of stereotypes of mental disorder. However, the fact that the mental disorder was presented with contextualising information in the vignette may also have had an influence on perceptions, and this requires further investigation.

Consistent with prior research, target-perpetrator gender did not influence ascriptions of a stalking label, however it did effect perceptions of behaviour seriousness. A man pursuing a woman was perceived as more likely to cause violence and anxiety to the target. In relation to persistence, the behaviour was equally likely to be ascribed a stalking label regardless of whether it lasted for two weeks or 12 weeks. There was also no influence on perceptions of behaviour seriousness or responsibility. However, it is unclear as to whether or not the consistent frequency of behaviour across different durations ultimately caused participants to perceive different levels of behaviour intensity. For this reason, future research should investigate the influence of behaviour duration, behaviour frequency and factors such as behaviour severity and target experience separately and together.

Perceptions in the present study generally aligned with elements of the current stalking legislation in Western Australia. However, the findings indicate that perceptions of stalking behaviour are significantly influenced by both the explicit presence of mental disorder and the assumption of mental disorder. Furthermore, perceptions of behaviour seriousness differed on the basis of target-perpetrator gender. These findings have implications for victims and perpetrators, both in relation to reporting stalking behaviour and their experience of and treatment by the criminal

justice system. The influence of perpetrator mental disorder diagnosis and target-perpetrator gender is especially important in relation to proving perpetrator intent and victim intimidation in court. Furthermore, there is potential for perpetrators to rely on a diminished responsibility defence where a mental disorder diagnosis is present, emphasising the need for the court to thoroughly deliberate the relevance of such diagnoses. Given the enormity of the impact that stalking behaviour can have on victims as well as the gravity of criminal justice proceedings, the influence of mental disorder on perceptions of stalking should be further examined.

References

- American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-IV-TR* (Vol. 4th, text revision.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5* (Vol. 5th). Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Association.
- Armstrong, R. A. (2014). When to use the Bonferroni correction. *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics*, 34(5), 502-508. doi: 10.1111/opo.12131
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2012). Personal Safety Survey Australia. Retrieved 1 March 2016, from abs.gov.au
- Baltar, F., & Brunet, I. (2012). Social research 2.0: virtual snowball sampling method using facebook. *Internet Research*, 22(1), 57-74. doi: 10.1108/10662241211199960
- Barnett, M. E., Brodsky, S. L., & Price, J. R. (2007). Differential Impact of Mitigating Evidence in Capital Case Sentencing. *Journal of Forensic Psychology Practice*, 7(1), 39-45. doi: 10.1300/J158v07n01_04
- Barter, C., & Renold, E. (1999). The use of vignettes in qualitative research *Sociology at Surrey: Social Research Update*.
- Beebe, L. H. P. A.-B. C. (2007). What Can We Learn From Pilot Studies? *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 43(4), 213-218.
- Berryessa, C. M., Milner, L. C., Garrison, N. A., & Cho, M. K. (2015). Impact of Psychiatric Information on Potential Jurors in Evaluating High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder (hfASD). *Journal of Mental Health Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 8(3), 140-167. doi: 10.1080/19315864.2015.1040176

- Blaauw, E., Winkel, F., Arensman, E., Sheridan, L., & Freeve, A. (2002). The toll of stalking: the relationship between features of stalking and psychopathology of victims. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17, 50-63. doi: 10.1177/0886260502017001004
- Brady, P. Q., & Nobles, M. R. (2015). The Dark Figure of Stalking: Examining Law Enforcement Response. *J Interpers Violence*. doi: 10.1177/0886260515596979
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Bray, J. H., & Maxwell, S. E. (1985). *Multivariate analysis of variance*. California: Sage Publications.
- Burdekin, B., Guilfoyle, M., & Hall, D. (1993). *Human rights and mental illness: report of the national inquiry into the human rights of people with mental illness*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government.
- Carabellese, F., La Tegola, D., Alfarano, E., Tamma, M., Candelli, C., & Catanesi, R. (2012). Female stalking: a systematic review. *Research and Reports in Forensic Medical Science*, 2, 31+.
- Carlson, R. (1971). Where is the person in personality research? *Psychological Bulletin*, 75(3), 203-219. doi: 10.1037/h0030469
- Carr, M. L., Goranson, A. C., & Drummond, D. J. (2014). Stalking of the mental health professional: reducing risk and managing stalking behavior by patients. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 1(1), 4 - 22 doi: 10.1037/tam0000003
- Cass, A. I. (2011). Defining stalking: the influence of legal factors, extralegal factors, and particular actions on judgement of college students. *Western Criminology Review*, 12(1), 1 - 14.

- Catanesi, R., Carabellese, F., La Tegola, D., & Alfarano, E. (2013). Coexistence and Independence Between a Mental Disorder and Female Stalking*. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 58(1), 251-254. doi: 10.1111/j.1556-4029.2012.02210.x
- Cavaglion, G. (2008). Bad, mad, or sad? Mothers who kill and press coverage in Israel. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 4, 271-278. doi: 10.1177/1741659008092332
- Chartier, S., & Allaire, J. F. (2007). Power estimation in multivariate analysis of variance. *Tutorials in Quantitative Methods for Psychology*, 3(2), 70-78.
- Chase, M. (2008). The chivalry hypothesis and filicide: are there categorical differences between mothers and fathers who kill their children? *Undergraduate Review*, 4, 40-50.
- Cipriani, G., Logi, C., & Di Fiorino, A. (2012). A romantic delusion: de Clerambault's syndrome in dementia. *Geriatrics & Gerontology International*, 12(3), 383-387. doi: 10.1111/j.1447-0594.2012.00850.x
- Coolican, H. (2004). *Research methods and statistic in psychology* (6th ed.). New York: Psychology Press.
- Corrigan, P. W., Rowan, D., Green, A., Lundin, R., River, P., Uphoff-Wasowski, K., . . . Kubiak, M. A. (2002). Challenging two mental illness stigmas: personal responsibility and dangerousness. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 28, 293-309.
- Crimes Act 1900 § S34A (1900).
- Criminal Code Act 1899 § S359A (1899).
- Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 § S338E (1913).
- Dennison, S., & Thomson, D. M. (2000). Community perceptions of stalking: what are the fundamental concerns? *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 7(2), 159 - 169. doi: 10.1080/13218710009524982

- Dennison, S. M. (2007). Interpersonal relationships and stalking: identifying when to intervene. *Law and Human Behavior*, 31, 353-367. doi: 10.1007/s1097900690673
- Dennison, S. M., & Stewart, A. (2006). Facing Rejection: New Relationships, Broken Relationships, Shame, and Stalking. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 50(3), 324-337. doi: 10.1177/0306624X05278077
- Dennison, S. M., & Thomson, D. M. (2002). Identifying stalking: the relevance of intent in commonsense reasoning. *Law and Human Behavior*, 26, 543-561.
- Diette, T. M., Goldsmith, A. H., Hamilton, D., Darity, W., & McFarland, K. (2014). Stalking: Does it Leave a Psychological Footprint? *Social Science Quarterly*, 95(2), 563-580. doi: 10.1111/ssqu.12058
- Dressing, H., Kuehner, C., & Gass, P. (2006). The epidemiology and characteristics of stalking. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 19, 395-399.
- Duff, S. C., & Scott, A. J. (2013). Understanding perceptions of stalking: the impact of additional contextual information regarding the breakdown of relationships. *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, 3(2), 136-144. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JCP-09-2012-0005>
- Dunlap, E. E., Lynch, K. R., Jewell, J. A., Wasarhaley, N. E., & Golding, J. M. (2015). Participant gender, stalking myth acceptance, and gender role stereotyping in perceptions of intimate partner stalking: a structural equation modeling approach. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 21(3), 234-253. doi: 10.1080/1068316X.2014.951648
- DuPont-Morales, M. A. (1999). De-Gendering Predatory Violence: The Female Stalker. *Humanity & Society*, 23(4), 366-379. doi: 10.1177/016059769902300406

- Dussuyer, I. (2000). *Is stalking legislation effective in protecting victims?* Paper presented at the Stalking: Criminal Justice Responses Conference, Sydney, New South Wales.
- Eldridge, S., & Kerry, S. (2012). *Statistics in practice: practical guide to cluster randomised trials in health service research* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Englebrecht, C. M., & Reyns, B. W. (2011). Gender differences in acknowledgement of stalking victimisation: results from the NVCS stalking supplement. *Violence and Victims*, 26, 560-578.
- Evans, J. R., & Mathur, A. (2005). The value of online surveys. *Internet Research*, 15(2), 195-219. doi: 10.1108/10662240510590360
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2008). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: a hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80-92.
- Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Finnegan, H. A. M. A., & Fritz, P. A. T. P. (2012). Differential Effects of Gender on Perceptions of Stalking and Harassment Behavior. *Violence and Victims*, 27(6), 895-910.
- Finney, D. J. (1989). Was This in Your Statistics Textbook? V. Transformation of Data. *Experimental Agriculture*, 25(02), 165-175. doi: doi:10.1017/S0014479700016665
- Gainsbury, S., & Blaszczynski, A. (2011). The Appropriateness of Using Laboratories and Student Participants in Gambling Research. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 27(1), 83-97. doi: 10.1007/s10899-010-9190-4

- Garvey, S. P. (1998). Aggravation and Mitigation in Capital Cases: What Do Jurors Think? *Columbia Law Review*, 98(6), 1538-1576.
- Gatewood Owens, J. (2015). A Gender-Biased Definition: Unintended Impacts of the Fear Requirement in Stalking Victimization. *Crime & Delinquency*. doi: 10.1177/0011128715615883
- Gordon, M. E., Slade, L. A., & Schmitt, N. (1986). 'The science of the sophomore revised: from conjecture to empiricism'. *Academy of Management Review*, 11, 191-207.
- Grabe, M. E., Trager, K. D., Lear, M., & Rauch, J. (2006). Gender in Crime News: A Case Study Test of the Chivalry Hypothesis. *Mass Communication and Society*, 9(2), 137-163. doi: 10.1207/s15327825mcs0902_2
- Groves, R. M., Fowler, F. J., Couper, M. P., Lepkowski, J. M., Singer, E., & Tourangeau, R. (2009). *Survey methodology* (2nd ed ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Hetherington, E. M., & Parke, R. D. (1993). *Child psychology: a contemporary viewpoint* (Vol. 4th). New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Hills, A. M., & Taplin, J. L. (1998). Anticipated responses to stalking: effect of threat and target-stalker relationship. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 5, 139-145. doi: 10.1080/13218719809524927
- James, D. V., & Farnham, F. R. (2003). Stalking and serious violence. *The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 31, 432 - 439.
- James, D. V., McEwan, T. E., MacKenzie, R. D., Meloy, J. R., Mullen, P. E., Pathé, M. T., . . . Darnley, B. J. (2010). Persistence in stalking: a comparison of associations in general forensic and public figure samples. *The Journal of*

- Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology*, 21(2), 283-305. doi:
10.1080/14789940903388994
- Jung, J. (1969). Current practices and problems in the use of college students for psychological research. *The Canadian Psychologist*, 10, 280-290. doi:
10.1037/h0082535
- Kamphuis, J. H., & Emmelkamp, P. M. G. (2001). Traumatic distress among support-seeking female victims of stalking. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 158, 795-798.
- Kamphuis, J. H., Galeazzi, G. M., Fazio, L. D., Emmelkamp, P. M. G., Farnham, F., Groenen, A., . . . Vervaeke, G. (2005). Stalking - perceptions and attitudes amongst helping professions. An EU cross national comparison. *Clinical psychology and psychotherapy*, 12, 215-225. doi: 10.1002/cpp.451
- Kendall, C., Kerr, L. R., Gondim, R. C., Werneck, G. L., Macena, R. H., Maia, . . . McFarland, W. (2008). An Empirical Comparison of Respondent-driven Sampling, Time Location Sampling, and Snowball Sampling for Behavioral Surveillance in Men Who Have Sex with Men, Fortaleza, Brazil. *AIDS and Behavior*, 12, 97-104. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10461-008-9390-4>
- Kinkade, P., Burns, R., & Fuentes, A. I. (2005). Criminalizing Attractions: Perceptions of Stalking and the Stalker. *Crime & Delinquency*, 51(1), 3-25. doi:
10.1177/0011128703262462
- Kivisto, A. J., Berman, A., Watson, M., Gruber, D., & Paul, H. (2015). North American Psychologists' experiences of stalking, threatening, and harassing behavior: a survey of ABPP diplomats. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 46(4), 277 - 286. doi: 10.1037/pro0000025

- Kraepelin, E. (1921). *Manic-depressive insanity and paranoia* (Translated by R. M. Barclay). Edinburgh, Livingstone: Original work published 1913.
- Laerd Statistics. (2014). Transformations in SPSS. Retrieved 10 October 2014, from <https://statistics.laerd.com/premium/t/transformations-in-spss.php>
- Lamplugh, D., & Infield, P. (2003). Harmonising anti-stalking laws. *The George Washington International Law Review*, 34(4), 863 - 870.
- Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., Palarea, R. E., Cohen, J., & Rohling, M. L. (2000). Breaking up is hard to do: unwanted pursuit behaviours following the dissolution of a romantic relationship. *Violence and Victims*, 15, 73-90.
- Leonard, E. B. (1982). *A critique of criminology theory: women, crime and society*. New York, NY: Longman, Inc.
- Lesaffre, E. (1983). Normality tests and transformations. *Pattern Recognition Letters*, 1, 187-199. doi: 10.1016/0167-8655(83)90061-2
- Liamputtong, P., & Ezzy, D. (2006). *Qualitative Research Methods*. (2nd ed.). South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.
- Lynch, K. R., & Logan, T. K. (2015). Police Officers' Attitudes and Challenges With Charging Stalking. *Violence Vict*, 30(6), 1037-1048. doi: 10.1891/0886-6708.vv-d-13-00085
- Lyndon, A. E., Sinclair, H. C., MacArthur, J., Fay, B., Ratajack, E., & Collier, K. E. (2011). An Introduction to Issues of Gender in Stalking Research. *Sex Roles*, 66(5), 299-310. doi: 10.1007/s11199-011-0106-2
- Marczyk, G., DeMatto, D., & Festinger, D. (2005). *Essentials of research design and methodology*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Marsh, I., & Melville, G. (2009). *Crime, justice and the media* (Vol. 1). London: Routledge.

- Mayers, A. (2013). *Introduction to statistics and SPSS in psychology*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- McEwan, T. E., MacKenzie, R. D., Mullen, P. E., & James, D. V. (2012). Approach and escalation in stalking. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology*, 23, 392-409. doi: 10.1080/14789949.2012.679008
- McEwan, T. E., Mullen, P. E., & MacKenzie, R. D. (2009). A study of the predictors of persistence in stalking situations. *Law and Human Behavior*, 33, 149-158. doi: 10.1007/s10979.008.9141.0
- McEwan, T. E., Mullen, P. E., MacKenzie, R. D., & Ogloff, J. R. P. (2009). Violence in stalking situations. *Psychological Medicine*, 39, 1469-1478. doi: 10.1017/s0033291708004996
- McHugh, M. L. (2013). The chi-square test of independence. *Biochemia Medica*, 23(2), 143-149. doi: 10.11613/BM.2013.018
- Meloy, J. R., & Boyd, C. (2003). Female stalkers and their victims. *J Am Acad Psychiatry Law*, 31(2), 211-219.
- Meloy, J. R., & Gothard, S. (1995). Deomgraphic and clinical comparison of obsessional followers and offenders with mental disorders. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 152(2), 258-263.
- Meloy, J. R., Mohandie, K., & Green, M. (2011). The female stalker. *Behav Sci Law*, 29(2), 240-254. doi: 10.1002/bsl.976
- Melton, G. B. (1992). The Law Is a Good Thing (Psychology Is, Too): Human Rights in Psychological Jurisprudence. *Law and Human Behavior*, 16(4), 381-398.
- Menard, K. S., & Cox, A. K. (2015). Stalking Victimization, Labeling, and Reporting: Findings From the NCVS Stalking Victimization Supplement. *Violence Against Women*. doi: 10.1177/1077801215610862

- Merriam-Webster Inc. (2003). *The concise dictionary*. Victoria: Hinkler-Books Pty Ltd,.
- Minster, J., & Knowles, A. (2006). Exclusion or concern: lawyers' and community members' perceptions of legal coercion, dangerousness and mental illness. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 13, 166-173.
- Mohandie, K., Meloy, J. R., Green-McGowan, M., & Williams, J. (2006). The RECON typology of stalking: reliability and validity based upon a large sample of North American stalkers. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 51, 147-155.
- Mossman, D. (2007). *Stalking, competence to stand trial, and criminal responsibility*. Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, USA.
- Mullen, P. E., Pathe, M., & Purcell, R. (2000). Stalking. *Psychologist*, 13, 454-459.
- Mullen, P. E., Pathé, M., Purcell, R., & Stuart, G. W. (1999). Study of stalkers. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 156(8), 1244-1249.
- Narud, K., Friestad, C., & Dahl, A. A. (2014). Stalking experiences and associated factors--a controlled population-based study from Norway. *Nord J Psychiatry*, 68(5), 347-354. doi: 10.3109/08039488.2013.844273
- Newton, L., Rosen, A., Tennant, C., & Hobbs, C. (2001). Moving out and moving on: some ethnographic observations of deinstitutionalization in an Australian community. *Psychiatric rehabilitation journal*, 25(2), 152-162. doi: 10.1037/h0095030
- Nicastro, A. M., Cousins, A. V., & Spitzberg, B. H. (2000). The tactical face of stalking. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 28, 69-82.
- Nobles, M. R., Fox, K. A., Piquero, N., & Piquero, A. R. (2009). Career Dimensions of Stalking Victimization and Perpetration. *Justice Quarterly*, 26(3), 476-503. doi: 10.1080/07418820802427833

- Norman, G. R., & Streiner, D. L. (2008). *Biostatistics: the bare essentials* (3rd ed.). CT: PMPH USA, Ltd.
- Ogilvie, E. (2000). *Stalking: legislative, policing and prosecution patterns in Australia*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology Retrieved from <http://www.aic.gov.au>.
- Olson, C. L. (1974). Comparative Robustness of Six Tests in Multivariate Analysis of Variance. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 69(348), 894-908.
doi: 10.2307/2286159
- Orr, J. M., Sackett, P. R., & DuBois, C. L. Z. (1991). Outlier detection and treatment in I/O psychology: a survey of researcher beliefs and an empirical illustration. *Personnel Psychology*, 44, 473-486.
- Osborne, J. W. (2008). *Best Practices in Quantitative Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Palarea, R. E., Zona, M. A., Lane, J. C., & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J. (1999). The dangerous nature of intimate relationship stalking: threats, violence, and associated risk factors. *Behav Sci Law*, 17(3), 269-283.
- Pearce, A., & Easteal, P. W. (1999). The 'domestic' in stalking: policing domestic stalking in the Australian Capital Territory. *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(4), 165-169.
- Peat, J. K. (2002). *Health science research*. London, England: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Peng, C. J., & So, T. H. (2002). Logistic regression analysis and reporting: a primer. *Understanding Statistics*, 1(1), 31-70.
- Phillips, L., Quirk, R., Rosenfeld, B., & O'Connor, M. (2004). Is it stalking? Perceptions of stalking among college undergraduates. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 31(1), 73-96. doi: 10.1177/0093854803259251

- Purcell, R., Pathé, M., & Mullen, P. (2004). Editorial: When do repeated intrusions become stalking? *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology*, 15(4), 571-583. doi: 10.1080/14789940412331313368
- Purcell, R., Pathe, M., & Mullen, P. E. (2001). A study of women who stalk. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 158, 2056-2060.
- Purcell, R., Pathé, M., & Mullen, P. E. (2002). The prevalence and nature of stalking in the Australian community. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36(1), 114-120. doi: 10.1046/j.1440-1614.2002.00985.x
- Qi, S. J., Starfelt, L. C., & White, K. M. (2016). Attributions of responsibility, blame and justifiability to a perpetrator and victim in an acquaintance rape scenario: the influence of Marijuana intoxication. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 22(1), 20-35. doi: 10.1080/13552600.2015.1025868
- Racine, C., & Billick, S. (2014). Classification systems for stalking behavior. *J Forensic Sci*, 59(1), 250-254. doi: 10.1111/1556-4029.12262
- Roberts, C. (2010). *Measuring social attitudes*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Roberts, S. (2008). Transform your data. *Nutrition*, 24, 492-494. doi: 10.1016/j.nut.2008.01.004
- Rosenfeld, B. (2004). Violence risk factors in stalking and obsessional harassment: a review and preliminary meta-analysis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 31, 9-36. doi: 10.1177/0093854803259241
- Ruiz, J., & Miller, C. (2004). An exploratory study of Pennsylvania police officers' perceptions of dangerousness and their ability to manage persons with mental illness. *Police Quarterly*, 7, 359-371. doi: 10.1177/1098611103258957

- Sabbagh, M. (2011). Direct and indirect influences of defendant mental illness on jury decision making. *The University of Central Florida Undergraduate Research Journal*, 5(2), 86 - 96.
- Salganik, M. J., & Heckathorn, D. D. (2004). Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling. *Sociological Methodology*, 34, 193-239. doi: 10.2307/3649374
- Sandberg, D. A., McNiel, D. E., & Binder, R. L. (1998). Characteristics of psychiatric inpatients who stalk, threaten, or harass hospital staff after discharge. *Am J Psychiatry*, 155(8), 1102-1105. doi: 10.1176/ajp.155.8.1102
- Scott, A. J., Gavin, J., Sleath, E., & Sheridan, L. (2014). The attribution of responsibility in cases of stalking. *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 20(7), 705 - 721.
- Scott, A. J., Lloyd, R., & Gavin, J. (2010). The influence of prior relationship on perceptions of stalking in the United Kingdom and Australia. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 37, 1185-1194. doi: 10.1177/0093854810378812
- Scott, A. J., Nixon, K., & Sheridan, L. (2013). The influence of prior relationship on perceptions of stalking: a comparison of laypersons, nonspecialist police officers and specialist police officers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 40(12), 1434-1448. doi: 10.1177/0093854813494183
- Scott, A. J., Rajakaruna, N., & Sheridan, L. (2014). Framing and perceptions of stalking: the influence of conduct severity and the perpetrator–target relationship. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 20(3), 242-260. doi: 10.1080/1068316X.2013.770856
- Scott, A. J., Rajakaruna, N., Sheridan, L., & Gavin, J. (2015). International Perceptions of Relational Stalking: The Influence of Prior Relationship, Perpetrator Sex,

- Target Sex, and Participant Sex. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(18), 3308-3323. doi: 10.1177/0886260514555012
- Scott, A. J., Rajakaruna, N., Sheridan, L., & Sleath, E. (2014). International Perceptions of Stalking and Responsibility: The Influence of Prior Relationship and Severity of Behavior. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 41(2), 220-236. doi: 10.1177/0093854813500956
- Scott, A. J., & Sheridan, L. (2011). 'Reasonable' perceptions of stalking: the influence of conduct severity and the perpetrator-target relationship. *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 17, 331-343. doi: 10.1080/10683160903203961
- Sears, D. O. (1986). College sophomores in the laboratory: Influences of a narrow data base on social psychology's view of human nature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(3), 515-530. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.51.3.515
- Shain, R., & Phillips, J. (1991). The stigma of mental illness: labeling and stereotyping in the news. In L. Wilkins & P. Patterson (Eds.), *Risky Business: communicating issues of science, risk, and public policy*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.
- Shepon, D. (2004). *Mothers who kill their children as compared to fathers who kill their children: stereotypes in Israeli society*. (Masters Thesis), Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel.
- Sheridan, L., Gillett, R., Davies, G., Blaauw, E., & Patel, D. (2003). 'There's no smoke without fire': are male ex-partners perceived as more 'entitled' to stalk than acquaintance or stranger stalkers? *British Journal of Psychology*, 94, 87-98.
- Sheridan, L., & Lyndon, A. E. (2012). The Influence of Prior Relationship, Gender, and Fear on the Consequences of Stalking Victimization. *Sex Roles*, 66(5-6), 340-350. doi: 10.1007/s11199-010-9889-9

- Sheridan, L., & Roberts, C. (2011). Key questions to consider in stalking cases. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 29, 255-270.
- Sheridan, L., & Scott, A. J. (2010). Perceptions of harm: verbal versus physical abuse in stalking scenarios. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 37, 400-416. doi: 10.1177/0093854809359743
- Sheridan, L. P., North, A. C., & Scott, A. J. (2014). Experiences of stalking in same-sex and opposite-sex contexts. *Violence Vict*, 29(6), 1014-1028.
- Spitzberg, B. H., & Cupach, W. R. (2007). The state of the art of stalking: Taking stock of the emerging literature. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 12(1), 64-86. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2006.05.001>
- Stevens, C. K. (2011). Questions to consider when selecting student samples. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 47, 19.
- Stevens, J. P. (1984). Outliers and influential data points in regression analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95(2), 334-344.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2001). *Using multivariate statistics* (4th ed.). MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2014). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Thomas, S. D. M., Purcell, R., Pathé, M., & Mullen, P. E. (2008). Harm associated with stalking victimization. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 42(9), 800-806 807p.
- Thompson, C. M., & Dennison, S. M. (2008). Defining Relational Stalking in Research: Understanding Sample Composition in Relation to Repetition and Duration of Harassment. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 15(3), 482-499. doi: 10.1080/13218710802389432

- Tjadan, P., Thoennes, N., & Allison, C. J. (2000). Comparing stalking victimization from legal and victim perspectives. *Violence and Victims, 15*, 7-22.
- van Teijlingen, E. R., & Hundley, V. (2001). The importance of pilot studies. *Sociology at Surrey*. Retrieved 35, Winter, from <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU35.pdf>
- Vanderstoep, S. W., & Johnston, D. D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Weller, M., Hope, L., & Sheridan, L. (2013). Police and public perceptions of stalking: the role of prior victim-offender relationship. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(2), 320 - 339. doi: 10.1177/0886260512454718
- Wheeler, A. R., Shanine, K. K., Leon, M. R., & Whitman, M. V. (2014). Student-recruited samples in organizational research: A review, analysis, and guidelines for future research. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 87*(1), 1-26. doi: 10.1111/joop.12042
- White, J., Kowalski, R. M., Lyndon, A., & Valentine, S. (2000). An integrative contextual developmental model of male stalking. *Violence and Victims, 15*(4), 373-388.
- Whitley, R., Adeponle, A., & Miller, A. R. (2015). Comparing gendered and generic representations of mental illness in Canadian newspapers: an exploration of the chivalry hypothesis. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 50*(2), 325-333. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s00127-014-0902-4>
- Wigman, S. A. (2009). Male victims of former-intimate partner stalking: a selected review. *International Journal of Men's Health, 8*, 101-115.
- Willis, J., & McMahon, M. (2000). *Stalking: intervention orders*. Paper presented at the Criminal Justice Responses Conference, Sydney, New South Wales. aic.gov.au

World Health Organization. (2011). *International statistical classification of diseases and related health problems* (Vol. 10th revision, 2010). Geneva: World Health Organization.

Wright, J. A., Burgess, A. G., Burgess, A. W., Laszlo, A. T., McCrary, G. O., & Douglas, J. E. (1996). A Typology of Interpersonal Stalking. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 11(4), 487-502. doi: 10.1177/088626096011004003

Appendix A

WA Stalking Legislation

Chapter XXXIIB — Stalking

[Heading inserted by No. 38 of 1998 s. 4.]

338D. Terms used

(1) In this Chapter —

circumstances of aggravation, without limiting the definition of that expression in section 221, includes circumstances in which —

- (a) immediately before or during or immediately after the commission of the offence, the offender is armed with any dangerous or offensive weapon or instrument or pretends to be so armed; or
- b) the conduct of the offender in committing the offence constituted a breach of a condition on which bail has been granted to the offender;

intimidate, in relation to a person, includes —

- (a) to cause physical or mental harm to the person;
- (b) to cause apprehension or fear in the person;
- (c) to prevent the person from doing an act that the person is lawfully entitled to do, or to hinder the person in doing such an act;
- (d) to compel the person to do an act that the person is lawfully entitled to abstain from doing;

pursue, in relation to a person, includes —

- (a) to repeatedly communicate with the person, whether directly or indirectly and whether in words or otherwise;
- (b) to repeatedly follow the person;
- (c) to repeatedly cause the person to receive unsolicited items;
- (d) to watch or beset the place where the person lives or works or happens to be, or the approaches to such a place;

(e) whether or not repeatedly, to do any of the foregoing in breach of a restraining order or bail condition.

(2) For the purpose of deciding whether an accused person has pursued another person —

(a) the accused is not to be regarded as having communicated with or followed that person on a particular occasion if it is proved by or on behalf of the accused that on that occasion the accused did not intend to communicate with or follow that person;

(b) an act by the accused on a particular occasion is not to be taken into account for the purpose of deciding whether the accused watched or beset a place where that person lived, worked or happened to be, or the approaches to such a place, if it is proved by or on behalf of the accused that on that occasion the accused did not know it was such a place.

[Section 338D inserted by No. 38 of 1998 s. 4(1); amended by No. 38 of 2004 s. 71.]

338E. Stalking

(1) A person who pursues another person with intent to intimidate that person or a third person, is guilty of a crime and is liable —

(a) where the offence is committed in circumstances of aggravation, to imprisonment for 8 years; and

(b) in any other case, to imprisonment for 3 years.

Alternative offence: s. 338E(2).

Summary conviction penalty:

(a) in a case to which subsection (1)(a) applies:
imprisonment for 2 years and a fine of \$24 000;

(b) in a case to which subsection (1)(b) applies:
imprisonment for 18 months and a fine of \$18 000.

(2) A person who pursues another person in a manner that could reasonably be expected to intimidate, and that does in fact

intimidate, that person or a third person is guilty of a simple offence.

Penalty: imprisonment for 12 months and a fine of \$12 000.

(3) It is a defence to a charge under this section to prove that the accused person acted with lawful authority.

[Section 338E inserted by No. 38 of 1998 s. 4(1); amended by No. 70 of 2004 s. 35(7), 35(8) and 36(3); No. 2 of 2008 s. 12.]

Appendix B

Stalking Legislation Matrix – Elements of Australian Jurisdictions

For detailed and specific information pertaining to the law in each state, please see the appropriate legislation. A broad overview of the components specified in stalking legislation across eight legal jurisdictions in Australia is provided in Table 12.

Table 12

Matrix of Stalking Legislation in Australia

State	Act & Offence Name	Repeated / Course of Conduct	Intent to Intimidate (Fear or Harm, Physical or Mental)	Proof of Fear, Harm, Apprehension	Aggravation	Third Party	Reasonable Expectation	Behaviours											
								Communicate	Follow	Approach	Surveillance	Enter a Property	Loiter	Transmit or Publish on the Internet etc	Monitor or Watch	Beset, Frequent, or Approach	Interfere with Property	Offensive Material or Gifts	Intimidate, Harass or Threaten
ACT	Crimes Act 1900 - Stalking	☑	☑	☑		☑		☑	☑	☑	☑		☑		☑		☑		
NSW	Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 - Stalking or intimidation with intent to cause fear of physical or mental harm	☑	☑			☑													

(Continued from previous page).

State	Act & Offence Name	Repeated / Course of Conduct	Intent to Intimidate (Fear or Harm, Physical or Mental)	Proof of Fear, Harm, Apprehension	Aggravation	Third Party	Reasonable Expectation	Behaviours												
								Communicate	Follow	Approach	Surveillance	Enter a Property	Loiter	Transmit or Publish on the Internet etc	Monitor or Watch	Beset, Frequent, or Approach	Interfere with Property	Offensive Material or Gifts	Intimidate, Harass or Threaten	Other Way Reasonably Expected to Cause Fear
NT	Criminal Code Act 1983 – Unlawful stalking	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
QLD	Criminal Code Act 1899 – Unlawful stalking^	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓	✓	
SA	Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 – Unlawful stalking	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
Tas	Criminal Code Act 1924 – Stalking	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
Vic	Crimes Act 1958 – Stalking	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓		✓
WA	Criminal Code Compilation Act 1913 - Stalking*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓				

*Intent is required for the indictable offence only; Victim apprehension / fear and reasonable expectation are required for the simple offence only.^ Single episode if protracted conduct.

Appendix C

Letter of Invitation to Participate – Online Mode



Information Letter and Invitation to Participate Win a Coles/Myer Gift Voucher Public Perceptions of Pursuit Behaviour

My name is Ebonnie Landwehr and I am currently completing this research as a requirement of the degree of Master of Criminal Justice by Research, coordinated by the School of Justice and Law, Faculty of Law and Business, at Edith Cowan University.

It is important to investigate and understand human behaviour, particularly pursuit behaviour, because it is an integral aspect of our lives. This research is designed to investigate community perceptions of pursuit behaviour within an Australian context.

You must be aged 18 years or over to be part of this research. If you participate in this online study you will be asked to read a short one paragraph scenario describing the pursuit behaviour of an individual towards another individual. You will then be asked to answer a series of questions regarding your opinion on the scenario. As this research project focuses on perspectives all opinions are valid and encouraged; there are no right or wrong answers. A short set of demographic questions will also be asked however no identifying information, such as name or address, will be recorded.

You can choose to participate anonymously, however, if you would like to enter the draw to win one of four Coles/Myer gift vouchers (1 x \$200, 3 x \$50) you will be asked to provide an email address so that you can be contacted if you win. The winners of the vouchers will be drawn randomly and notified via email prior to 31 December 2014.

Participation is voluntary and this may be withdrawn at any time, even after commencement of a survey. You are under no obligation to complete the survey. All information will be collected and handled confidentially during the study and upon completion of the study.

Although it is unlikely and not expected, in the event that you suffer adverse psychological effects, such as anxiety or depression, from participation in this study please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14. This is free number from mobiles for both pre- and post-paid customers. Landline calls are usually charged at the cost of a landline call.

The Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided or you can contact my academic supervisor Dr Adrian Scott on 6304 5407 or adrian.scott@ecu.edu.au.

You can also contact the Edith Cowan University Ethics Officer:

Research Ethics Officer - Edith Cowan University
270 Joondalup Drive
JOONDALUP WA 6027
Phone: (08) 6304 2170
Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

Thank you for reading this information sheet. Your participation is valued.

Ebonnie Landwehr
elandweh@our.ecu.edu.au

Appendix D

Letter of Invitation to Participate – Physical Mode



Information Letter and Invitation to Participate Win a Coles/Myer Gift Voucher Public Perceptions of Pursuit Behaviour

This is an anonymous questionnaire. You should read the Information Letter carefully as it explains fully the intention of the research project. Please ensure that you do not write your name (or any other comments that could identify you) on the questionnaire. By completing the questionnaire, you are consenting to take part in this research.

My name is Ebonnie Landwehr and I am currently completing this research as a requirement of the degree of Master of Criminal Justice by Research, coordinated by the School of Justice and Law, Faculty of Law and Business, at Edith Cowan University.

It is important to investigate and understand human behaviour, particularly pursuit behaviour, because it is an integral aspect of our lives. This research is designed to investigate community perceptions of pursuit behaviour within an Australian context.

You must be aged 18 years or over to be part of this research. If you participate in this online study you will be asked to read a short one paragraph scenario describing the pursuit behaviour of an individual towards another individual. You will then be asked to answer a series of questions regarding your opinion on the scenario. As this research project focuses on perspectives all opinions are valid and encouraged; there are no right or wrong answers. A short set of demographic questions will also be asked however no identifying information, such as name or address, will be recorded.

You can choose to participate anonymously, however, if you would like to enter the draw to win one of four Coles/Myer gift vouchers (1 x \$200, 3 x \$50) you will be asked to provide an email address so that you can be contacted if you win. The winners of the vouchers will be drawn randomly and notified once the minimal number of surveys has been collected.

Participation is voluntary and this may be withdrawn at any time, even after commencement of a survey. You are under no obligation to complete the survey. All information will be collected and handled confidentially during the study and upon completion of the study.

Although it is unlikely and not expected, in the event that you suffer adverse

psychological effects, such as anxiety or depression, from participation in this study please contact **Lifeline** on **13 11 14**. This is free number from mobiles for both pre- and post-paid customers. Landline calls are usually charged at the cost of a landline call.

The Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided or you can contact my academic supervisor Dr Adrian Scott on 6304 5407 or adrian.scott@ecu.edu.au.

You can also contact the Edith Cowan University Ethics Officer:
Research Ethics Officer - Edith Cowan University
270 Joondalup Drive JOONDALUP WA 6027
Phone: (08) 6304 2170 Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

Thank you for reading this information sheet. Your participation is valued.

Ebonnie Landwehr
elandweh@our.ecu.edu.au

If returning this questionnaire by mail, please send to:

Ebonnie Landwehr
52a Scaddan St
BASSENDEAN WA 6054

Appendix E

Study Vignettes

Condition 1

Every morning Gillian visits a particular café at the university campus where she works and has done so for several years. Two weeks ago John introduced himself to Gillian as a new employee to the café while preparing her coffee order. He complimented Gillian on her appearance and then asked her out. Gillian declined. When she left the café her colleague advised her that John had a diagnosed mental disorder and was employed as part of a program to put mentally disordered individuals in employment. During the subsequent two weeks John told Gillian that she was attractive every time she visited the café and asked her out repeatedly. Gillian always declined. John also phoned Gillian's office on several occasions, always asking how she was and whether there were any academic opportunities in her department. Each phone call ended with John asking Gillian why she would not go out with him, and Gillian telling John that she was not interested and that he should not call again. A couple of times John became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on Gillian. Gillian occasionally noticed John walking a short distance behind her on her way to the university car park. Each time, Gillian got in her car and quickly drove away.

Condition 2

Every morning Gillian visits a particular café at the university campus where she works and has done so for several years. Two weeks ago John introduced himself to Gillian as a new employee to the café while preparing her coffee order. He complimented Gillian on her appearance and then asked her out. Gillian declined. During the subsequent two weeks John told Gillian that she was attractive every time she visited the café and asked her out repeatedly. Gillian always declined. John also phoned Gillian's office on several

occasions, always asking how she was and whether there were any academic opportunities in her department. Each phone call ended with John asking Gillian why she would not go out with him, and Gillian telling John that she was not interested and that he should not call again. A couple of times John became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on Gillian. Gillian occasionally noticed John walking a short distance behind her on her way to the university car park. Each time, Gillian got in her car and quickly drove away.

Condition 3

Every morning John visits a particular café at the university campus where he works and has done so for several years. Two weeks ago Gillian introduced herself to John as a new employee to the café while preparing his coffee order. She complimented John on his appearance and then asked him out. John declined. When he left the café his colleague advised him that Gillian had a diagnosed mental disorder and was employed as part of a program to put mentally disordered individuals in employment. During the subsequent two weeks Gillian told John that he was attractive every time he visited the café and asked him out repeatedly. John always declined. Gillian also phoned John's office on several occasions, always asking how he was and whether there were any academic opportunities in his department. Each phone call ended with Gillian asking John why he would not go out with her, and John telling Gillian that he was not interested and that she should not call again. A couple of times Gillian became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on John. John occasionally noticed Gillian walking a short distance behind him on his way to the university car park. Each time, John got in his car and quickly drove away.

Condition 4

Every morning John visits a particular café at the university campus where he works and has done so for several years. Two weeks ago Gillian introduced herself to John as a new employee to the café while preparing his coffee order. She complimented John on his appearance and then asked him out. John declined. During the subsequent two weeks Gillian told John that he was attractive every time he visited the café and asked him out repeatedly. John always declined. Gillian also phoned John's office on several occasions, always asking how he was and whether there were any academic opportunities in his department. Each phone call ended with Gillian asking John why he would not go out with her, and John telling Gillian that he was not interested and that she should not call again. A couple of times Gillian became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on John. John occasionally noticed Gillian walking a short distance behind him on his way to the university car park. Each time, John got in his car and quickly drove away.

Condition 5

Every morning Gillian visits a particular café at the university campus where she works and has done so for several years. Twelve weeks ago John introduced himself to Gillian as a new employee to the café while preparing her coffee order. He complimented Gillian on her appearance and then asked her out. Gillian declined. When she left the café her colleague advised her that John had a diagnosed mental disorder and was employed as part of a program to put mentally disordered individuals in employment. During the subsequent twelve weeks John told Gillian that she was attractive every time she visited the café and asked her out repeatedly. Gillian always declined. John also phoned Gillian's office on several occasions, always asking how she was and whether

there were any academic opportunities in her department. Each phone call ended with John asking Gillian why she would not go out with him, and Gillian telling John that she was not interested and that he should not call again. A couple of times John became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on Gillian. Gillian occasionally noticed John walking a short distance behind her on her way to the university car park. Each time, Gillian got in her car and quickly drove away.

Condition 6

Every morning Gillian visits a particular café at the university campus where she works and has done so for several years. Twelve weeks ago John introduced himself to Gillian as a new employee to the café while preparing her coffee order. He complimented Gillian on her appearance and then asked her out. Gillian declined. During the subsequent twelve weeks John told Gillian that she was attractive every time she visited the café and asked her out repeatedly. Gillian always declined. John also phoned Gillian's office on several occasions, always asking how she was and whether there were any academic opportunities in her department. Each phone call ended with John asking Gillian why she would not go out with him, and Gillian telling John that she was not interested and that he should not call again. A couple of times John became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on Gillian. Gillian occasionally noticed John walking a short distance behind her on her way to the university car park. Each time, Gillian got in her car and quickly drove away.

Condition 7

Every morning John visits a particular café at the university campus where he works and has done so for several years. Twelve weeks ago Gillian introduced herself to John

as a new employee to the café while preparing his coffee order. She complimented John on his appearance and then asked him out. John declined. When he left the café his colleague advised him that Gillian had a diagnosed mental disorder and was employed as part of a program to put mentally disordered individuals in employment. During the subsequent twelve weeks Gillian told John that he was attractive every time he visited the café and asked him out repeatedly. John always declined. Gillian also phoned John's office on several occasions, always asking how he was and whether there were any academic opportunities in his department. Each phone call ended with Gillian asking John why he would not go out with her, and John telling Gillian that he was not interested and that she should not call again. A couple of times Gillian became agitated and verbally abusive, hanging up on John. John occasionally noticed Gillian walking a short distance behind him on his way to the university car park. Each time, John got in his car and quickly drove away.

Condition 8

Every morning John visits a particular café at the university campus where he works and has done so for several years. Twelve weeks ago Gillian introduced herself to John as a new employee to the café while preparing his coffee order. She complimented John on his appearance and then asked him out. John declined. During the subsequent twelve weeks Gillian told John that he was attractive every time he visited the café and asked him out repeatedly. John always declined. Gillian also phoned John's office on several occasions, always asking how he was and whether there were any academic opportunities in his department. Each phone call ended with Gillian asking John why he would not go out with her, and John telling Gillian that he was not interested and that she should not call again. A couple of times Gillian became agitated and verbally

abusive, hanging up on John. John occasionally noticed Gillian walking a short distance behind him on his way to the university car park. Each time, John got in his car and quickly drove away.

Appendix F

Study Items

Please answer the following questions.

1. Do you think [the perpetrator's] behaviour is stalking?

☐ Yes☐ Don't know☐ No

Why?

2. How likely is it that [the perpetrator] will use violence against [the target]?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
highly unlikely									highly likely	

3. How likely is it that [the target] is experiencing fear or anxiety as a result of the behaviour?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>highly unlikely</i>									<i>highly likely</i>	

4. How long do you think this situation will continue for?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>not long at all</i>								<i>a very long time</i>		

5. To what extent do you consider [the target] to be responsible for encouraging [the perpetrator's] behaviour?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
not responsible at all totally responsible

6. To what extent do you consider [the perpetrator] responsible for [their] own behaviour?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
not responsible at all totally responsible

7a. What mental disorder do you think [the perpetrator] is diagnosed with?

(participants in the mental disorder present conditions only)

7b. How likely is it that [the perpetrator] has a diagnosed mental disorder?

(participants in the mental disorder absent conditions only)

highly unlikely *highly likely*

If you believe you know what mental disorder [the perpetrator] has been diagnosed with, please enter it into the space below:

Appendix G

Demographic Items

Circle the appropriate response.

1. Please indicate your gender:

Male

Female

2. What is your age? _____

3. Please indicate the highest level of study you have achieved:

Year 9 or less

Certificate/diploma

Year 10

Bachelor degree

Year 12

Postgraduate degree

4. Please indicate the industry in which you work:

Administration

Hospitality

Police/courts/corrections

Science / research

Government (excluding sworn officers)

Student

Mining/oil/gas

Other (specify) _____

Financial / insurance

5. Are you a mental health professional or have you had personal experience with someone with a mental disorder?

Yes

No

6. Would you like to go into the draw to win a Coles/Myer voucher?

Yes

No

7. Would you like to receive the results of this study?

Yes

No

8. If you answered yes to either question 6 or 7 please provide an email address that you are able to be contacted on:

Appendix H

Binomial Logistic Regression Model Fit

As discussed in the results chapter of this paper, logistic regression was initially used to analyse the categorical item ‘Do you think the behaviour is stalking?’. As highlighted previously, the resulting model fit was poor. The SPSS output given below demonstrates this.

Block 0: Beginning Block

Classification Table^{a,b}

Observed			Predicted	
			Is it stalking dichotomous	
			Not stalking/Unsure	Stalking
Step 0	Is it stalking dichotomous	Not stalking/Unsure	0	39
		Stalking	0	241
	Overall Percentage			

Classification Table^{a,b}

Observed			Predicted
			Percentage Correct
Step 0	Is it stalking dichotomous	Not stalking/Unsure	.0
		Stalking	100.0
	Overall Percentage		86.1

a. Constant is included in the model.

b. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 0 Constant	1.821	.173	111.341	1	.000	6.179

Variables not in the Equation

	Score	df	Sig.
Step 0 Variables	duration_b(1)	1	.605
	Gender_b(1)	1	.605
	Mental_b(1)	1	.003
	Overall Statistics	3	.027

Block 1: Method = Enter

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	9.419	3	.024
	Block	9.419	3	.024
	Model	9.419	3	.024

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	216.633 ^a	.033	.060

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 5 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	1.646	5	.896

Contingency Table for Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

		Is it stalking dichotomous = Not stalking/Unsure		Is it stalking dichotomous = Stalking		Total
		Observed	Expected	Observed	Expected	
Step 1	1	7	8.061	28	26.939	35
	2	8	6.971	27	28.029	35
	3	7	6.971	28	28.029	35
	4	6	5.996	29	29.004	35
	5	3	3.235	32	31.765	35
	6	7	5.464	63	64.536	70
	7	1	2.301	34	32.699	35

Classification Table^a

Observed		Predicted	
		Is it stalking dichotomous	
		Not stalking/Unsure	Stalking
Step 1	Is it stalking dichotomous	0	39
	Not stalking/Unsure	0	241
	Stalking		
Overall Percentage			

Classification Table^a

Observed			Predicted
			Percentage Correct
Step 1	Is it stalking dichotomous	Not stalking/Unsure	.0
		Stalking	100.0
	Overall Percentage		86.1

a. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

Step 1							
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	
Step 1 ^a	duration_b(1)	-.185	.352	.276	1	.599	.831
	Gender_b(1)	-.185	.352	.276	1	.599	.831
	Mental_b(1)	-1.078	.379	8.089	1	.004	.340
	Constant	2.654	.413	41.243	1	.000	14.211

Variables in the Equation

		95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
		Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	duration_b(1)	.417	1.656
	Gender_b(1)	.417	1.656
	Mental_b(1)	.162	.715
	Constant		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: duration_b, Gender_b, Mental_b.

Appendix I

Removal of Outliers from the Raw Dataset

The raw dataset contained 48 outliers. Two different approaches were taken to address this issue with the data. Initially, an attempt was made to remove all of the outliers from the dataset, however this was unsuccessful. As shown in Table 13, continually removing all of the outliers until none were present in the dataset resulted in just 18 cases remaining. Consequently, only the extreme outliers were removed. Unfortunately, this was also not a suitable solution to the problem. Removing only the extreme outliers until there were no extreme outliers present in the dataset, resulted in the removal of 19 cases. Despite this, a further 39 non-extreme outliers remained in the dataset. This is detailed in Table 14.

Table 13

The Effect of Removing Outlier Cases and Generating Further Outliers

Removal Iteration	Cases Removed (N)
1 (raw dataset)	48
2	21
3	2
4	4
5	8
6	19
7	16
8	24
9	38
10	39
11	22
12	8
13	10
14	8
15	1
16	1
17	1
Total cases remaining	18

Table 14

The Effect of Removing Extreme Outlier Cases

Removal Iteration	Cases Removed (N)
1 (raw dataset)	13
2	3
3	1
4	2
Total cases remaining	269
<i>Total outliers remaining</i>	<i>39</i>

Appendix J

Log Transformation - SPSS Output

In order to improve the non-normality of the raw data, a log transformation was attempted. Table 15 provides the KS statistic for all the dependent variables at each level of the independent variables. The corresponding boxplots are given in the SPSS output contained in Figures 1 through 30.

Table 15

KS Statistics for Log Transformed Data

Variable	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder					
Present	.25***	.18***	.20***	.30***	.16***
Absent	.17***	.20***	.19***	.38***	.34***
Target-Perpetrator Gender					
Female-Male	.17***	.26***	.19***	.34***	.25***
Male-Female	.23***	.19***	.19***	.33***	.24***
Persistence					
2 weeks	.22***	.19***	.19***	.37***	.26***
12 weeks	.18***	.18***	.19***	.31***	.24***

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

*** $p < .001$.

Histograms of Log Transformed Data

Mental disorder diagnosis.

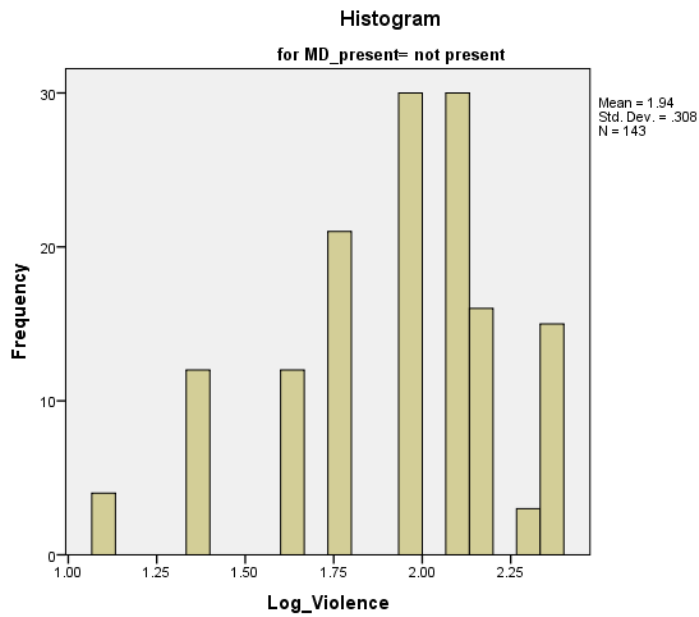


Figure 1. Log Distribution of Violence - Mental Disorder Absent

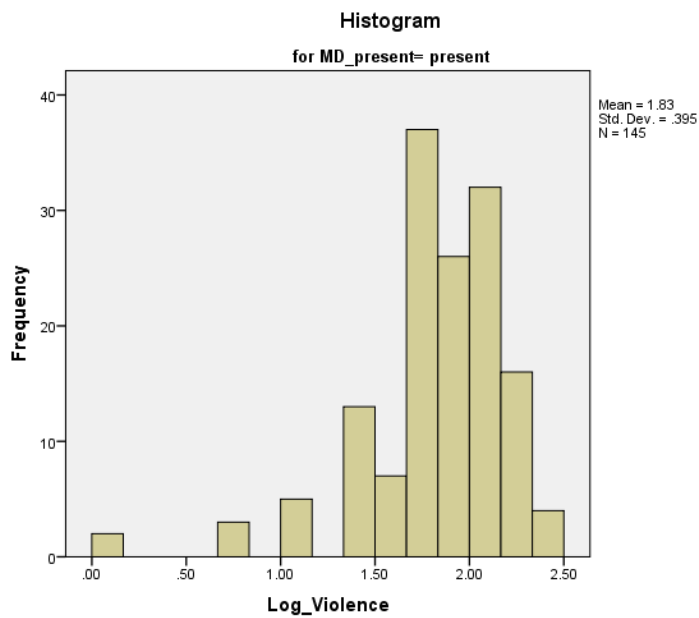


Figure 2. Log Distribution of Violence - Mental Disorder Present

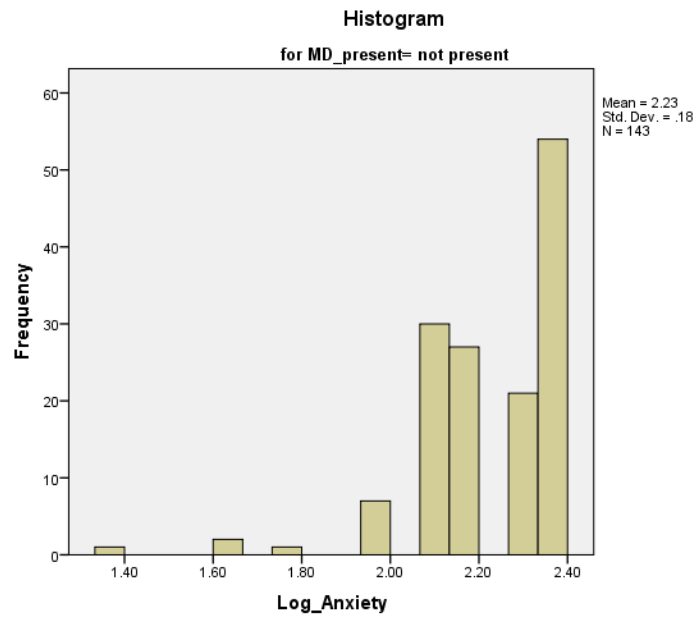


Figure 3. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Mental Disorder Absent

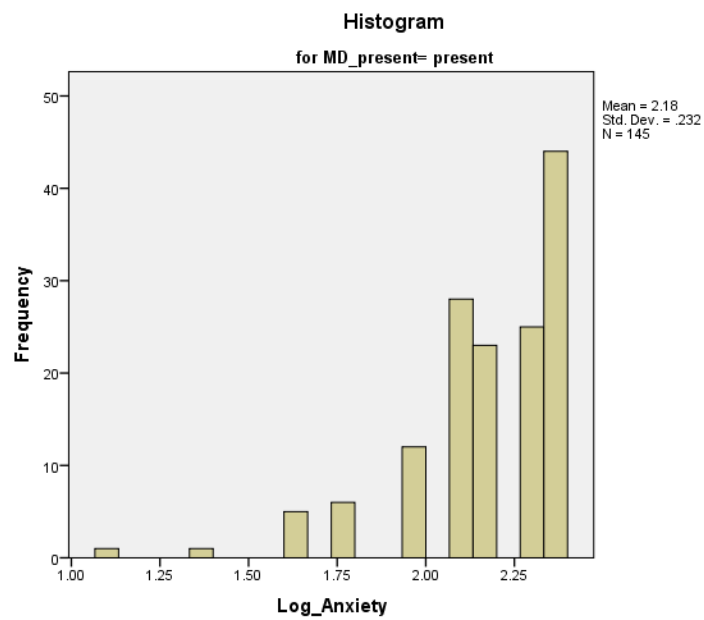


Figure 4. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Mental Disorder Present

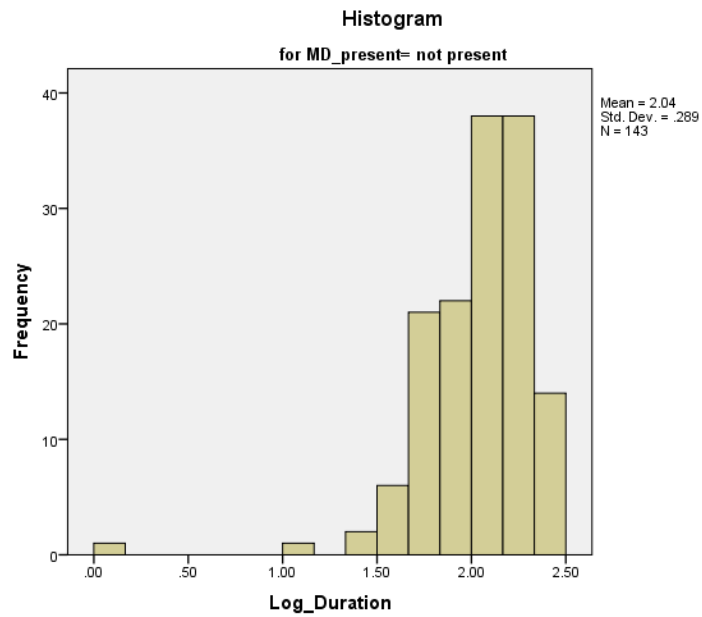


Figure 5. Log Distribution of Duration - Mental Disorder Absent

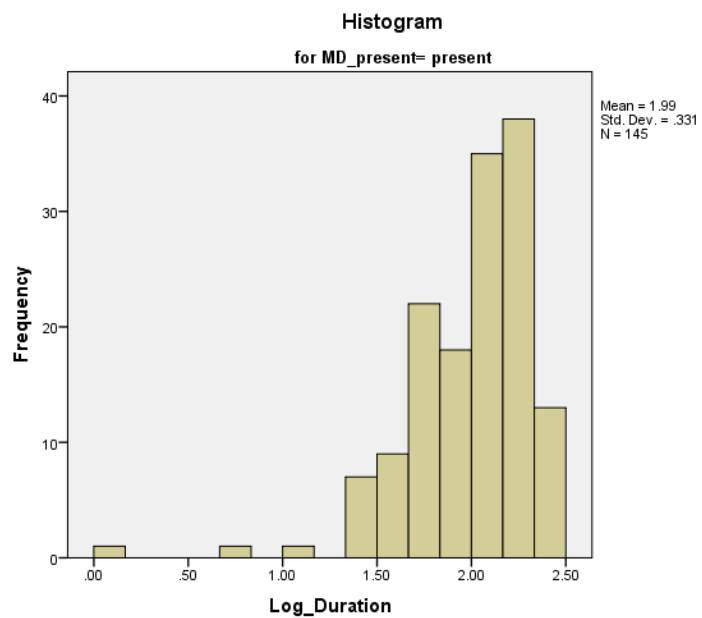


Figure 6. Log Distribution of Duration - Mental Disorder Present

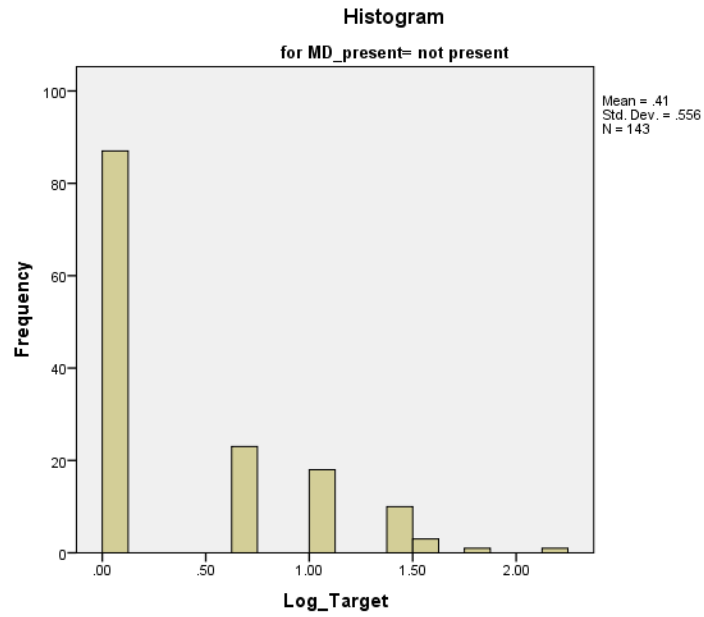


Figure 7. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Mental Disorder Absent

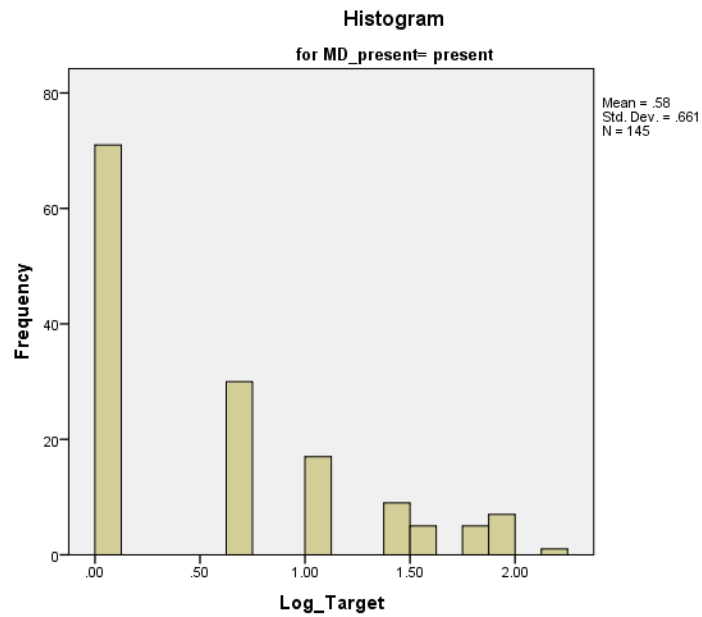


Figure 8. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Mental Disorder Present

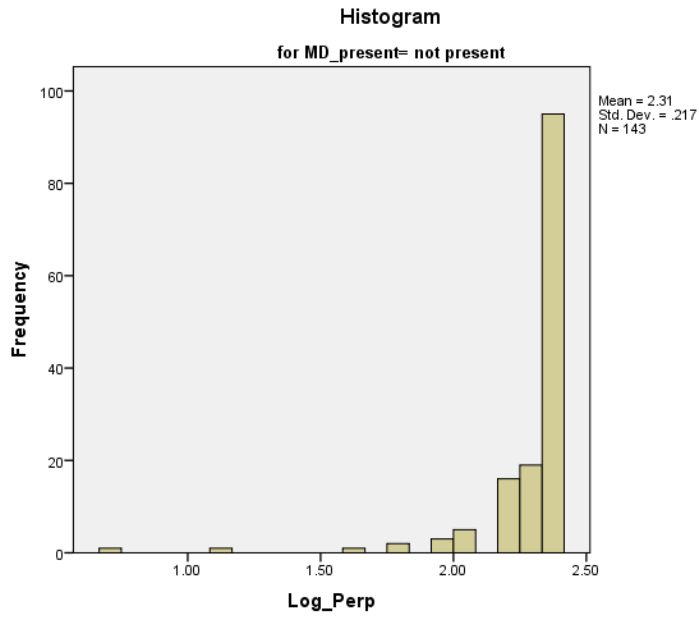


Figure 9. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Mental Disorder Absent

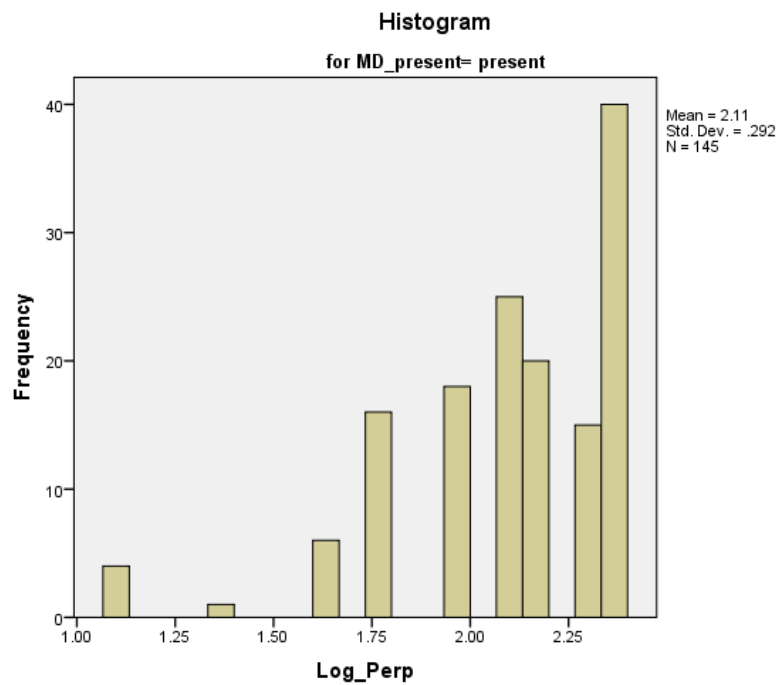


Figure 10. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Mental Disorder Present

Target-perpetrator gender.

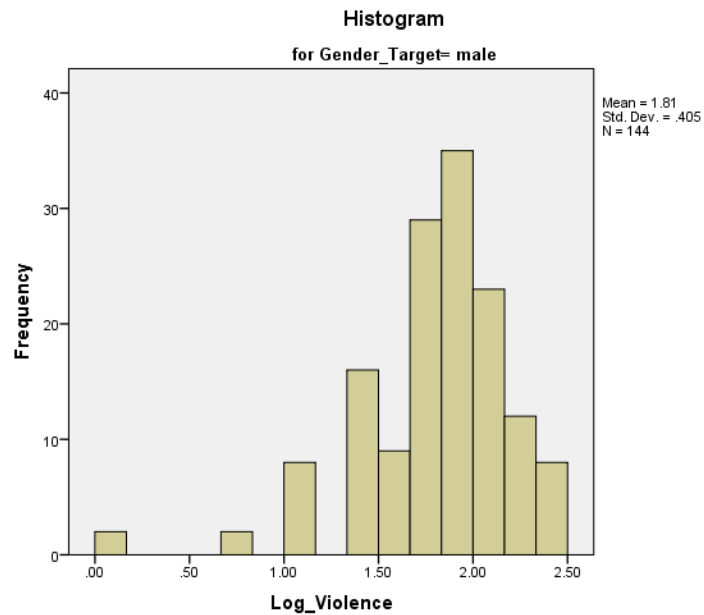


Figure 11. Log Distribution of Violence - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

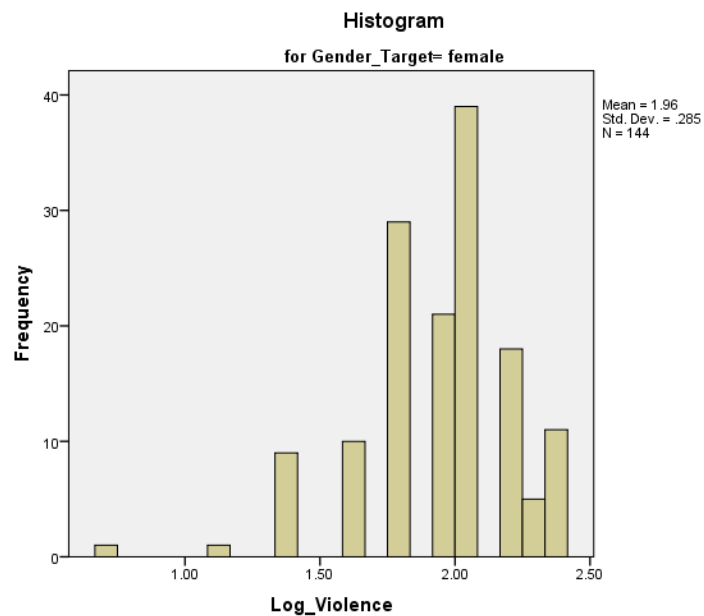


Figure 12. Log Distribution of Violence - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

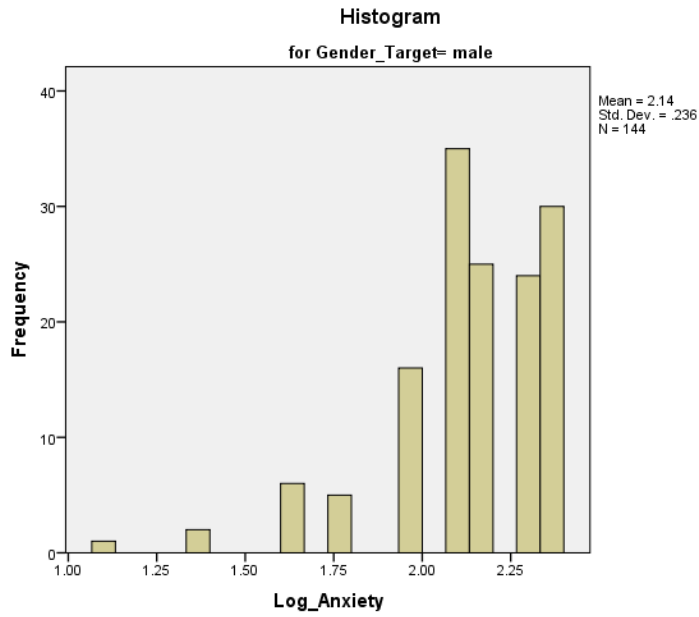


Figure 13. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

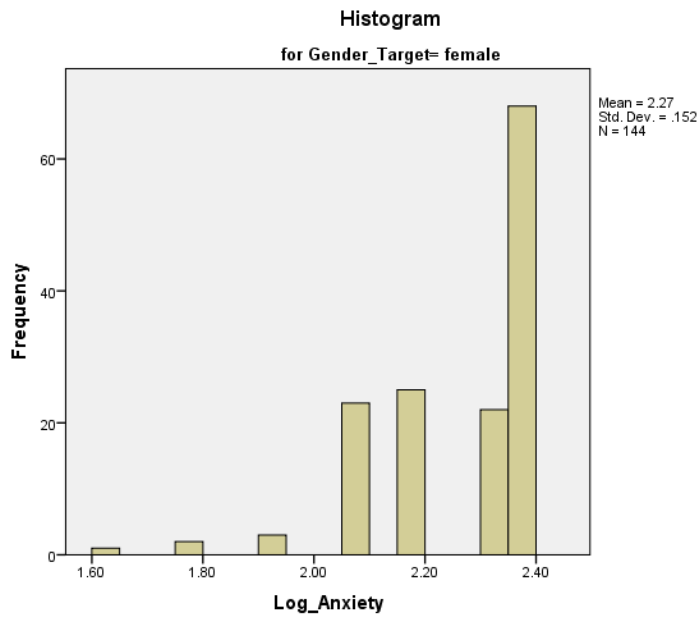


Figure 14. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

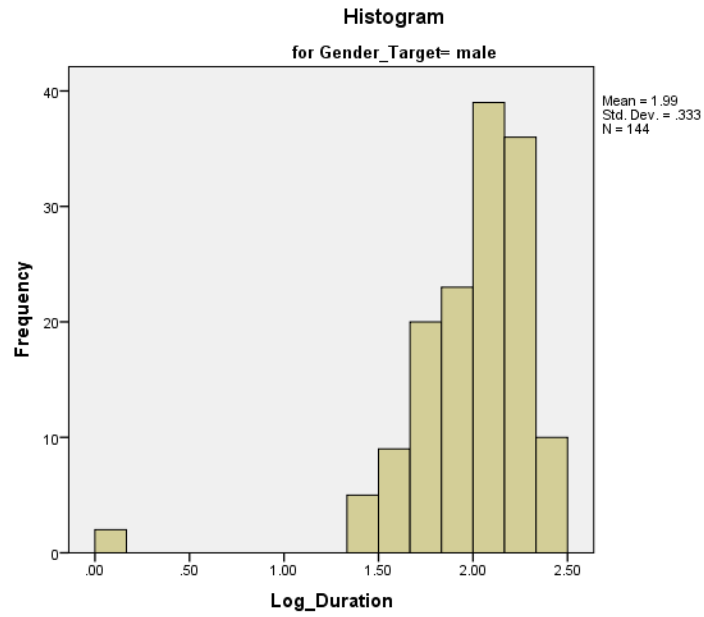


Figure 15. Log Distribution of Duration - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

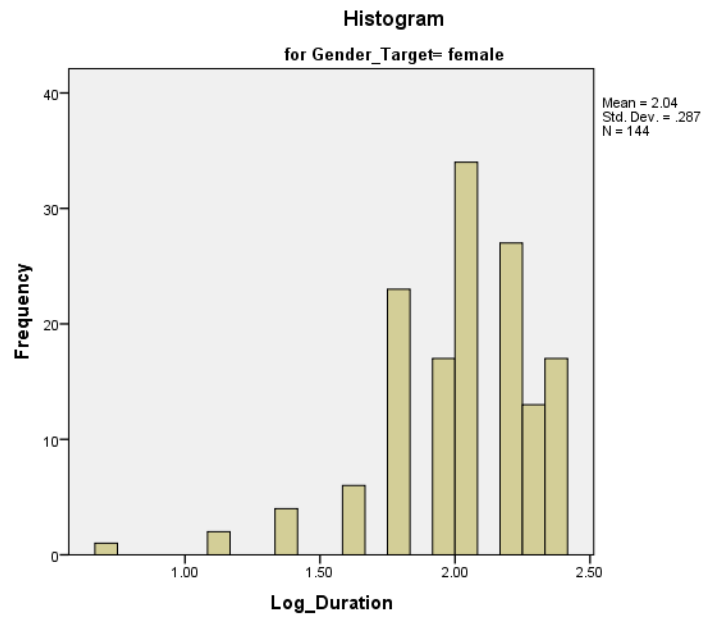


Figure 16. Log Distribution of Duration - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

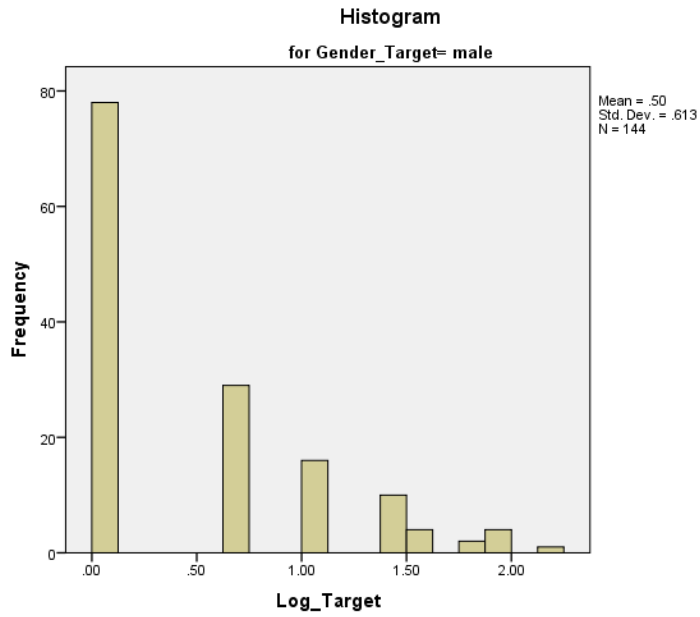


Figure 17. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

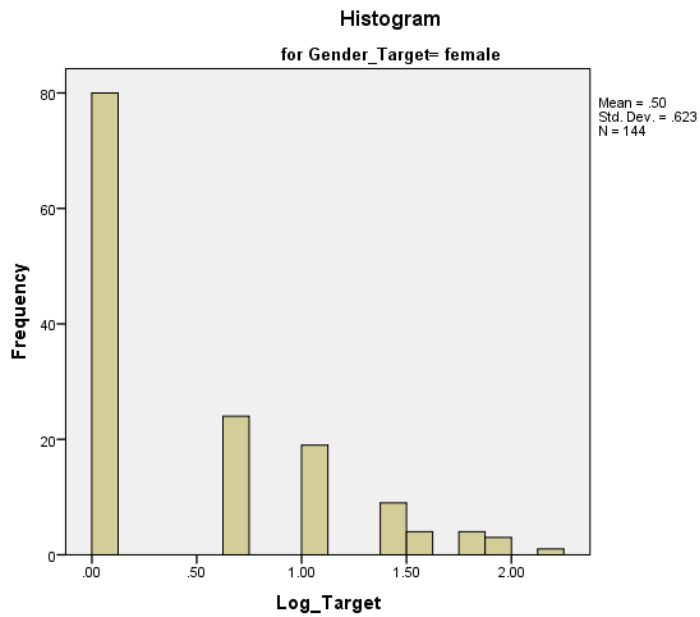


Figure 18. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

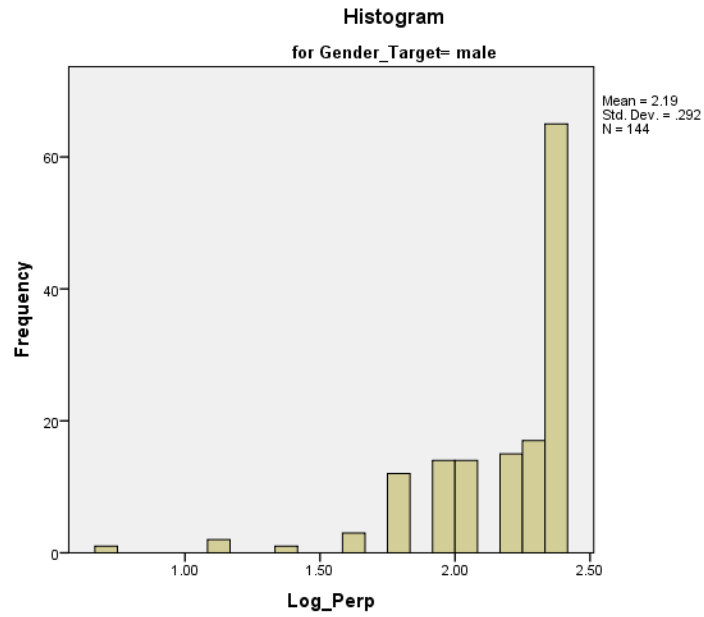


Figure 19. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

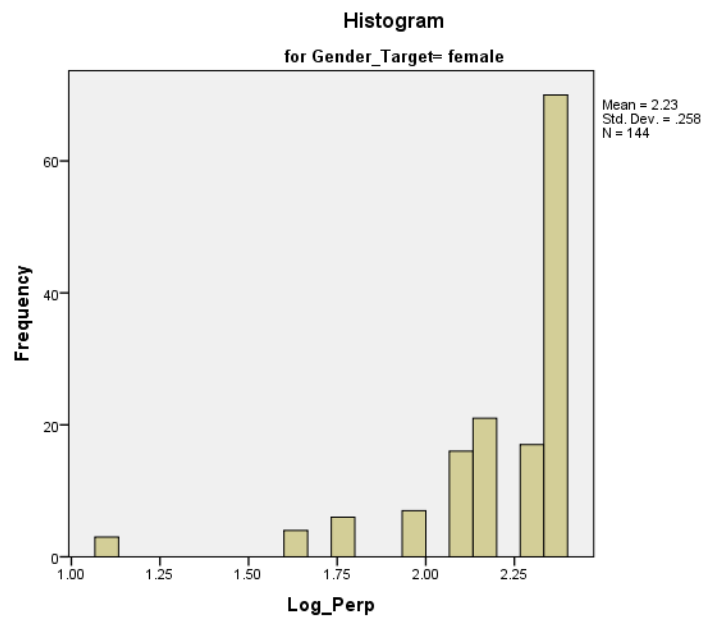


Figure 20. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

Persistence.

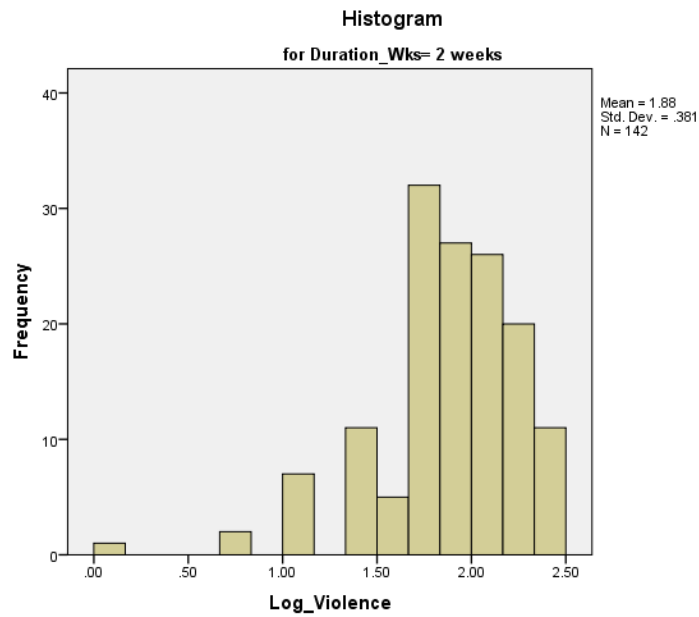


Figure 21. Log Distribution of Violence - 2 weeks

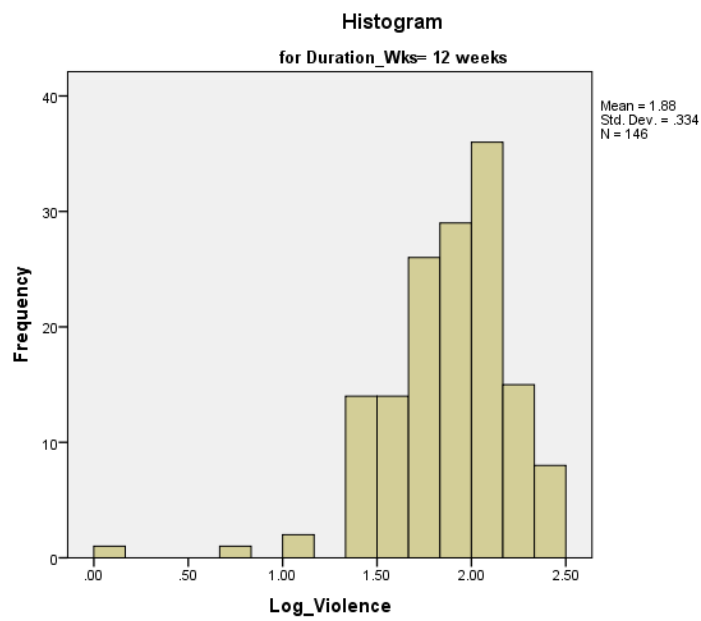


Figure 22. Log Distribution of Violence - 12 weeks

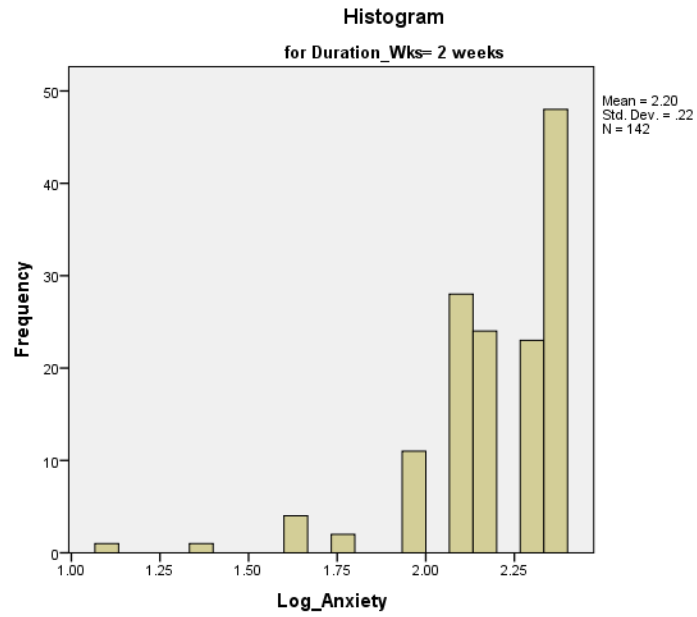


Figure 23. Log Distribution of Anxiety - 2 weeks

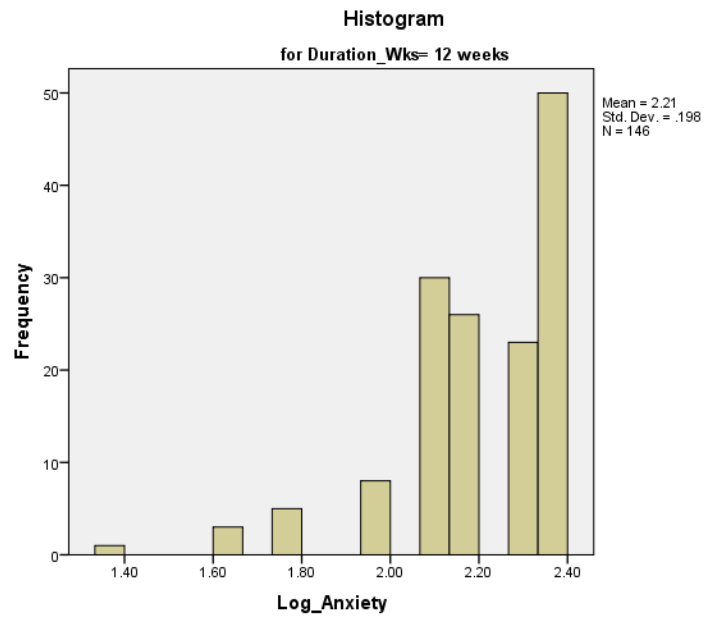


Figure 24. Log Distribution of Anxiety - 12 weeks

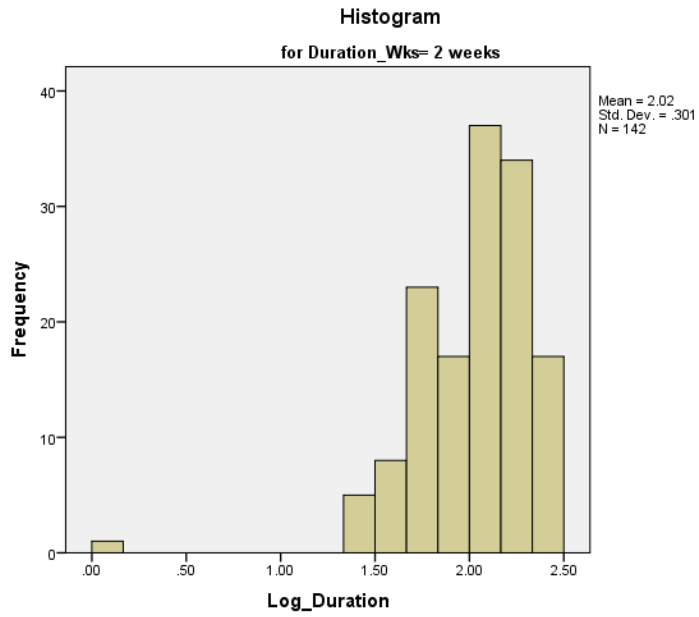


Figure 25. Log Distribution of Duration - 2 weeks

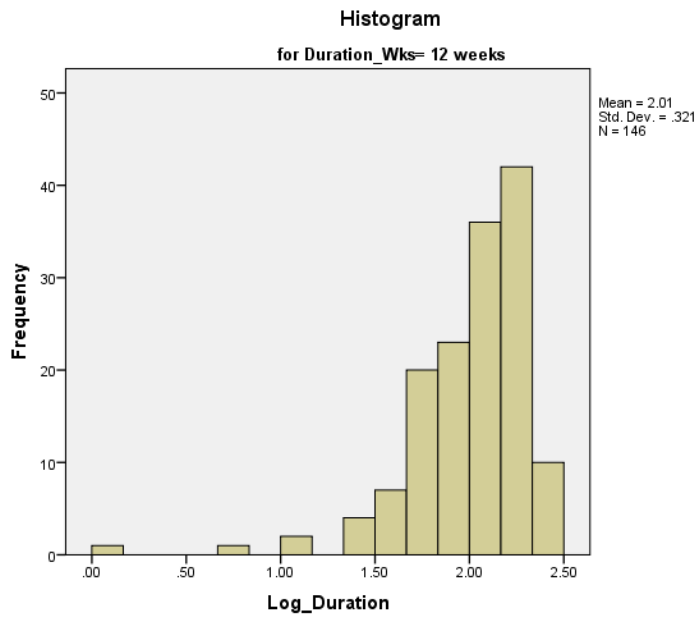


Figure 26. Log Distribution of Duration - 12 weeks

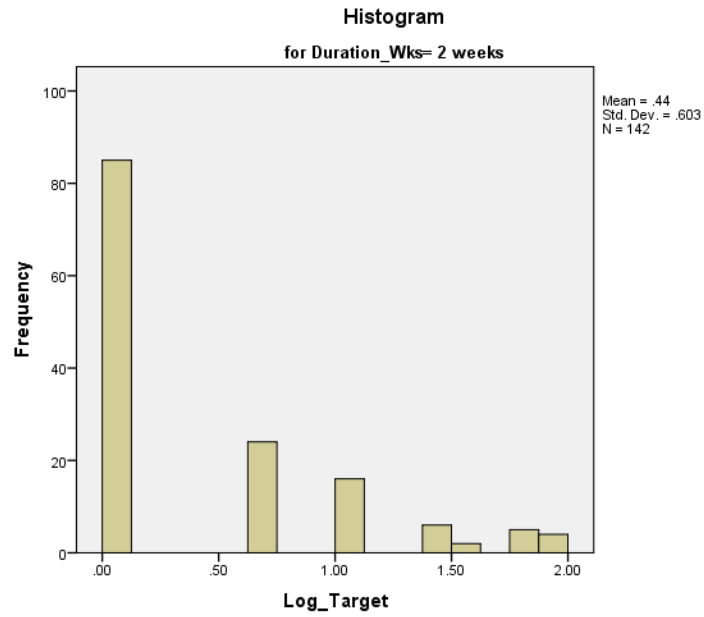


Figure 27. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - 2 weeks

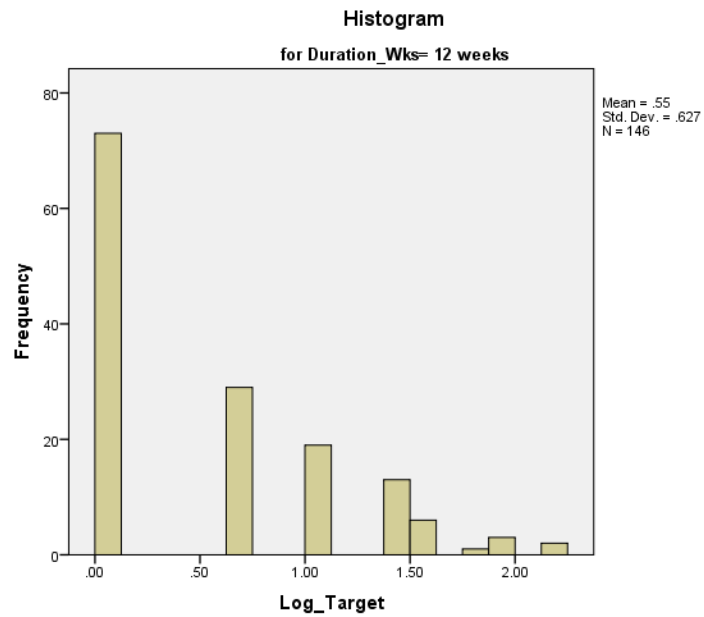


Figure 28. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - 12 weeks

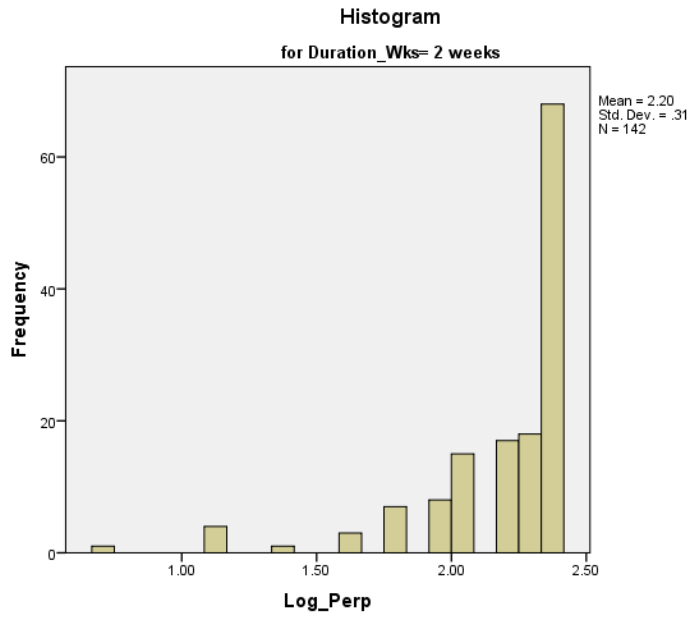


Figure 29. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - 2 weeks

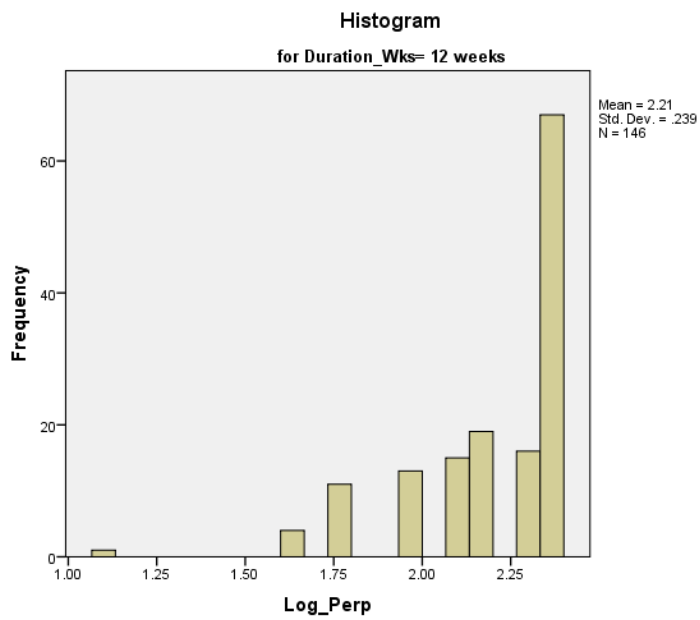


Figure 30. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - 12 weeks

Appendix K

Square Root Transformation - SPSS Output

In order to improve the non-normality of the raw data, a square root transformation was attempted. Table 16 provides the KS statistic for all the dependent variables at each level of the independent variables. The corresponding boxplots are given in the SPSS output contained in Figures 31 through 60.

Table 16

KS Statistics for Square Root Transformed Data

Variable	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder					
Present	.21***	.17***	.18***	.28***	.14***
Absent	.14***	.21***	.17***	.36***	.35***
Target-Perpetrator Gender					
Female-Male	.16***	.27***	.17***	.33***	.25***
Male-Female	.18***	.16***	.18***	.31***	.24***
Persistence					
2 weeks	.18***	.17***	.17***	.35***	.24***
12 weeks	.15***	.18***	.18***	.29***	.25***

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

*** $p < .001$.

Histograms of Square Root Transformed Data

Mental disorder diagnosis.

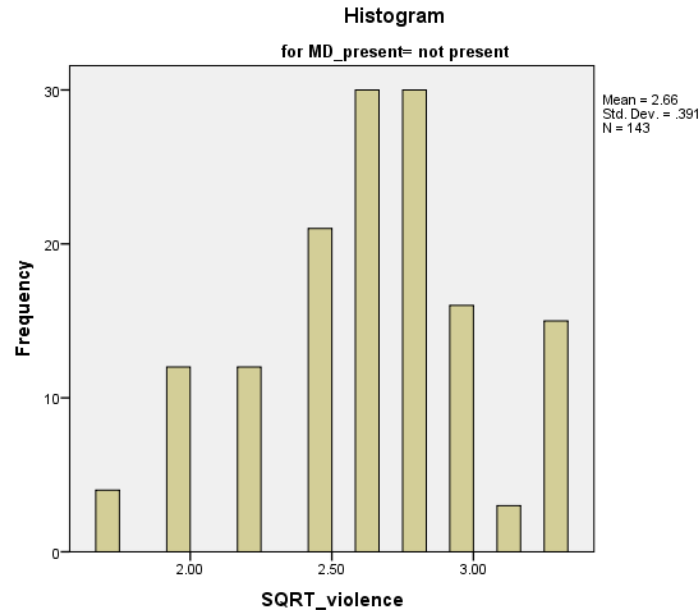


Figure 31. Log Distribution of Violence – Mental Disorder Absent

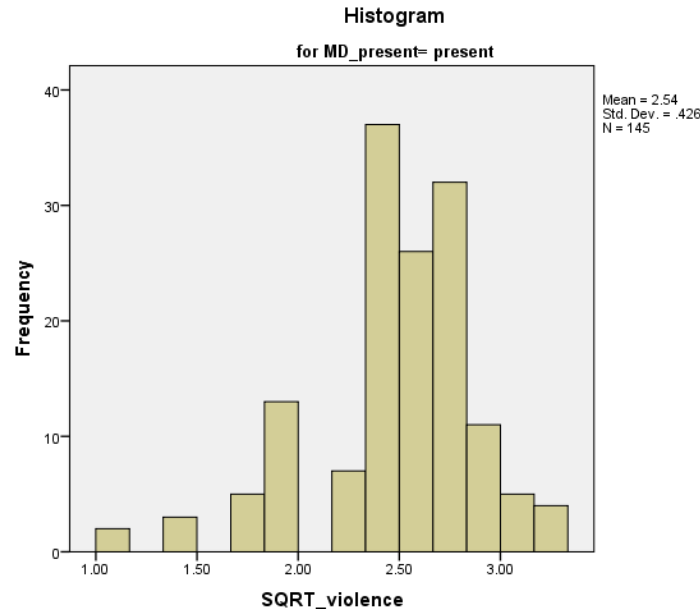


Figure 32. Log Distribution of Violence – Mental Disorder Present

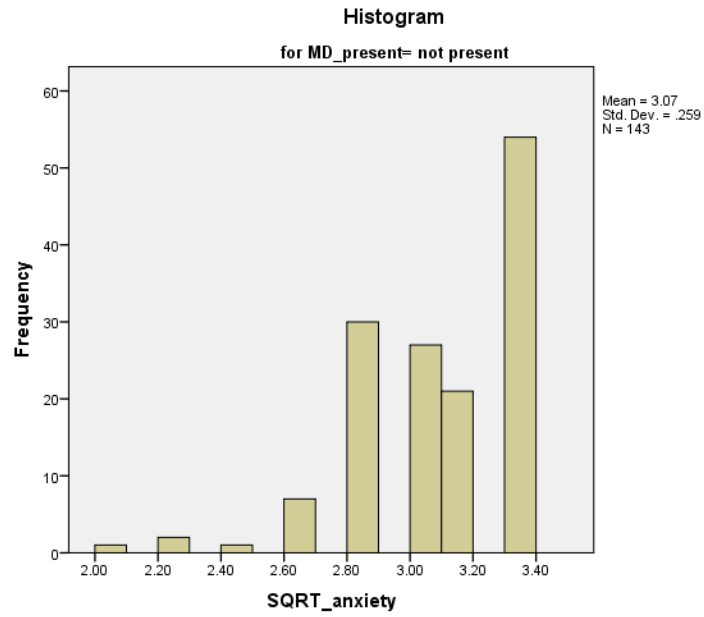


Figure 33. Log Distribution of Anxiety – Mental Disorder Absent

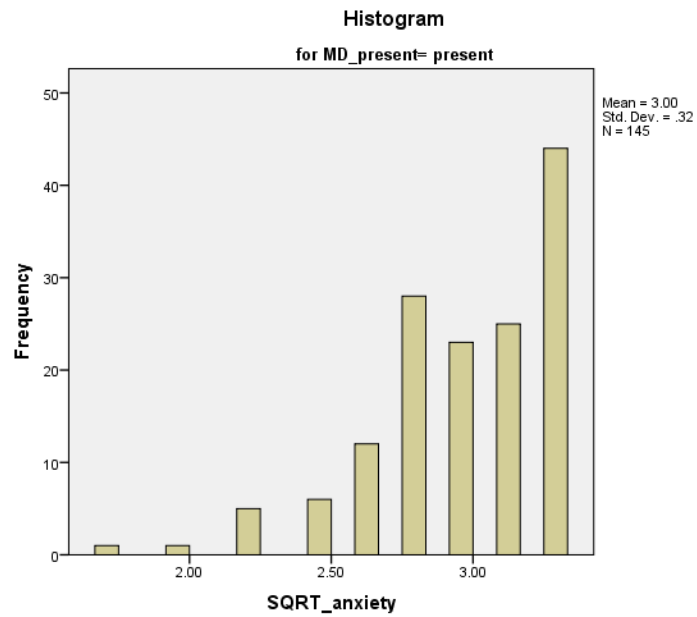


Figure 34. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Mental Disorder Present

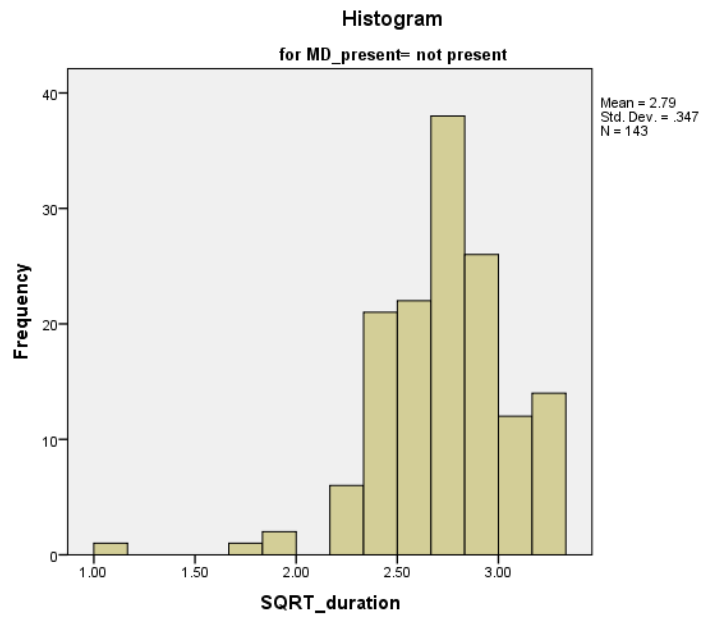


Figure 35. Log Distribution of Duration - Mental Disorder Absent

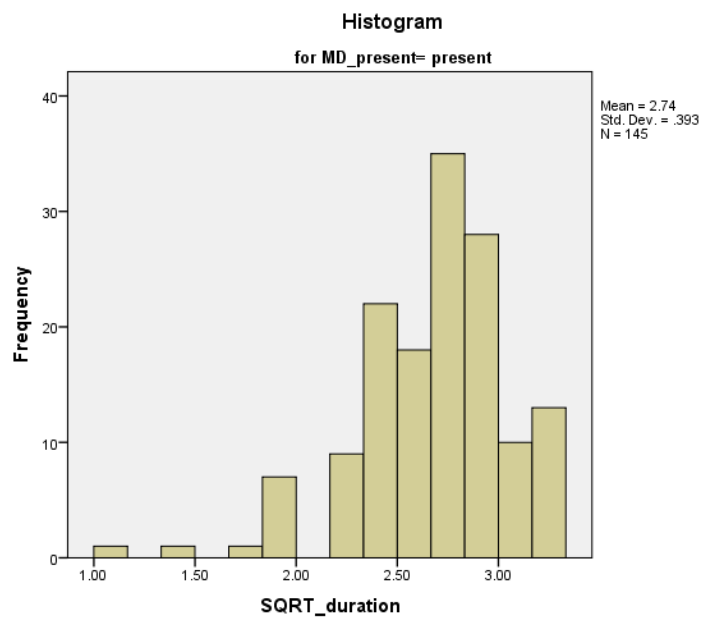


Figure 36. Log Distribution of Duration - Mental Disorder Present

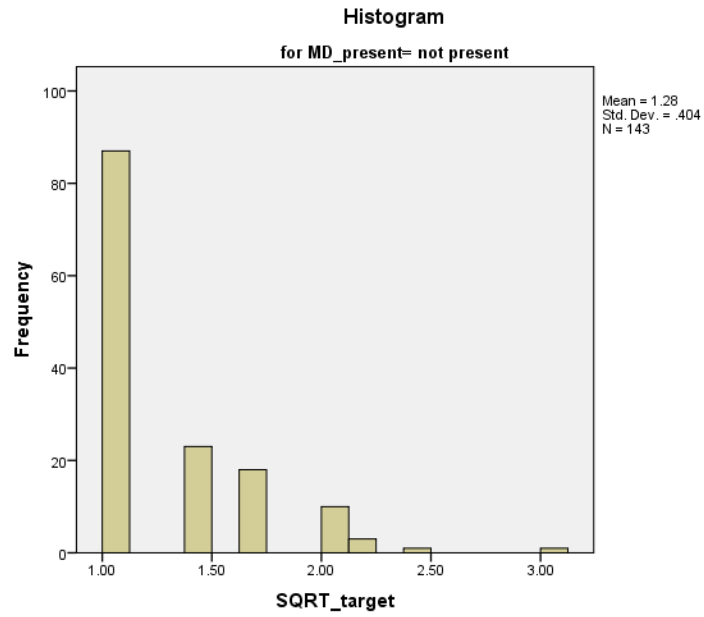


Figure 37. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Mental Disorder Absent

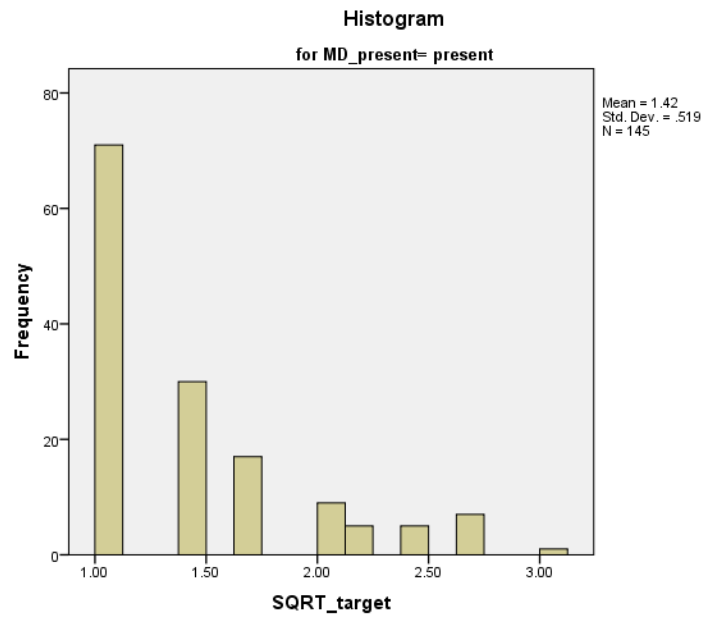


Figure 38. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Mental Disorder Present

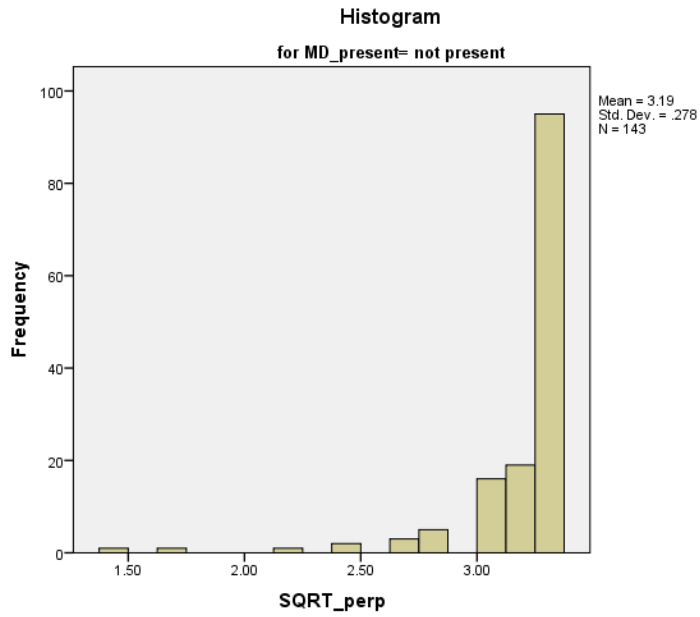


Figure 39. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Mental Disorder Absent

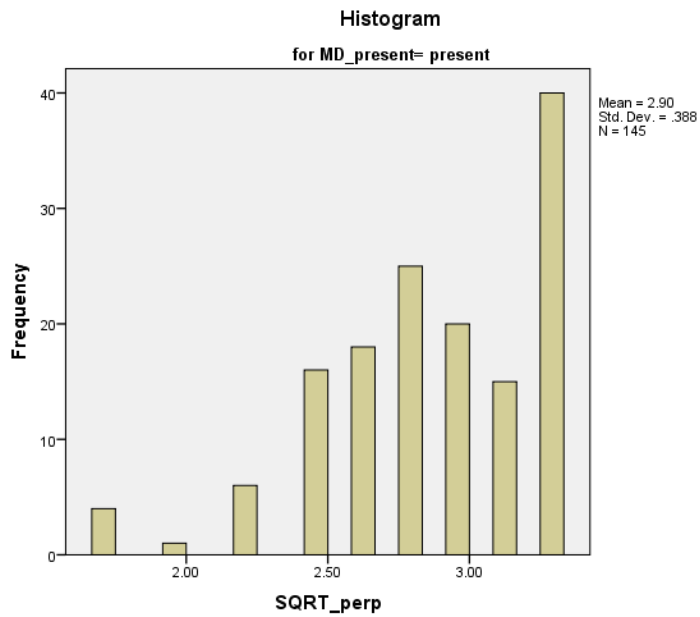


Figure 40. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Mental Disorder Present

Target-perpetrator gender.

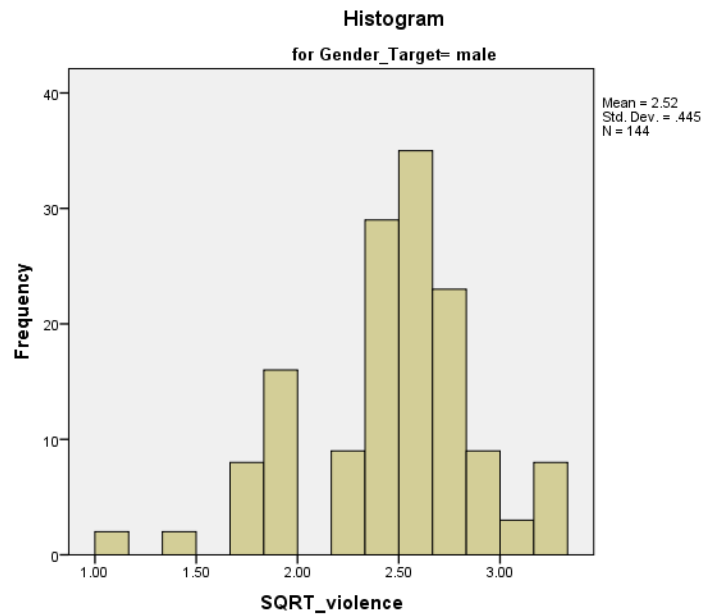


Figure 41. Log Distribution of Violence - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

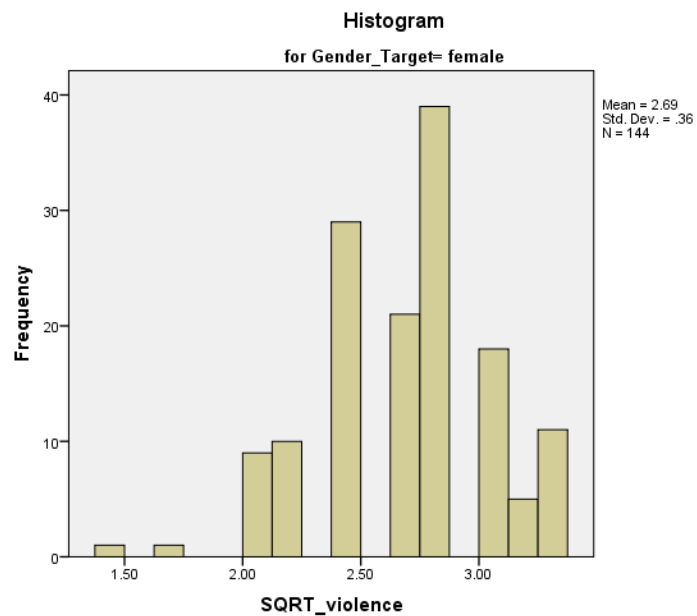


Figure 42. Log Distribution of Violence - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

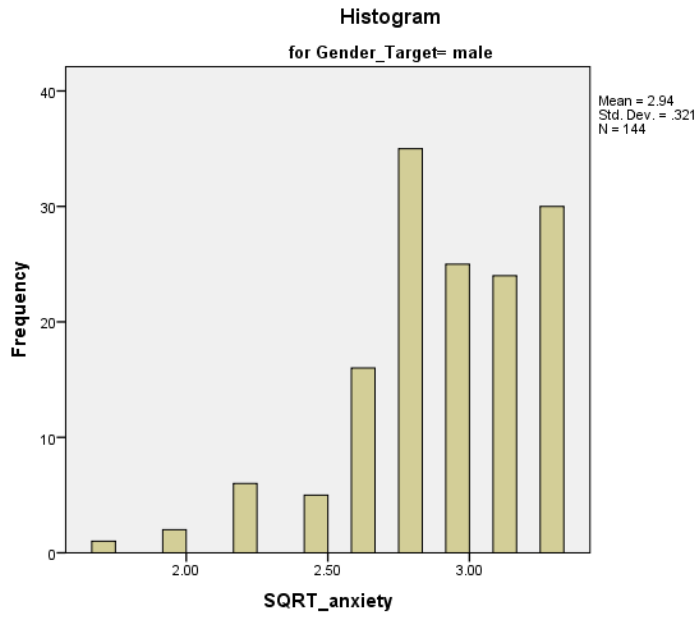


Figure 43. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

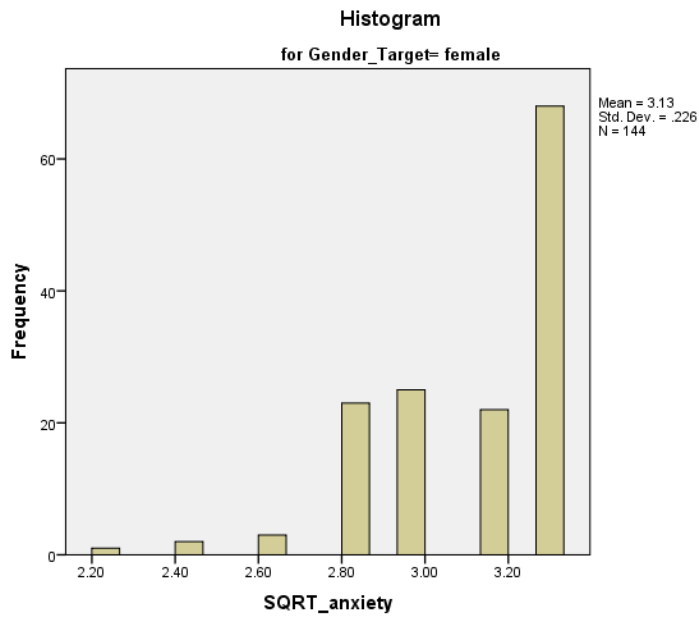


Figure 44. Log Distribution of Anxiety - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

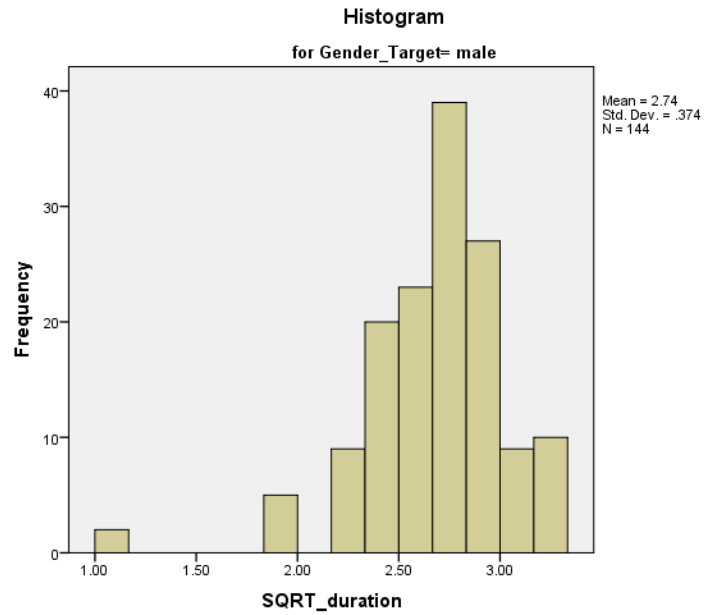


Figure 45. Log Distribution of Duration - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

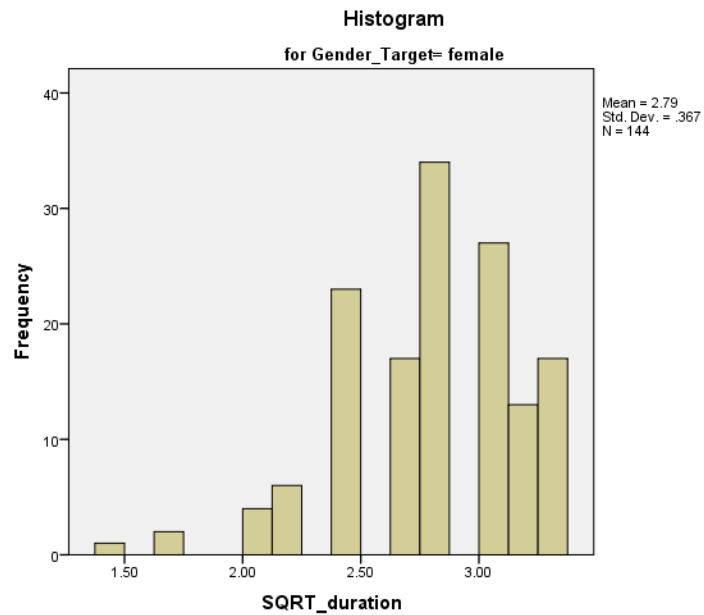


Figure 46. Log Distribution of Duration - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

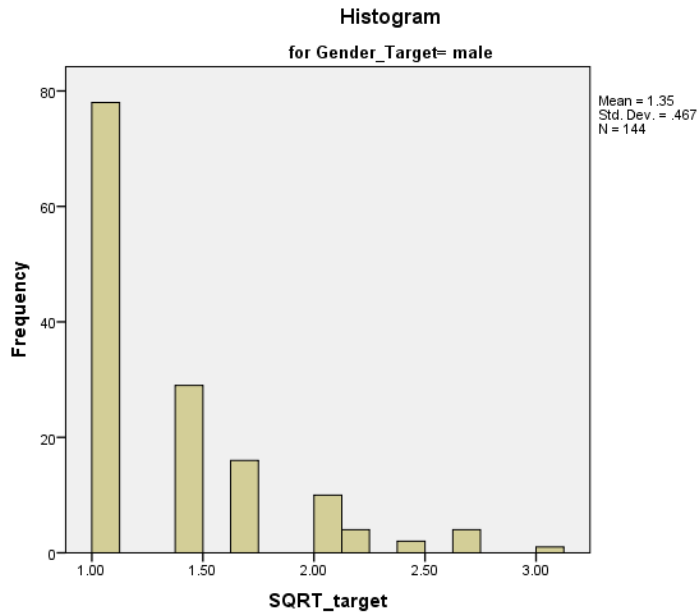


Figure 47. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

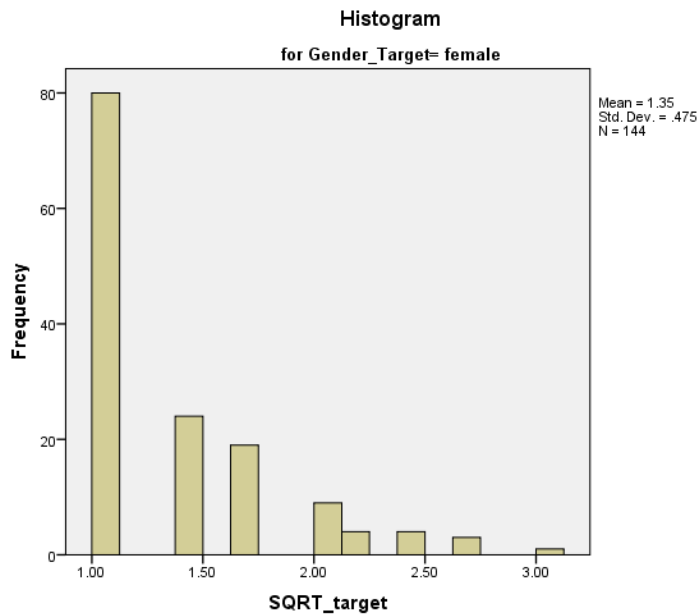


Figure 48. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

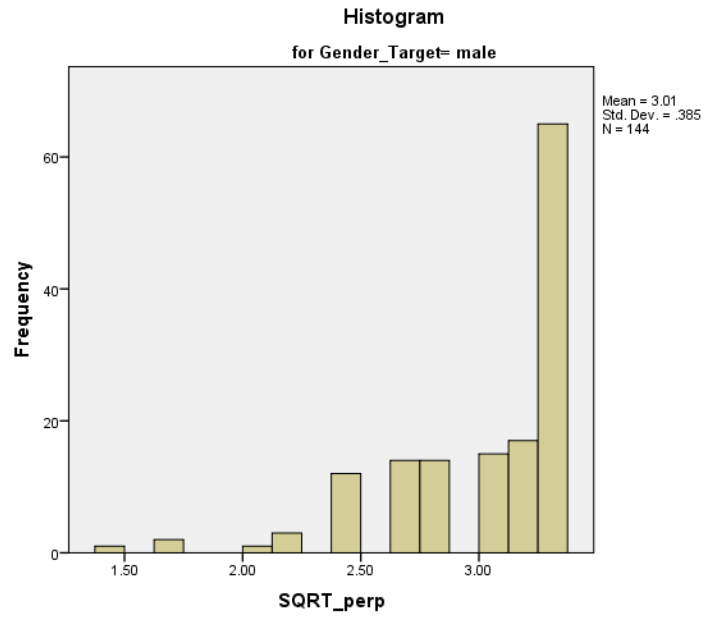


Figure 49. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Male Target, Female Perpetrator

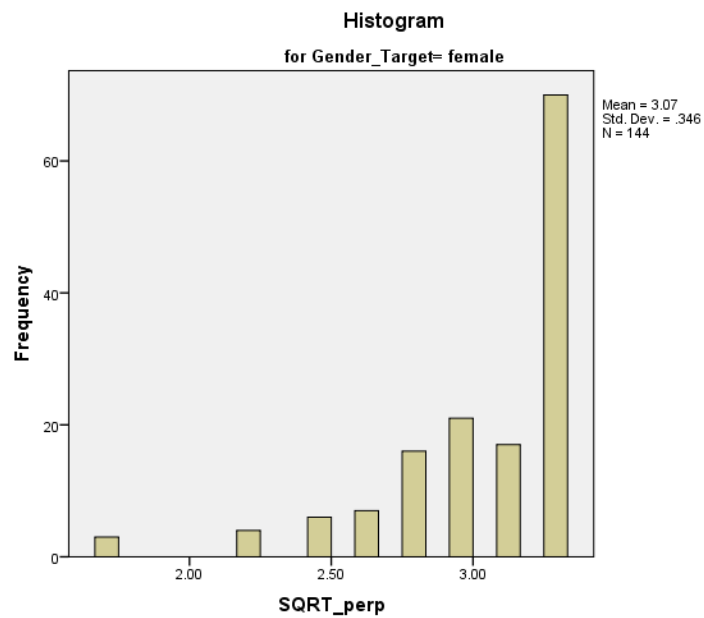


Figure 50. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - Female Target, Male Perpetrator

Persistence.

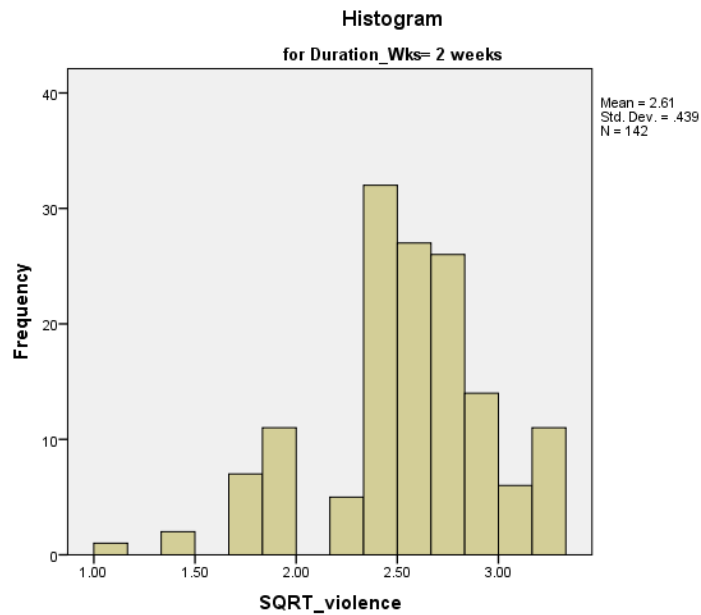


Figure 51. Log Distribution of Violence - 2 weeks

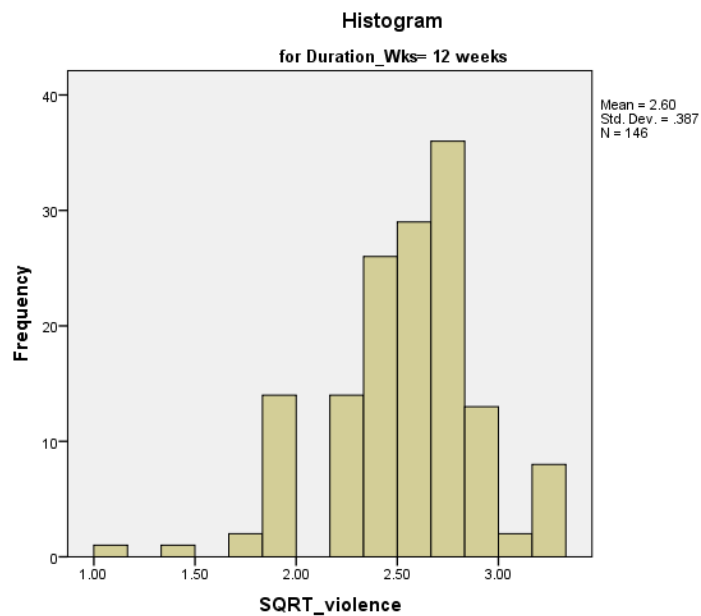


Figure 52. Log Distribution of Violence - 12 weeks

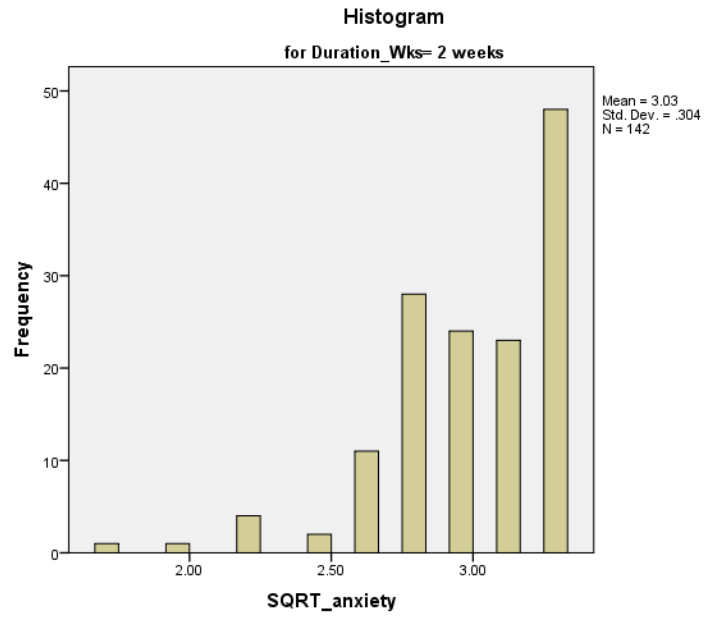


Figure 53. Log Distribution of Anxiety - 2 weeks

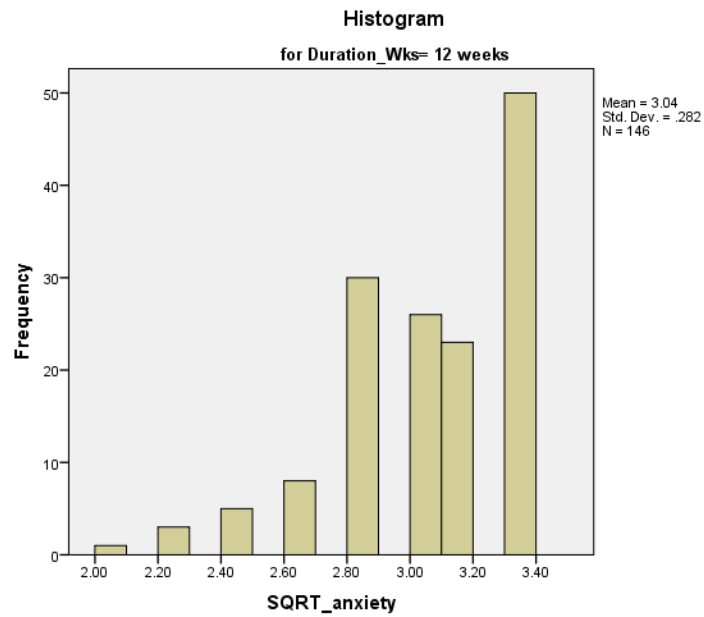


Figure 54. Log Distribution of Anxiety - 12 weeks

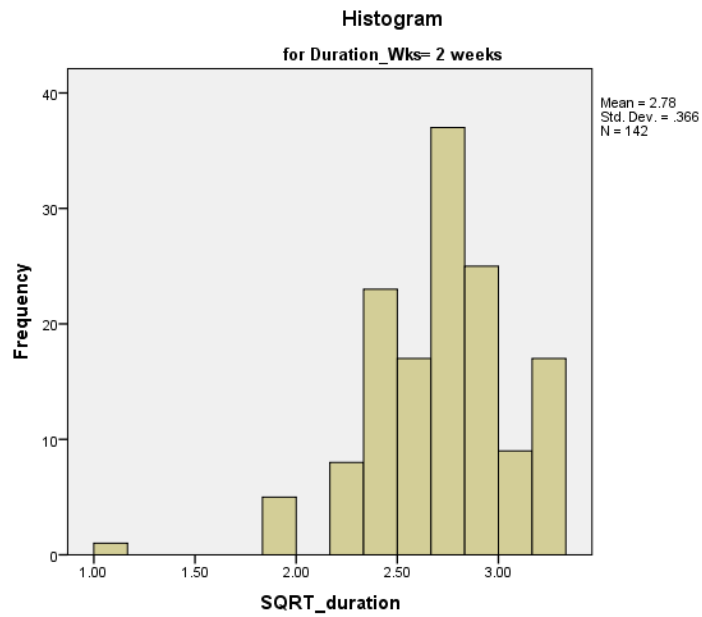


Figure 55. Log Distribution of Duration - 2 weeks

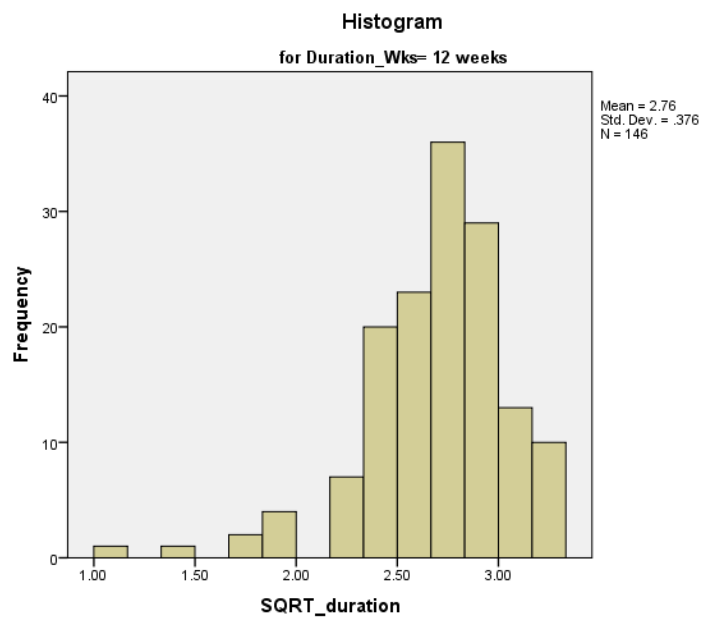


Figure 56. Log Distribution of Duration - 12 weeks

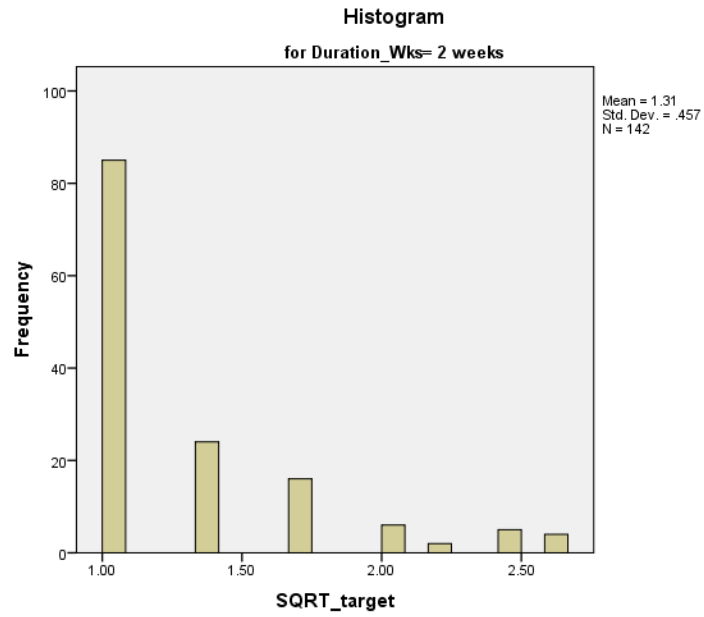


Figure 57. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - 2 weeks

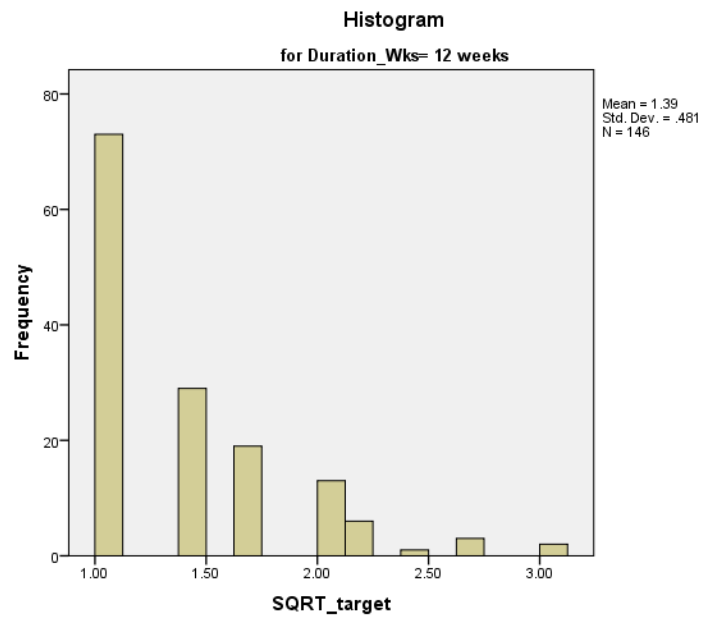


Figure 58. Log Distribution of Target Responsibility - 12 weeks

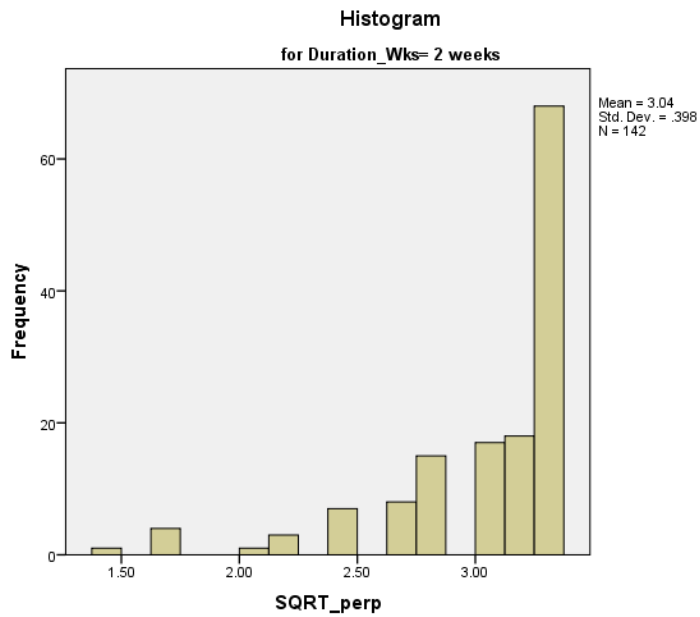


Figure 59. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - 2 weeks

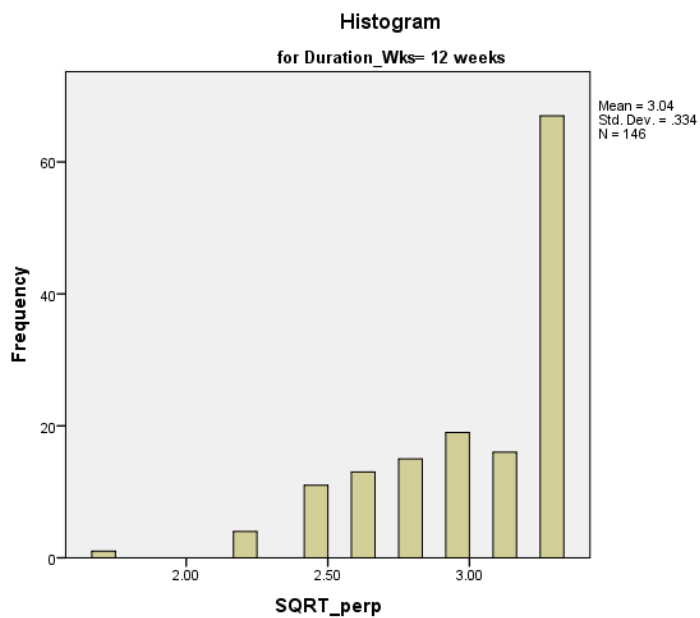


Figure 60. Log Distribution of Perpetrator Responsibility - 12 weeks

Appendix L

Mann-Whitney U Analyses

Mann Whitney-U tests were conducted on the data in order to support the robustness of the MANOVA, in spite of the presence of non-normality and outliers. Table 17 provides the median scores for each of the five dependent variables at each level of the three independent variables. For the sake of brevity, the test statistic and significance levels of the Mann Whitney-U tests are presented in Table 18. The patterns of results produced by the Mann Whitney-U analyses are consistent with the results of the MANOVA that is presented in the results chapter of this paper.

Table 17

Median Scores of Scale Items for Each Independent Variable by Level

	Median				
	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target Resp	Perp Resp
Mental Disorder					
Present	6.00	8.00	7.00	1.00	8.00
Not present	6.00	9.00	7.00	0.00	10.00
Target-perpetrator Gender					
Female/male	7.00	9.00	7.00	0.00	9.00
Male/female	6.00	8.00	7.00	0.00	9.00
Duration					
2 weeks	6.00	8.50	7.00	0.00	9.00
12 weeks	6.00	8.00	7.00	1.00	9.00

Note: Responsibility and perpetrator have been abbreviated to resp and perp respectively.

Table 18

Mann-Whitney U Results for all Independent and Dependent Variables

Variables	Mann-Whitney U	z
Mental disorder		
Violence	8,495.00	-1.95
Anxiety	7,777.00	-1.55
Duration	9,344.50	-.68
Target responsibility	11,178.00*	2.24
Perpetrator responsibility	4,987.00***	-7.53
Gender		
Violence	12,206.00***	3.60
Anxiety	13,421.00***	5.50
Duration	10,503.00	1.06
Target responsibility	9,670	-.21
Perpetrator responsibility	10,390.50	.92
Duration		
Violence	9,486.50	-.50
Anxiety	9,784.00	-.02
Duration	9,395.50	-.61
Target responsibility	10,873.00	1.74
Perpetrator responsibility	9,671.00	-.20

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Appendix M

Analysis of Variance Results

The results of individual ANOVAs produced a pattern of findings consistent with that of the MANOVA reported in the Results chapter of this paper. For the sake of brevity, the test statistic, degrees of freedom and significance levels of the ANOVA analyses are presented in Table 19 below. A reduced alpha of .01 remained applicable.

Table 19

Analyses of Variance Results

Variable	ANOVA $F(1, 272)$				
	Violence	Anxiety	Duration	Target	Perpetrator
Mental Disorder (M)	5.13	3.64	.97	7.56*	58.78*
Gender (G)	14.41***	33.67*	.73	.03	1.52
Persistence (P)	.24	.05	.84	1.36	.07
M × G	1.82	1.68	.43	.11	.11
M × P	.14	.21	.04	.69	1.08
G × P	1.65	.29	.52	.06	.04
M × G × P	2.34	2.33	.00	.84	.11

Note. Target = Target Responsibility; Perpetrator = Perpetrator Responsibility.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Appendix N

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) – Four Dependent Variables

Levene's test of equality of error variances was non-significant for all of the dependent variables except perpetrator responsibility ($p < .001$). Therefore, this variable was excluded. Using Pillai's Trace statistic the $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (mental disorder \times gender \times duration) MANOVA with four dependent variables found significant main effects for mental disorder, $F(4, 269) = 15.49, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$, and gender, $F(4, 269) = 9.32, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$. The effect of duration $F(4, 269) = .41, p < .800, \eta^2 = .00$ was not significant and there were no significant interaction effects. To limit the chance of making a Type I error, a Bonferroni-type correction was applied to the univariate analyses, reducing the alpha to .0125 (Armstrong, 2014). Gender had a significant effect on likeliness of violence to the target, $F(1, 272) = 14.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .97$ and likeliness of the target experiencing anxiety, $F(1, 272) = 33.66, p < .001, \eta^2 = 1.00$. Mental disorder was found to have an influence on responsibility of the perpetrator, $F(1, 272) = 58.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = 1.00$.

Appendix O

Data Collection Mode Comparisons

In order to ensure that the data collection mode did not impact on the results, all analyses were conducted with the offline-participants excluded. The results are reported below.

MANOVA including all conditions.

A $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (mental disorder \times gender \times persistence) MANOVA was conducted and the pattern of results was the same that reported in the results chapter. Using Pillai's Trace statistic there was a significant main effect for mental disorder, $F(5, 266) = 14.88$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .25$, and gender, $F(5, 266) = 6.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$. Persistence, $F(5, 266) = .27$, $p = .931$, $\eta^2 = .01$, was not significant. Mental Disorder influenced target responsibility $F(1, 230) = 4.72$, $p = .031$, $\eta^2 = .02$, and perpetrator responsibility $F(1, 230) = 72.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .24$. Gender influenced likeliness of violence $F(1, 230) = 10.59$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$, and likeliness of anxiety $F(1, 230) = 26.22$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$.

MANOVA and MANCOVA including mental disorder absent conditions.

The 2×2 (gender \times persistence) MANOVA revealed the same pattern of findings as what was reported in the results chapter. Using Pillai's Trace statistic, there was a significant main effect for gender, $F(5, 121) = 3.02$, $p = .013$, $\eta^2 = .11$. The main effect for persistence, $F(5, 121) = .65$, $p = .660$, $\eta^2 = .03$, was not significant. Gender influenced likeliness of anxiety $F(1, 125) = 12.98$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$. The MANCOVA that included only the online-mode participants showed the same pattern of findings as those reported in the results chapter. Using Pillai's Trace statistic, the main effects for likeliness of mental disorder, $F(5, 120) = 4.56$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .16$, and gender, $F(5, 120) = 3.51$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2 = .13$, were significant. The main effect for persistence, $F(5, 120) = .69$, $p = .635$, $\eta^2 = .03$, was not significant. The covariate was significantly related to likeliness of violence, $F(1, 124) = 14.97$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$, likeliness of anxiety, $F(1, 124) = 13.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$, and duration, $F(1, 124) = 8.31$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Gender influenced the likeliness of anxiety $F(1, 124) = 16.31$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$.

Chi-square analyses including all conditions.

A chi-square analysis was conducted for each of the independent variables on the dependent variable 'do you think [the perpetrator's] behaviour is stalking?'. The

pattern of results obtained was consistent with the final chi-square analysis reported in the results chapter. The relationship between the behaviour being perceived as stalking was significant for mental disorder, $\chi^2(1, N = 238) = 6.91, p = .009$. The relationship between the variables gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = .61, p = .436$, and persistence, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = .12, p = .731$, and the behaviour being perceived as stalking were non-significant. Participants in the conditions where mental disorder was absent were more likely to perceive the behaviour to be stalking (92.2%) compared to participants in the conditions where mental disorder was present (80.7%).

Appendix P

Comparison of Chi-Square Analyses for Interactions

As explained in the methodology chapter, although binomial logistic regression, allows for consideration of interaction terms, this type of test was not suitable for analysing the categorical item ‘Do you think it is stalking?’ as the model was a poor fit. Instead, chi-square analyses were utilised. Table 20 was constructed in order to show that interactions did not exist among the combinations of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

Table 20

Cross-tabulation of the Eight Conditions for Ascriptions of a Stalking Label

Duration	Gender of Target	MD	Is the behaviour stalking?			
			Yes		No / Don't Know	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
2 weeks	Male	Absent	34	97.1	1	2.9
		Present	29	82.9	6	17.1
	Female	Absent	32	91.4	3	8.6
		Present	27	77.1	8	22.9
12 weeks	Male	Absent	31	29.5	4	11.4
		Present	28	80.0	7	20.0
	Female	Absent	32	91.4	3	8.6
		Present	28	80.0	7	20.0

Appendix Q

Chi-square Cross Tabulations

Mental Disorder.

Table 21

Cross-Tabulation of Mental Disorder for Stalking Label Ascription

			Stalking Label Ascription		
			Not Applied	Applied	Total
Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	Absent	Count	11	129	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	7.9%	92.1%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	28.2%	53.5%	50.0%
		% of Total Std. Residual	3.9% -1.9	46.1% .8	50.0%
	Present	Count	28	112	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	71.8%	46.5%	50.0%
		% of Total Std. Residual	10.0% 1.9	40.0% -.8	50.0%
Total	Count	39	241	280	
	Expected Count	39.0	241.0	280.0	
	% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%	
	% within Stalking Label Ascription	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%	

Target-Perpetrator Gender.

Table 22

		Stalking Label Ascription			
		Not Applied	Applied	Total	
Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	Absent	Count	18	122	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	12.9%	87.1%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	46.2%	50.6%	50.0%
		% of Total	6.4%	43.6%	50.0%
		Std. Residual	-.3	.1	
	Present	Count	21	119	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	15.0%	85.0%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	53.8%	49.4%	50.0%
		% of Total	7.5%	42.5%	50.0%
		Std. Residual	.3	-.1	
Total		Count	39	241	280
		Expected Count	39.0	241.0	280.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%

Persistence.

Table 23

Cross-Tabulation of Persistence for Stalking Label Ascription

			Stalking Label Ascription		
			Not Applied	Applied	Total
Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	Absent	Count	11	129	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	7.9%	92.1%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	28.2%	53.5%	50.0%
		% of Total	3.9%	46.1%	50.0%
		Std. Residual	-1.9	.8	
	Present	Count	28	112	140
		Expected Count	19.5	120.5	140.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	71.8%	46.5%	50.0%
		% of Total	10.0%	40.0%	50.0%
		Std. Residual	1.9	-.8	
Total		Count	39	241	280
		Expected Count	39.0	241.0	280.0
		% within Perpetrator Mental Disorder Diagnosis	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%
		% within Stalking Label Ascription	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	13.9%	86.1%	100.0%

