Polizeiliches Bedrohungsmanagement bei Stalking

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Abstract

Da die Polizei in Stalkingfällen eine wichtige Anlaufstelle darstellt, wurde in der **Arbeit 1** der Wissensstand über Stalking und dysfunktionale Einstellungen bei 517 Schweizer Polizisten untersucht. Im Vergleich zu ihren europäischen Kollegen stimmten die Schweizer Polizeibeamten in Einstellungen, die Stalkingverhalten minimieren, rechtfertigen und normalisieren, weniger stark zu. Gleichwohl erwies sich besonders die Skala „Dem Opfer die Schuld geben" als relevanter Prädiktor im Umgang mit Stalkingfällen im polizeilichen Arbeitsalltag. Der Wissensstand hinsichtlich Risikofaktoren für Gewalt beim Stalking erwies sich als ausbaufähig. Als Schlussfolgerung wurde u.a. die Implementierung spezialisierter Bedrohungsmanagement-Fachstellen innerhalb der Polizei angeregt.

In den **Arbeiten 2 und 3** wurden zum ersten Mal Warnverhaltensweisen, welche auf ein sich erhöhendes Gewaltrisiko hinweisen könnten konkreter operationalisiert. Stalkingverhalten ist Teil der Warnverhalten. Sollte die Forschung die prädiktive Validität der Warnverhalten untermauern, so könnten diese auch für die Polizei ein praxistaugliches Instrument darstellen. In der **Arbeit 4** wurde der Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber dem Ex-Partner und sozial-psychologischen Konstrukten untersucht. Besonders der Faktor Commitment (Rusbult, 1980) leistete einen relevanten Beitrag in der Varianzaufklärung betreffend Belästigungsverhalten. Dieses Ergebnis könnte mit der Höhe der geleisteten Investitionen (z.B. Zeit, Kinder) während der Beziehung in Zusammenhang stehen. Je höher die wahrgenommene Investition, desto eher kam es zu Belästigungsverhalten. Dieses Ergebnis könnte auch eine Begründung liefern, warum Stalkingverhalten frühestmöglich unterbrochen werden sollte. Je länger Stalking andauert, desto höher werden die Investitionen auf Seiten des Stalkers wahrgenommen, was es wiederum schwierig gestalten könnte, dass Stalking aufzugeben.

Zum Schluss (**Arbeit 5**) wurde untersucht, wie häufig Polizeibeamte selbst das Ziel von Stalkern werden. Die Lebenszeitprävalenz lag bei 5.2% (n=28), wobei nur 1% angab,

jemals berufsbedingt Opfer von Stalking geworden zu sein. Das Ex-Partnerstalking stellte die grösste Gruppe dar. Polizeibeamte, welche ihr privates und/oder berufliches Umfeld nicht über die Stalking-Viktimisierung orientierten, gaben unter anderem als Begründung Scham darüber an, dass sie trotz ihres Berufs, Opfer von Stalking geworden sind.

Zusammenfassend geht aus dieser Dissertation hervor, dass es sinnvoll erscheint, wenn die Polizeibehörden über adäquates Wissen bezüglich Stalking bzw. spezialisierte Bedrohungsmanagement-Fachstellen verfügen sowie über Instrumente für eine strukturierte Risikoeinschätzung bei Bedrohungslagen. Darüber hinaus sollte eine professionelle Haltung bzw. funktionale Einstellungen in der Fallbearbeitung gegenüber den Opfern bzw. Stalkern gewährleistet sein. Dieser Standard sollte auch innerhalb der Polizeibehörden gelten, damit von Stalking betroffene Polizisten ebenfalls die benötigte Unterstützung von ihrem Arbeitgeber erhalten.

Danksagung

Der Weg ist das Ziel – sagt Konfuzius

Auf seinem Lebensweg trifft man besondere Menschen, die einen in ihren unterschiedlichen Rollen berühren. Ich möchte den Rahmen dieser Arbeit nutzen, um mich bei Ihnen zu bedanken. Ich danke meiner Familie, die immer an meiner Seite ist und meinen Freunden, die mich mit ihrer Zuneigung, ihrer Begeisterung, ihrem Hinterfragen, ihrem (schwarzen) Humor und ihrer Gelassenheit weit über diese Arbeit hinaus inspiriert und mitgetragen haben.

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Erklärung über die Selbständigkeit

Die zur Promotion eingereichten Arbeiten wurden in Zusammenarbeit mit den jeweiligen Co-Autoren angefertigt. Es handelt sich dabei um vier Originalarbeiten (Arbeiten 1, 3, 4 & 5) und eine theoretische Arbeit (Arbeit 2), die zur Veröffentlichung bei von Experten begutachteten (peer-reviewed) Zeitschriften eingereicht oder bereits veröffentlicht wurden. Hiermit bestätige ich, dass ich den für die Erst- Dritt- und Letztautorenschaft notwendigen Beitrag an den fünf Publikationen geleistet, die vorliegende Dissertation selbstständig verfasst und dafür keine anderen Hilfsmittel und Quellen als die angegebenen benutzt habe. Die Arbeiten wurden weder von den beteiligten Autoren noch von anderen Personen an anderer Stelle veröffentlicht und an keiner anderen Universität in derselben oder ähnlichen Form vorgelegt.

Arbeit 1 (Studie 1): **Guldimann A.,** Mokros, A., Stieglitz RD, Habermeyer E., Kurzemann, E., & Ermer A. (*submitted*). Knowledge and attitudes on stalking among police officers. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence.*

Arbeit 2 (Theoretische Arbeit): Meloy, JR., Hoffmann, J., **Guldimann A.,** & James, D. (2012). The role of warning behaviors in threat assessment: An exploration and suggested typology. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, *30*, 256–279.

Arbeit 3 (Studie 2): Hoffmann, J., Meloy, JR., **Guldimann, A.,** & Ermer, A. (2011). Attacks on German Public Figures, 1968-2004: Warning behaviors, potentially lethal and non-lethal acts, psychiatric status, and motivations. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, *29*, 155-179.

Arbeit 4 (Studie 3): Balmer, A., Oswald, ME, Ermer, A., & **Guldimann, A.** (2014). Der Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigung des Ex-Partners, Trennungskontext, Bindungsstil und Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung. *Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie, Psychologie und Psychotherapie*, *62*(2), 131-141.

Arbeit 5 (Studie 4)**: Guldimann, A.,** Stieglitz, RD, Meloy, JR, Habermeyer, E., & Ermer, A. (*submitted*). Stalking victimization among Swiss police officers. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management.*

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Angela Guldimann

Vorwort

Die Dissertation befasst sich mit dem polizeilichen Bedrohungsmanagement bei Stalking. Ein professionelles Bedrohungsmanagement, d.h. die fachgerechte Einschätzung und das Management von Bedrohungslagen, setzt voraus, dass die involvierten Personen und Behörden - insbesondere die Polizeibehörden - über angemessenes Wissen und professionelle Einstellungen betreffend Stalking verfügen (Arbeit 1). Darüber hinaus sollten auf Gewaltprävention spezialisierte polizeiliche Bedrohungsmanagement-Fachstellen über Hilfsmittel bzw. Instrumente verfügen, um eine professionelle Risikoeinschätzung vornehmen zu können (Arbeiten 2 und 3). In einer studentischen Stichprobe wurde untersucht, welche psychologischen Konstrukte mit Belästigungs- bzw. Stalkingverhalten im Zusammenhang stehen könnten. Die Ergebnisse beinhalten wiederum Implikationen für den Umgang mit Stalking in der praktischen Polizeiarbeitet (Arbeit 4). Zum Schluss wurde untersucht, ob Polizisten aufgrund der Ausübung ihres Berufs eine erhöhte Wahrscheinlichkeit aufweisen, Opfer von Stalkingverhalten zu werden (Arbeit 5).

Inhaltlich gliedert sich die Dissertation wie folgt: Anschliessend an die Definition von Stalking und deren Abgrenzung von ähnlichen Phänomenen, wird jeweils ein Abschnitt basierend auf den eigenen Arbeiten über theoretische Hintergründe, eine Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse und daraus folgende Implikationen für Praxis und Forschung präsentiert. Eine ausführliche Beschreibung der Methoden, Resultate und Diskussionen mit allen Referenzen ist in den Originalarbeiten, die sich im Anhang (I -V) befinden, enthalten. Im letzten Anhang befindet sich das Curriculum Vitae der Verfasserin der Dissertation. Aus Gründen der besseren Lesbarkeit wird auf die gleichzeitige Verwendung männlicher und weiblicher Sprachformen verzichtet. Sämtliche Personenbezeichnungen gelten gleichwohl für beiderlei Geschlecht.

Inhaltsverzeichnis

1 Definition von Stalking

Stalkingverhalten ist keine Erfindung der Neuzeit, lassen sich doch Stalkingverhaltensweisen bereits in religiösen Texten, Gedichten und der Literatur finden (Hoffmann, 2006). Erst in der jüngeren Vergangenheit wurde „Stalking", ein Begriff aus der Jägersprache (engl. *to stalk* = anpirschen), zum wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungsgegenstand und in angelsächsischen und europäischen Ländern als eigenständiger Straftatbestand formuliert. Bis heute existiert weder innerhalb der internationalen Rechtsprechung, noch in der Wissenschaft eine allgemeingültige Definition von Stalking (deFazio, 2009), was auf die Komplexität und Fallstricke dieses Konstrukts hinweist. Zusammenfassend sind folgende Elemente bei der Definition von Stalking aber von Relevanz (Owens, 2015):

– Ein einseitiges und unerwünschtes Kontakt- und/oder Annäherungsverhalten gegen- über einer bestimmten Person mittels einer oder verschiedener Kontaktmethoden;

– Diese sogenannten Stalkingmethoden können u.a. elektronische und/oder telefonische Kontaktaufnahmen, Ausspionieren, Verfolgen, persönliches Ansprechen des Opfers, Drohungen, Versendung von Geschenken und zahlreiche weitere Kontaktversuche umfassen;

– Das Verhalten muss mehrfach auftreten (Häufigkeit) und persistierend (Dauer) sein;

– Soziale Normen werden durch das Verhalten verletzt (Soziale Konventionen);

– Das Verhalten bzw. die Kommunikation muss ein implizit oder explizit drohendes Element beinhalten und die Person in Angst und Schrecken versetzen oder das Verhalten muss dazu geeignet sein, einen rational denkenden Menschen in Besorgnis zu versetzen (implizites bzw. explizites bedrohliches Element, Reaktion des Opfers).

Es ist davon auszugehen, dass normalpsychologisch noch erklärbare, aber dennoch unerwünschte Kontaktversuche (z.B. in Trennungssituationen) und intensiveres Belästigungsverhalten sich auf einem Kontinuum befinden, wobei aufgrund der Dauer, Häufigkeit und Intensität der Kontaktversuche Stalkingverhalten das Ende des Kontinuums darstellt. Die Übergänge scheinen fliessend. Purcell, Pathé und Mullen (2004) konnten jedoch in ihrer Studie zeigen, dass kurzes, intensives Belästigungsverhalten in persistierendes, oft monatelang dauerndes Stalkingverhalten übergeht, wenn das Verhalten die zwei Wochen – Grenze überschreitet. Es existieren zudem unterschiedliche Typen von Stalkern. Mullen et al (1999) postulierten fünf Kategorien von Stalkertypen, was den bis heute bedeutendsten und in der praktischen Arbeit am häufigsten benutzte Kategorisierungsversuch darstellt. Die postulierten Typen sind nicht als abschliessende Entitäten aufzufassen innerhalb der Typen finden sich wiederum Subtypen (*Tabelle 1*).

Tabelle 1: *Stalkertypen nach Mullen et al. (1999)*

Stalkertyp	Hintergrund	Beziehung	Auslösendes Motiv	Aufrechterhaltendes Motiv
Zurück-gewiesener Stalker	Ende einer engen Beziehung	Partner, Familie, Freunde	Oft fluktuierend zw. Versöhnung und, Rache	Stalking als Ersatz für „verlorene" Beziehung
Liebe-suchender Stalker	Einsamkeit Mangel an Liebe, Nähe	Berühmtheiten Bekannte Fremde	Aufbau einer Beziehung (Liebe, Freundschaft)	Fantasierte bzw. wahnhafte Beziehung als Ersatz für reale Beziehung
Inkompetenter Stalker	Einsamkeit Begierde	Bekannte Fremde	Freundschaft, sexuelle Kontakte	Soziale Konventionen nicht verstehen wollen bzw. können Intellektuell gering begabt
Rachsüchtiger Stalker	Fühlt sich ungerecht behandelt, zu kurz gekommen	Professionelle Beziehungen (z.B. Anwalt, Psychiater)	Rächt sich für ein vermeintlich oder tatsächlich erlittenes Unrecht	Beabsichtigt Opfer zu verängstigen Macht und Kontrolle befriedigen ihn/sie
Jagdstalker/	Deviante sexuelle Interessen	Fremde, entfernte Bekannte	Beschaffung von Informationen zur Vorbereitung von Sexualverbrechen	Befriedigung durch Voyeurismus Planung der Tat Machtgefühl durch Unwissen der Opfer

Das Konzept der Querulanz (lat. *queri* = „vor Gericht klagen) weist in bestimmten Fällen einen engen Zusammenhang mit Stalking auf. Querulanten wenden sich aufgrund ihres subjektiv wahrgenommen starken Fairness- bzw. Unrechtserleben mit Klagen, Wünschen und Bitten in der Regel an unterschiedliche Behörden, Personen des öffentlichen Lebens und /oder die Medien, wobei auch in diesem Bereich wieder Subtypen zu finden sind (Mullen et al., 2009). Den engsten Bezug hat „der Querulant" mit Mullen's et al. (1999) rachsüchtigem Stalker. Im Fallverlauf kann es vorkommen, dass ein Stalker erst ein spezifisches Opfer belästigt und dann dazu übergeht Mitarbeiter der Arbeitsstelle des Opfers zu belästigen oder andere Institutionen mit einzubeziehen (Querulanz). Umgekehrt ist es auch denkbar, dass sich das querulatorische Verhalten (Stalking) im Verlauf ausschliesslich auf ein bestimmtes Opfer fokussiert (Mullen et al., 2009).

Die Relevanz von Stalking wird für Fachpersonen aus der forensischen Psychologie bzw. Psychiatrie, den Polizeibehörden, Opferberatungsstellen, der Justiz und nicht zuletzt von den von Stalking Betroffenen dadurch akzentuiert, dass Stalkingverhalten ein Prädiktor bzw. Risikofaktor für Gewalt mit tödlichem Ausgang darstellen kann (Campell et al., 2003; MacKenzie, McEwan, Pathé, James, Ogloff, & Mullen, 2009).

2 Eigene Arbeiten

2.1 Arbeit 1: Wissen und Einstellungen zu Stalking innerhalb der

Polizeibehörden

2.1.1 Theoretischer Hintergrund

Die auf den regionalen Aussenstellen tätigen Polizisten stellen eine der ersten Anlaufstellen für Stalkingopfer dar. Sie können durch die Handhabung ihrer Fälle eine tragende Weichenstellung für den weiteren Verlauf vornehmen, indem sie das Stalking als solches erkennen und aufgrund ihres Wissens und ihrer professionellen Haltung eine kompetente Beratung anwenden (Meloy & Hofmann, 2014). Die wenigen bereits vorliegenden Ergebnisse werfen tendenziell ein ungünstiges Licht auf den Berufsstand der Polizei, da z.B. gemäss Galeazzi, Bucar-Rucaman, DeFazio und Groenen (2009) die Polizeibehörden in drei europäischen Ländern von den Stalking-Opfern im Vergleich zu anderen Helfersystemen als am wenigsten hilfreich erachtet wurden. Die Betroffenen seien zu wenig ernst genommen worden und die Polizei habe dem Stalker keinen Einhalt gebieten können. Der letztgenannte Vorwurf kann zwar nicht vollumfänglich den Behörden angelastet werden, da Stalker als ein schwieriges Klientel gelten, die im noch abzuklärenden Ausmass an psychischen Störungen bzw. Persönlichkeitsstörungen leiden (Mullen et al., 1999). Dem Einfluss der Polizei sind daher natürliche Grenzen gesetzt.

Unabhängig davon lassen sich aus der Unzufriedenheit der Opfer Hinweise auf eine Verletzung der sogenannten prozeduralen Gerechtigkeit ableiten. Hierbei geht es grob zusammengefasst darum, wie Opfer in einem Strafverfahren oder generell in einem behördlichen Kontakt behandelt werden (z.B. mit Respekt) und wie sie Aspekte der Fairness innerhalb des Strafverfahrens ihnen gegenüber einschätzen Wenn Aspekte der prozeduralen Gerechtigkeit erfüllt seien, würde dies die Bereitschaft der Opfer hinsichtlich der

Zusammenarbeit mit den Polizeibehörden stärken (Mazerolle, Bennet, Davis, Sargeant, & Manning, 2013). Symonds (1980) formulierte die Befürchtung, dass eine nichtfachgerechte bzw. eine als kühl anmutend empfundene Haltung den Opfern gegenüber bei diesen zu einer sekundären Viktimisierung führen könnte, da sie sich ev. aufgrund der Straftat in psychisch vulnerablen Phase befinden. Stalking stellt eine chronische Stresssituation dar, die gemäss der aktuellen Forschung mit psychopathologischen Auffälligkeiten einhergehen kann (Purcell, Pathé, Baksheev, MacKinnon, & Mullen, 2012).

Kamphuis et al. (2005) wiesen in ihrer Studie bezüglich der Einstellung zu Stalking bei mehreren hundert europäischen Polizisten darauf hin, dass dysfunktionale Einstellungen zu Stalking die grösste Varianz bezüglich der Identifizierung von Stalkingverhalten und damit auch der Wahrnehmung der Ernsthaftigkeit dieses Verhaltens erklärte. Aus hiesiger Sicht benötigt es neben professionellen Einstellungen auch ein Basiswissen, um Stalkingfälle zu erkennen und zu handhaben. Das Wissen und die Einstellungen zu Stalking wurde bei 517 Schweizer Polizeibeamten untersucht und diese Einstellungswerte darüber hinaus mit jenen in Kamphuis et al. (2005) europäischen Polizeistudie verglichen.

2.1.2 Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse

Die Ergebnisse der Studie weisen darauf hin, dass das Wissen der Schweizer Polizeibeamten hinsichtlich Stalking ausbaufähig ist, wobei besonders hinsichtlich der Risikofaktoren für Gewalt, aber auch bezüglich Verhaltenstipps für Opfer und die rechtliche Lage Nachholbedarf besteht.

Es gelang, die dreifaktorielle Struktur des ins Deutsch übersetzten „Stalking Related Attitudes Questionnaire" zu replizieren (Kamphuis et al., 2005). Die Ergebnisse legen nahe, dass drei zugrundeliegende Einstellungsbereiche unterschieden werden können: Stalking kann als Ärgernis, aber nicht kriminell aufgefasst werden (*Skala 1:Stalking ist ein Ärgernis, aber nicht kriminell*). Skala 2 zeichnet sich hingegen durch Einstellungen aus, dem Opfer die

Schuld für das Stalking zu geben (Skala 2: *Dem Opfer die Schuld geben*), die letzte Skala umfasst Items, welche Stalking als eine Form von Schmeichelei beschreiben (*Skala 3: Stalking ist schmeichelhaft*). Das Stalkingverhalten wird demnach trivialisiert, dem Opfer die Verantwortung zugeschrieben und das Stalkingverhalten normalisiert. Im internationalen Vergleich mit den Niederlande, Grossbritannien, Belgien und Italien zeigten Schweizer Polizisten weniger dysfunktionale Einstellungen als ihre europäischen Kollegen. Obwohl Italien als einziges Land zum Zeitpunkt der Datenerhebung über keinen Stalking-Straftatbestand verfügte und damit rechtlich betrachtet den Schweizer Verhältnissen am ähnlichsten war, zeigten sich hinsichtlich der drei Einstellungsskalen die grössten Unterschiede zwischen der Schweiz und Italien, während vor allem die niederländische Haltung mit den Schweizern korrespondierte. Da das Fehlen eines Straftatbestandes bezüglich Stalking die hohen Werte bei den italienischen Polizisten nicht alleine zu erklären vermag, könnte ein Erklärungsversuch in der Bedeutung der länderspezifischen sozial-kulturellen Unterschiede liegen.

Im Einklang mit früheren Studien (vgl. McKeon, McEwan, & Luebbers, 2014) stimmten weibliche Polizisten mit oder ohne professioneller Erfahrung mit Stalkingfällen signifikant weniger oft den drei dysfunktionalen Einstellungsbereichen zu. Polizeibeamte ($n = $ 241), welche berufsbedingt Erfahrung mit Stalkingfällen hatten und jene Gruppe von Polizisten ($n = 225$), die bereits einmal Informationen vom Arbeitgeber erhalten hatten, stimmten weniger oft den dysfunktionalen Einstellungen der Skala 1 und 3 zu. Hingegen waren weder „Informationen vom Arbeitgeber" noch „praktische Erfahrung mit Stalkingfällen" mit der Skala „ Dem Opfer die Schuld geben" assoziiert. Dieselbe Einstellungsskala 2 (*dem Opfer die Schuld geben*) erwies sich in einer multiplen Regression sogar als der stärkste Prädiktor hinsichtlich der tatsächlichen Handhabung solcher Stalkingfälle im polizeilichen Alltag, nämlich die Formalitäten und den Fall schnell abschliessen zu wollen.

2.1.3 Implikationen für Praxis und Forschung

Das Management von Stalkingfällen ist komplex, da auf Seiten der Polizeibeamten sowohl vorbestehende oder durch Erfahrung mit Stalkingfällen einhergehende dysfunktionale Einstellungen bestehen, als auch eigene Unsicherheiten in der Thematik die Handhabung des Falles beeinträchtigen können. Seitens der Opfer kann durch das Stalking und / oder psychischen Probleme ein hohes Ausmass an Stress auf der Verhaltensebene vorliegen, welches die Interaktion mit dem Polizisten mitbestimmt.

Die mit Stalkingfällen in Kontakt kommenden Polizeibeamten müssen daher über ein elementares Wissen und professionelle, sensible Einstellungen hinsichtlich Stalking verfügen, um den Fall korrekt handhaben zu können. Informationen vom Arbeitgeber und besonders interne Trainings können dabei als hilfreich erachtet werden, da bereits in der vorliegenden Stichprobe Informationen vom Arbeitgeber einen (wenn auch kleinen) Effekt hinsichtlich der Ablehnung solcher dysfunktionalen Einstellungen zur Folge hatte. Auch die Implementierung spezieller polizeiinterner Bedrohungsmanagement-Fachstellen könnte aufgrund der Ergebnisse angedacht werden, da die Forschung zeigen konnte, dass spezialisierte Polizeibeamte weniger anfällig für dysfunktionale Einstellungen oder fehlerhafte Schlussfolgerungen sind (Scott, Nixon, & Sheridan, 2013). Bedenkt man zudem das Vorliegen von psychischen Störungen auf Seiten der Opfer, als auch bei Stalkern, könnte für speziell geschulte Polizisten die enge Zusammenarbeit mit psychologischen bzw. psychiatrischen Fachkräften, die über forensisches Fachwissen verfügen, hilfreich sein (vgl. Bedrohungsmanagement im Kapitel 2.2).

Der Stalking-Einstellungsfragebogen scheint ein valider Fragebogen zu sein, um auch in Zukunft mit einem differenzierten Design den Zusammenhang zwischen Verhalten und dysfunktionalen Einstellungen, sowie weiterer Faktoren wie der subjektiven Norm und der wahrgenommenen Verhaltenskontrolle zu überprüfen (vgl. Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

2.2 Arbeiten 2 & 3: Warnverhaltensweisen von Gefährdern im Bedrohungsmanagement (BM)

2.2.1 Theoretische Hintergründe

„Prognosen sind schwierig – besonders wenn sie die Zukunft betreffen"

-- dem Physiker Niels Bohr zugeschrieben (1885 – 1962)

Die Prognose von Gewalt basiert immer auf Wahrscheinlichkeitsaussagen bzw. Risikozuschreibungen. Historisch betrachtet kann man drei Vorgehensweisen im Zusammenhang mit der Prognose von Gewalttaten bzw. Risikoeinschätzungen (engl. *risk assessment*) beschreiben. Anfänglich wurden Risikoeinschätzungen basierend auf unstrukturierten klinischen oder „intuitiven" Urteilen gefällt. Der Logik von „ipsi dixit" (lat. für „Er selbst hat es gesagt") folgend wurde angenommen, dass die Einschätzung korrekt sein müsse, wenn sie von Experten stamme, da Experten es am besten wissen müssten (Prentky, Barbaree, Janus, 2015). Diese Vorgehensweise wurde zunehmend kontroverser diskutiert und kritisiert, weil in verschiedenen Studien gezeigt werden konnte, dass diese Art der Risikoeinschätzung wenig zuverlässig und valide ist (Meehl 1954; Monahan, 1981). Mit den aktuarischen Risikoinstrumenten (von aktuarisch = versicherungsmathematisch) entwickelte sich eine neue Form der Einschätzung, deren Anwendung sich durch definierte und klare Regeln auszeichnet. Aktuarische Instrumente sind dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass ähnlich wie im Versicherungswesen Risikofaktoren, die aufgrund von Gruppenvergleichen von rückfälligen bzw. nicht rückfälligen Straftätern eruiert wurden und mit späterer Rückfälligkeit statistisch korrelierten, in ein Instrument integriert werden. Dabei wird diesen Risikofaktoren jeweils eine Gewichtung zugeschrieben (z.B. bei Vorhandensein von Vorstrafen = +2 Punkte). Schliesslich werden, basierend auf einem statistischen Algorithmus (meist anhand der Regressionsrechnung), Risikokategorien, Trennwerte und Rückfallwahrscheinlichkeiten für bestimmte Zeiträume berechnet. Diese Vorgehensweise soll die Objektivität, Reliabilität und

prädiktive Validität erhöhen. Eine viel diskutierte Einschränkung der aktuarischen

Instrumente ist jedoch deren starke Betonung von biografischen und daher in der Regel

statischen, also letztlich nicht veränderbaren, Faktoren (z.B. Alter bei der ersten Verurteilung,

Vorliegen von Haftstrafen) und damit die fehlende Berücksichtigung dynamischer bzw.

veränderbarer Faktoren (z.B. psychopathologisches Zustandsbild, Compliance, soziale

Unterstützung; Otto & Douglas, 2010).

In den letzten beiden Jahrzenten wurde eine dritte Methodik entwickelt, die

strukturierte klinische professionelle Risikobeurteilung (structured professional judgement

(SPJ) (Otto & Douglas, 2010). Mit der Entwicklung dieser Instrumente wurde der Kritik an

einem „unstrukturierten" klinischen Ansatz Rechnung getragen und gleichwohl die

Bedeutung bzw. der Nutzen des klinischen Ansatzes unterstrichen, ohne die Starrheit und den

statischen Charakter der aktuarischen Verfahren aufzugreifen.

Auf empirischem Wege ermittelte zentrale Risikofaktoren werden in den SPJ-

Instrumenten definiert und operationalisiert. Die Sammlung aller für die Beurteilung

notwendigen Informationen und der nachfolgende Entscheidungsfindungsprozess des

Beurteilers sollen durch diese strukturierte Vorgehensweise zuverlässiger und nach aussen hin

nachvollziehbarer gemacht werden. Definitionsgemäss existieren für SPJ-Instrumente weder

Trennwerte, die einen bestimmten Risikograd nahelegen, noch werden erwartete

Rückfallraten berechnet. Die Einschätzung wird vielmehr anhand der eigenen klinischen

Gewichtung aller vorhandenen Risikofaktoren und einer individuellen Analyse des Falles

(gering – moderat – hoch) gebildet (Otto & Douglas, 2010).

Dieser Ansatz fokussiert neben statistischen Faktoren auch auf dynamische bzw. durch

die Zeit oder Interventionen veränderbare Risikofaktoren. SPJ-Instrumente eröffnen ferner

neben einer Risikoeinschätzung aufgrund der beschriebenen Risikobereiche die Möglichkeit,

im Hinblick auf die zu beurteilende Person Risikoszenarien zu entwerfen (z.B. Was müsste

passieren, damit die Situation im Sinne einer Gewaltspirale weiter eskaliert?). Schliesslich

liefern die SPJ-Verfahren Hinweise darauf, welche Massnahmen oder Interventionen zur Senkung des Risikos angeraten erscheinen (Douglas, Hart, Webster, & Belfrage, 2013).

Während die traditionelle forensische Risikoeinschätzung („risk assessment") in der Regel in einem formalen, zeitlich befristeten Setting stattfindet (z.B. im Rahmen der Schuldfähigkeitsbegutachtung während der Haft), hat sich in den letzten Jahren parallel das sogenannte Bedrohungsmanagement (BM) entwickelt (Threat Assessment & Management; Meloy & Hoffmann, 2014). Im Unterschied zur formalen Begutachtung ist im Rahmen der Bedrohungsanalyse und -management in der Regel ein dynamischer Kontext vorhanden. Die Gefährder zeigen besorgniserregendes Verhalten bzw. Risikofaktoren, welche mit Gewalt im Zusammenhang gebracht werden, wobei die Gefährder noch nicht zwingend strafrechlich relevantes Verhalten gezeigt haben müssen und sich daher oft in Freiheit bewegen.

Das BM weist zudem die Besonderheit auf, dass anders als bei der klassischen Risikoeinschätzung, die fast ausschliesslich von Psychologen oder Psychiatern durchgeführt wird, auch geschulte Experten aus anderen Berufsgruppen Risikobewertungen vornehmen können (etwa BM-Fachstellen innerhalb der Polizei, Mitarbeiter privater Sicherheitsfirmen oder Angehörige von Sozialbehörden).

Die klassische Risikoeinschätzung und das Bedrohungsmanagement weisen aber auch viele Gemeinsamkeiten auf. Während ein psychologischer Gutachter aber einen eng umschriebenen Auftrag erfüllt (in der Regel Einschätzung des Risikos mit Empfehlungen für risikosenkende Interventionen), ist ein Bedrohungsmanager sowohl für das Erkennen und die Einschätzungen des Risikos als auch für den sachgerechten Umgang mit der Situation zuständig; dabei ist auch die interdisziplinäre Vernetzung mit weiteren an der Bearbeitung des Falles beteiligten Fachpersonen und Behörden von hoher Bedeutung. Im polizeilichen BM sind dabei vor allem Gefährderansprachen als Intervention zu nennen (Greuel et al., 2010). Im BM geschulte Polizisten treffen sich — sofern dessen Einverständnis vorliegt – in zivil mit dem Gefährder bei ihm zu Hause oder an einem öffentlichen Ort, um ihm erstens seine

potentiell strafrechtlich relevanten Grenzverletzungen aufzuzeigen, zweitens Risiko- bzw.

Schutzfaktoren für Gewalt zu eruieren und ihm drittens mögliche Hilfestellung aufzuzeigen,

anzubieten oder zu vermitteln.

Warnverhaltensweisen (warning behaviors)

Im BM liegt bei der Beurteilung eines Gefährders — neben der Berücksichtigung statischer

Risikofaktoren (z.B. Vorstrafen) – der Fokus auf der frühzeitigen Entdeckung und der

kontinuierlichen Bewertung von veränderbaren Verhaltensmustern und psychologischen

Dispositionen, von denen man annimmt, dass sie mit einem erhöhten Risiko für Gewaltdelikte

in Zusammenhang stehen. Relevante Änderungen von Verhaltensmustern oder

psychologischen Merkmalen können wiederum den Fachleuten, die den Fall managen, wie

z.B. die Polizei, Anlass für Interventionen geben.

Unter diesen Voraussetzungen wurde von den Mitarbeitenden des *Fixated Threat*

Assessment Center (FTAC) in London, Grossbritannien, das Konzept der Warnverhaltens-

weisen („warning behaviors") entwickelt, die anzeigen sollen, dass sich das Risiko für eine

gewalttätige Eskalation erhöht. Die FTAC-Expertengruppe wertete abnorme

Kommunikations- und Annährungsversuche von potentiellen Gefährdern an Mitglieder der

englischen königlichen Familie aus (James, Mullen, Meloy, Pathé, Farnham, Preston, &

Darnley, 2008), wobei die Autoren die Warnverhaltensweisen auch teilweise als

"stalkingähnliche Verhaltensweisen" bezeichnen, z.B. die pathologische Beschäftigung mit

einer Person oder einem Sachverhalt („Fixation") (Mullen, James, Meloy, Pathé, Farnham,

Preston, Darnley & Berman, 2009). Weitere Autoren wie Calhoun und Weston (2003)

beschreiben Warnverhaltensweisen als „Hochrisiko-Signale". In der Gewaltforschung lassen

sich eher ungeplante bzw. affektive / reaktive Gewalttaten von eher geplanten, zielgerichteten

Gewalttaten unterscheiden (Meloy, 2006). Formen von Warnverhaltensweisen wurden bislang

bei zielgerichteter Gewalt erforscht (James et al., 2007).

2.2.2 Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse aus den Arbeiten 2 und 3

In der Forschung wurde der Begriff bzw. das Konzept der Warnverhaltensweisen weit gefasst und eine Reihe von Kommunikations- und/oder Annäherungsversuchen sowie bedrohliches Verhalten darunter subsumiert (James et al., 2007). Die einzelnen („Warn"-) Verhaltensweisen wurden bisher kaum oder gar nicht operationalisiert. Die in der Arbeit 2 erarbeitete Typologie von insgesamt acht Warnverhaltensweisen differenziert zwischen verschiedenen Ausdrucksformen von Warnverhalten, um Fachpersonen, die an der Bewertung oder Betreuung entsprechender Fälle beteiligt sind, eine strukturierte Einschätzung hinsichtlich des Risikos zu ermöglichen. Eine strukturierte professionelle Risikoeinschätzung stellt nach dem aktuellen Stand der Wissenschaft eine zuverlässige und valide Methode in der Einschätzung des Gewaltrisikos dar (Otto & Douglas, 2010). Die acht Formen von Warnverhalten wurden anhand von theoretischen Überlegungen, der bisherigen empirischen Forschung, aber auch aufgrund von praktischer Erfahrung formuliert. Sie sind in der *Tabelle 2* verkürzt zusammengefasst, die Reihenfolge entspricht keiner Gewichtung der Warnverhaltensweisen.

Tabelle 2: *Warnverhaltensweisen*

Warnverhalten	Beobachtbare Verhaltensweisen oder psychologische Hintergründe als Beispiele	Autoren*
Pathway Weg zur Gewalt	Recherchen, Planung, Vorbereitung einer Gewalttat wie Waffenkauf, strategisches Stalking (Beobachten des Tatorts)	Calhoun and Weston, 2003
Fixation Fixierung / Intensive Beschäftigung	Intensive, zunehmende, pathologische (v.a. gedankliche) Beschäftigung mit bzw. Fixierung auf eine Person oder einen Sachverhalt. Mögliche Einbussen des sozialen Funktionsniveaus (z.B. Arbeit, Trennung vom Partner).	Mullen et al., 2009
Identifikation Identifizierung	Aggressive Konfliktlösungsstrategien: Die Identität/Haltung eines „Kriegers" wird eingenommen; Affinität zu Waffen und militärische Utensilien /Ausrüstung; Sammler solcher Gegenstände; Beschäftigung mit früheren Attentätern, Bewunderung und Identifikation mit diesen; man betrachtet sich als „Agent" einer wichtigen, weltrettenden Mission.	Hempel, Meloy, & Richards, 1999
Novel Agression Neue Form der Gewalt	Aggressives Verhalten, welches erstmals und in zeitlicher Nähe zur aktuellen Bedrohungssituation ausgeführt wurde, ohne dass die Aggression gegen die Zielperson gerichtet wäre. Neue Form der Aggression kann als „Testlauf" verstanden werden, mit der Gefährder seine Fähigkeit testet Gewalt anzuwenden	de Becker, 1997
Leakage Kommunikation des geplanten Vorhabens an Dritte	Kommunikation mit Dritten, in denen die Absicht zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, der Zielperson etwas anzutun. Das „Durchsickern" (engl. leaking = Durchsickern lassen) dieser Absicht kann mündlich, schriftlich, elektronisch erfolgen (Briefe, im Gespräch, Internet). Leakage kann dabei eindeutig („Ich bringe xy um") oder aber auch andeutungsweise erfolgen („Ihm sollte etwas Schlimmes passieren").	Meloy & O'Toole, 2011
Threats Direkte Drohung	Eine direkte Drohung gegenüber der Zielperson oder den Behörden, welche die Zielperson beschützen. Eine Drohung ist eine schriftliche oder mündliche Kommunikation, die implizit oder explizit ausdrückt, dass der Zielperson Schaden zugefügt, sie verletzt oder getötet werden soll.	Calhoun and Weston, 2003
Last Resort Letzter Ausweg	Verhaltensweise bzw. Äusserung, die auf eine zunehmende Verzweiflung oder endgültige Bedrängnis des Gefährders hinweist. Dieser sieht sich in der Falle sitzend, in eine Position gedrängt, in der nur Gewalt als der nächste logische, notwendige und einzige Schritt übrig bleibt („Sackgasse", „Zugzwang"). In der Wahrnehmung der Person sind alle anderen Alternativen zu Gewalt bereits ausgeschöpft, die Folgen einer Gewalttat erscheinen als gerechtfertigt	de Becker, 1997; Mohandie & Duffy, 1999.
Energy Burst Engergieschub	Zunahme in der Häufigkeit, Vielfalt oder Intensität der genannten Formen von Warnverhalten in Bezug auf die Zielperson und/oder andere als unverfänglich erscheinende Aktivitäten. Der „Energieschub" zeigt sich in der Regel in den Tagen oder Wochen vor der Tat.	Odgers, Mulvey, Skeem, Gardner, Lidz & Schubert , 2009

*Anmerkung: Autoren, welche einen möglichen Zusammenhang mit einer Risikoerhöhung postuliert haben

Der Zusammenhang von Stalking mit den acht Warnverhaltensweisen

Stalkingverhalten ist ein Teil der acht Warnverhaltensweisen. Bestimmte Aspekte von Stalking spiegeln sich in unterschiedlichen Warnverhalten wider (v.a. Fixierung, Weg zur Gewalt). Stalkingverhalten kann im fortgeschrittenen Stadium auch strategisch eingesetzt werden, um das künftige Opfer zu beobachten und auszuspionieren, um auf diese Weise ein beabsichtigtes Attentat zu planen (Weg zur Gewalt).

Den engsten theoretischen und praktischen Zusammenhang hat Stalking mit dem Warnverhaltenstyp „Fixierung". Das Objekt der Begierde oder ein bestimmter Sachverhalt bestimmen (zunehmend) das eigene Leben. Eine intensive, aber noch im Normbereich einzuordnende Beschäftigung mit einer Person, einer Idee oder einer Aktivität ist Teil unseres täglichen Lebens (Mullen et al., 2009). Die Begeisterung für eine Person oder ein Thema kann das Leben bereichern, im Gegensatz dazu geht mit einer pathologischen Beschäftigung in der Regel ein zunehmender Verlust an sozialen Kontakten und manchmal auch der Realitätsprüfung einher (vgl. Wahn). Die pathologische Beschäftigung mit einer Person (oder einem Sachverhalt) ist zudem oft geprägt durch eine Anspruchshaltung in Bezug auf die vermeintlich getätigten Investitionen aus Sicht des Gefährders. Während Stalking eine Konstellation von *Verhaltensweisen* beschreibt, die sich in unerwünschten Kontaktaufnahmen und Annährungsversuchen zeigt, beschreibt Fixierung ein übergeordnetes psychologisches Konstrukt bzw. eine mentale Verfassung („state of mind", Mullen et al., 2009, S. 33). Eine pathologische gedankliche Beschäftigung und Stalkingverhalten treten nicht zwingend in allen Fällen gemeinsam auf, dennoch kann eine starke Fixierung ohne Stalkingverhalten ebenfalls problematisch sein. Ein bezeichnendes Beispiel für eine solche Konstellation ist der norwegische Attentäter Anders Behring Breivik, welcher – soweit der Autorin bekannt – zwar kein Stalkingverhalten (etwa im Sinne einer Belästigung von Politikern und/oder Muslimen), jedoch ein hohes Ausmass an pathologischer Beschäftigung einschliesslich sozialem Rückzug

(Fixierung) und Identifikation mit seiner „Mission" aufwies (Meloy, Habermeyer, Hoffmann & Guldimann, *submitted*).

Während in der Arbeit 2 die Warnverhaltensweisen operationalisiert wurden, wurden sieben Warnverhalten im Rahmen einer retrospektiven Aktenanalyse von 14 Attentaten auf öffentliche Personen in Deutschland zwischen 1968 -2004 untersucht. Die sieben Warnverhaltensweisen waren in der retrospektiven Analyse in unterschiedlichem Ausmass vorhanden. Aufgrund der sehr kleinen Stichprobe und dem Fehlen einer Kontrollgruppe wurde auf eine interferenz- statistische Analyse verzichtet. Während es in 12 Fällen zu gelegentlichen Kontaktaufnahmen mit den Politikern bzw. deren Sicherheitspersonal kam, wurde persistierendes Stalkingverhalten in den beiden Fällen, in denen die Opfer eine Tennisspielerin und ein Fernsehmoderator waren, festgestellt. Das im Artikel verwendete Fallbeispiel zeigt die in den Warnverhalten abgebildeten Facetten von Stalking. Herr P. sammelte über Jahre alle möglichen Informationen über sein Idol und richtete sein Leben nach ihrem Spielplan aus (Fixierung), entwickelte im Verlauf ein massives Stalkingverhalten gegenüber Stephanie Graf und kontaktierte dabei sie selber, ihre Security, aber auch ihre Eltern. Frau Seles wurde von Günther P. als massive Bedrohung für Frau Grafs Status als „weltbeste Tennisspielerin" erachtet, sie oder ihr Umfeld wurden von Herrn P. jedoch nie direkt kontaktiert. Im Rahmen der Planung der Attacke hat Herr P. Monica Seles jedoch an verschiedenen Trainings- und Spieltagen ausgespäht und sich so auf die Attacke vorbereitet (Weg zur Gewalt).

Psychiatrische Diagnosen und Warnverhaltensweisen

Attentäter, die ihre Opfer in Lebensgefahr versetzten, wiesen (rein deskriptiv) häufiger Warnverhaltensweisen auf als die Gruppe mit weniger schweren Angriffen. Alle fünf Attentäter, die eine gesicherte Diagnose aufwiesen bzw. bei welchen ein starker Verdacht auf eine Störung aus dem schizophrenen Formenkreis bestand, befanden sich in der Gruppe mit

den lebensgefährlichen Angriffen. Politiker oder andere Personen des öffentlichen Lebens werden oft von Personen belästigen, die an einer Störung aus dem schizophrenen Formenkreis leiden (van der Meer, Bootsma, & Meloy, 2012). Während das Warnverhalten *Fixierung* einen engen Zusammenhang mit psychotischen Erkrankungen aufweist, ist jedoch keine dieser Warnverhaltensweisen zwangsläufig ein diagnostischer Indikator, der mit einer psychiatrischen Diagnose gleichgesetzt werden könnte. Eine pathologische Beschäftigung mit verschiedenen Inhalten kann z.B. auch bei Persönlichkeitsstörungen oder Zwangs- erkrankungen vorkommen. Während eine klinisch korrekt hergeleitete psychiatrische Diagnose zwar für die Behandlung relevant ist, sind psychiatrische Diagnosen im Rahmen des Bedrohungsmanagements bzw. einer Risikoanalyse alleine wenig aussagekräftig hinsichtlich eines Zusammenhang mit Gewalt. Die Analyse auf der Ebene der Symptome bzw. Syndrome erscheint gerade bei Diagnosen aus dem schizophrenen Formenkreis wesentlich relevanter für die Einschätzung des Gewaltrisikos (Douglas, Guy & Hart, 2009). In der deutschen Stich- probe fand sich (deskriptiv) ein enger Zusammenhang mit dem Inhalt des Wahns und der Motivation für die Attentate.

2.2.3 Implikationen für Praxis und Forschung

Grundsätzlich muss ein aktuell vorliegendes (Warn-) Verhalten bei der Bewertung des Gewaltrisikos immer unter Einbezug der risikorelevanten Vorgeschichte, der aktuellen Situation und Persönlichkeit des Gefährders und des Verhaltens des (potentiellen) Opfers bewertet werden. Die Operationalisierung der verschiedenen Formen von Warnverhalten soll Fachpersonen jedoch eine strukturierte Erfassung von aus der Theorie und der Praxis postulierten risikorelevanten Verhaltensmustern und psychologischen Merkmalen ermöglichen. Die Warnverhaltensweisen bzw. deren Veränderungen können beim Gefährder

selber beobachtet, erfragt oder aber – wenn möglich – über sein soziales Umfeld oder auch sein Auftreten im Internet erschlossen werden.

Angesichts des retrospektiven, aktengestützten Designs der Untersuchung in der Arbeit 3 muss die prädiktive Validität der Warnverhalten künftig weiter überprüft werden. Es wäre ein unzulässiger Zirkelschluss, vom Vorliegen von Warnverhaltensweisen in retrospektiv erfassten Fällen auf deren prädiktive Validität zu schliessen, da noch unklar ist in wie vielen Fällen ohne gewalttätige Eskalation die postulierten Warnverhaltensweisen auch auftreten. Um dieser Problematik gerecht zu werden wäre an prospektive Gruppenvergleiche zwischen Gefährdern zu denken, die entsprechende Warnverhaltensweisen an den Tag legen und solchen, die keine oder wenige entsprechende Verhaltensweisen erkennen lassen. Die empirische Überprüfung der prädiktiven Validität von Warnverhaltensweisen wie auch bei Risk-Assessment-Instrumenten ist jedoch mit einigen Herausforderungen verbunden (Otto & Douglas, 2010):

– Schwere Gewalttaten weisen eine niedrige Basisrate auf, was es erschwert grosse Stichproben hinsichtlich des zu erklärenden Kriteriums (schwere Gewalt) zu untersuchen;

– Je höher das Risiko einer bestimmten Person eingeschätzt wird, desto mehr Ressourcen bzw. Interventionen werden in den Fall investiert. Folgt keine Gewalttat, ist letztlich kaum festzustellen, ob der Gefährder falsch (genauer: falsch positiv) beurteilt wurde oder ob die eingeleiteten Interventionen wirksam waren;

– Gefährdern, denen ein hohes Risiko für Gewalttaten attestiert wird, können aufgrund ethischer Bedenken nicht in zwei Gruppen (1. Gruppe mit risikosenkenden Interventionen und 2. Kontrollgruppe ohne solche Interventionen) eingeteilt werden, da die potentiellen Konsequenzen (bzw. Begehung einer schweren Gewalttat) im Rahmen der Kontrollgruppe kaum ethisch vertretbar sind.

Aufgrund dieser Überlegungen kann die prädiktive Validität der Warnverhaltensweisen abgeschätzt werden, indem auch die Rate von (schweren) Gewalttaten bei Gefährdern ohne die entsprechenden Warnverhaltensweisen registriert wird, weil bei dieser Fallkonstellation (niedriges Risiko für Gewalttaten) wenig oder kaum Interventionen zur Senkung des Risikos erfolgen dürften.

Im Zusammenhang mit der Risikoeinschätzung von Gewalttaten bietet sich hinsichtlich der beschriebenen empirischen Problematik die Analogie zur Suizideinschätzung an. Einerseits weist – wie bei der Einschätzung von Gewalttaten – ein nicht geringer Anteil der Patienten ähnliche bzw. dieselben Risikofaktoren auf, die mit Suizid im Zusammenhang stehen, wobei aber nur ein geringer Anteil der Patienten tatsächlich Suizid begeht. Andererseits sind diese Individuen oft nicht bereit – analog manchen Gefährdern – ihre Absichten gegenüber anderen preiszugeben (Nock et al., 2010). Im Bewusstsein dieser Problematik nutzten Nock et al. (2010) den Implicit Association Test (IAT) bei Personen, die einen Suizidversuch getätigt hatten. Die Autoren konnten zeigen, dass implizite Assoziationen zwischen dem *Selbst* und *Tod/Suizid* mit einer sechsfach erhöhten Wahrscheinlichkeit eines weiteren Suizidversuchs binnen sechs Monate einhergingen und damit mehr prädiktive Validität aufwiesen als die herkömmlichen Indikatoren für Suizidalität (frühere Suizidversuche, Depression), auch als die Selbsteinschätzung des Patienten oder die Einschätzung durch den Behandler. Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Ergebnisse der Suizidforschung und der Ähnlichkeit zur empirischen (und ethischen) Problematik von Einschätzungen zur Fremdgefährlichkeit bei bedrohlich anmutendem Verhalten, sollte künftige Forschung auch den potentiellen Nutzen impliziter oder indirekter Verfahren ins Auge fassen. In einem anderen Bereich der forensischen Beurteilung, nämlich der Diagnostik sexueller Präferenzstörungen (konkret: der Pädophilie), sind indirekte Testverfahren bereits erfolgreich erprobt worden (z.B. Mokros, Dombert, Osterheider, Zappalà, & Santtila, 2010).

Letztendlich ist es zudem möglich, dass je nach untersuchtem Gewaltbereich (Attentate auf öffentliche Personen vs. häusliche Gewalt) den Warnverhaltensweisen unterschiedliche Bedeutung hinsichtlich ihrer prädiktiven Validität zu kommt. Während direkte Drohungen in unserer Stichprobe kaum vorkamen, zeigt z.B. die Forschung zu häuslicher Gewalt/ Stalking, dass Drohungen ein Prädiktor für Gewalt in diesem Setting darstellen (Meloy, 2007).

2.3 Arbeit 4: Der Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigung des Ex-Partners, Trennungs-kontext, Bindungsstil und Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung

2.3.1 Theoretischer Hintergrund

In der 4. Arbeit wurden (sozial-) psychologische Konstrukte (Bindung und Investitionsmodell) und deren Zusammenhang mit Belästigungsverhalten in einer studentischen Stichprobe untersucht. Es stand dabei nicht die Suche nach reliablen bzw. validen Cut-Offs hinsichtlich noch normalpsychologisch erklärbarem Trennungsverhalten oder Belästigungs- und Stalkingverhalten im Vordergrund. Vielmehr wurde angenommen, dass es sich bei diesen Verhaltensweisen um ein Kontinuum handelt und die zugrundeliegenden psychologischen Konstrukte sich nicht massgeblich unterscheiden.

Bindungsstile

Frühe Bindungserfahrungen mit primären Bezugspersonen werden als inneres Arbeitsmodell gespeichert, in welchem Erwartungen an alle künftigen Beziehungen enthalten sind (Bowlby, 1988). In diesem Arbeitsmodell ist das positive bzw. negative Fremd- und Selbstbild verinnerlicht. Gelingt es nicht eine sichere Bindung zu erwerben, führen unsichere Bindungsmuster zu Konflikten im Erwachsenenalter. Dies wenn zwischenmenschliche

Interaktionen Ähnlichkeiten mit der früheren defizitären Beziehung aufweisen. Hazan & Shaver (1987) wiesen auf die Parallelen zwischen der Bindung zur primären Bezugsperson und jener zum romantischen Partner hin. Miculincer & Shaver (2012) beschreiben unsichere Bindungsstile zudem als Vulnerabilität für die Entwicklung psychischer Störungen. Der Zusammenhang zwischen Bindungsstil und Psychopathologie wird von biologischen, psychologischen und sozio-kulturellen Faktoren moderiert.

Bartholomew (1990) postulierte vier Bindungsstile bei Erwachsenen: 1) Sicher 2) ängstlich-ambivalent („preoccupied", verstrickt) 3) ängstlich („fearful") und 4) abweisend („dismissing"), wobei sich 2 & 3 durch ein negatives Selbstbild auszeichnen. Den Bindungsstilen scheinen zwei Dimensionen zu Grunde zu liegen, nämlich Angst und Vermeidung (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). *Vermeidung* ist gekennzeichnet durch das Vermeiden von emotionaler Nähe in der Partnerschaft, *Angst* hingegen geht mit besitzergreifendem, anklammerndem Verhalten einher, das Gefühl der Verbundenheit mit dem Partner scheint besonders stark zu sein. Ein hohes Ausmass an Angst findet sich bei wenig selbstbewussten Menschen (Neumann, Rohmann, & Bierhoff, 2007).

Die Bindungstheorie diente als eine der ersten Theorien als möglicher Erklärungsansatz für die zugrundeliegenden psychologischen Prozesse bei Stalking (Meloy, 1992), da Stalkingverhaltensweisen häufig nach einer Trennung vom Partner oder anderen bedeutsamen Verlusten (z.B. Arbeit) auftreten. MacKenzie, Mullen, Ogloff, McEwan, & James (2008) konnten bei 122 Stalkern aus einem forensischen Setting zeigen, dass Stalker im Vergleich zu einer Kontrollgruppe aus der Allgemeinbevölkerung signifikant häufiger unsichere Bindungsstile aufwiesen. Dies galt besonders für den ängstlich-verstrickten (preoccupied) sowie den ängstlich (fearful) Bindungsstil.

<u>Investitionsmodell von Rusbult</u> (1980)

Im Zusammenhang mit Belästigungs-/Stalkingverhalten wurde – soweit der Verfasserin dieser Zeilen bekannt – in der Arbeit 5 das erste Mal das *Investment model of close relationships* von Rusbult (1980) untersucht. Dieses Modell basiert auf der Interdependenztheorie von Thibaut & Kelley (1959). Diese geht davon aus, dass eine Person von einem Partner abhängig ist, wenn sie ein hohes Mass an Zufriedenheit (u.a. in Bezug auf Intimität, Sicherheit etc.) innerhalb einer Beziehung erlebt. Ein weiterer Faktor besteht in der Wahrnehmung bzw. Attraktivität der potentiellen Alternativen zur bestehenden Partnerschaft (andere Partner, Alleinsein). Rusbult (1980) schlug als erste Erweiterung des Modells vor, dass Partner nicht nur aufgrund der Zufriedenheit bzw. mangelnder/unattraktiver Alternativen in einer Beziehung verbleiben, sondern auch aufgrund der bereits getätigten sozialen, ökonomischen und emotionalen Investitionen wie gemeinsam verbrachte Zeit, aber auch gemeinsamer „Besitz" wie Kinder oder den Freundeskreis. Die zweite Erweiterung von Rusbult (1980) bestand in dem sogenannten „Gefühl des Commitments". Commitment bezieht sich auf die Festlegung eines Partners mit der Absicht, die Beziehung aufrecht zu erhalten (ein sogenanntes Wir-Gefühl, Verbundenheit). Die Stabilität einer Beziehung wird durch das Commitment bestimmt, das Commitment hingegen wiederum durch die drei Basisfaktoren a) Zufriedenheit b) Qualität der Alternativen c) Investitionen. Ein hohes Commitment erhöht im Rahmen eines partnerschaftlichen Konflikts die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass bestimmte beziehungsaufrechterhaltende Strategien auf der Ebene der Kognition und im Verhalten angewendet werden (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002). Im Rahmen von Trennungskontexten hingegen wurde in der *Arbeit 5* postuliert, dass ein hohes Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung ein Risikofaktor für nachfolgendes Belästigungsverhalten sein könnte.

2.3.2 Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse

Insgesamt nahmen 140 männliche Studenten und Doktoranden der Universität Bern an einer Online-Studie zum Thema letzter Beziehungsabbruch teil. Das Belästigungsverhalten wurde mithilfe des ins Deutsche übersetzten Unwanted Pursuit Behavior Inventory (Langrichsen-Rohling, Palarea, Cohen, & Rohling, 2000) erfasst, welcher zwischen der Anzahl der Verhaltensweisen und der Schwere (z.B. E-Mails vs .Drohungen aussprechen) differenziert. In der Gesamtstichprobe gaben lediglich 26% der Teilnehmer an, dass sie kein von der Ex-Partnerin unerwünschtes Verhalten nach der letzten Trennung gezeigt hätten. Schwerere Formen von Belästigungsverhalten (z.B. Drohungen) wurden nur von 7% der befragten Studenten bejaht.

Die Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass Personen, die verlassen wurden, häufiger ein Belästigungsverhalten zeigten als Personen, die die Beziehung beendet haben. Dies erscheint intuitiv nachvollziehbar, da Erstere sich aufgrund einer Entscheidung des Gegenübers in einer Situation befinden, die sie selber nicht herbeigeführt haben. Die damit einhergehenden Gefühle bei den Verlassenen waren Verletzt sein, Trauer, Ärger und Wut. Verletzt sein, Trauer und Wut korrelierten signifikant positiv mit Belästigungsverhalten, wobei Verletztsein unter den Emotionen in einer multiplen Regression der stärkste Prädiktor für die Schwere des Belästigungsverhalten darstellte.

Im Einklang mit der bisherigen Forschung ergaben sich signifikant positive Zusammenhänge zwischen der Bindungsdimension Angst (Bochumer Bindungsfragebogen; Neumann et al., 2007) und der Anzahl an Verhaltensweisen bzw. dem Schweregrad der Belästigung. Die Bindungsdimension Angst geht mit besitzergreifendem, anklammerndem Verhalten gegenüber dem Partner einher.

Hinsichtlich des Investitionsmodells von Rusbult (1980) konnte - wie von der Originalautorin postuliert - gezeigt werden, dass die drei Basisfaktoren (Zufriedenheit, Alternativen und Investitionen) einen eigenständigen Beitrag zur Vorhersage des

Commitments („Wir Gefühl", Absicht in der Beziehung zu verweilen) leistete. Unter den Prädiktoren Zufriedenheit, Alternativen und Investitionen konnte in einer multiplen Regressionsanalyse in einem ersten Schritt unter diesen drei Basisfaktoren nur der Faktor Investitionen einen eigenständigen Beitrag in der Vorhersage der Anzahl und des Schweregrades von Belästigungsverhalten leisten. Das Commitment stellte sich unter allen Prädiktoren (u.a. Trennungskontext, Bindungsdimension und Emotionen) als der wichtigste Prädiktor hinsichtlich Belästigungsverhalten nach einer Trennung unter männlichen Studenten heraus. Eine Erklärung hinsichtlich des starken Zusammenhanges zwischen dem Belästigungsverhalten und des Commitments könnte in den getätigten Investitionen innerhalb der Beziehung liegen, da unter den drei Basisfaktoren nur Investitionen einen eigenständigen Beitrag hinsichtlich Belästigungsverhalten leisten konnte.

2.3.3 Implikationen für Praxis und Forschung

In der untersuchten Stichprobe wurden wohl eher leichte Formen von Belästigungsverhalten im Rahmen einer Studentenpopulation untersucht. Da der Faktor Commitment die grösste Varianz hinsichtlich des Belästigungsverhaltens aufklärte, könnte Stalkingverhalten unter verlassenen Ex-Partnern als (dysfunktionale) Strategie zur Aufrechterhaltung der (verlorenen) Beziehung bzw. als deren Ersatz angesehen werden (vgl. Finkel et al., 2002). Da der Faktor Investitionen einen wichtigen Beitrag in Bezug auf die Vorhersage des Belästigungs-verhaltens leistete, liefert dies wiederum Implikationen für den Umgang mit Stalking in der Praxis.

Während des Stalkings *investiert* der Stalker in der Regel (erneut) Ressourcen wie gedankliche Beschäftigung, Emotionen, Zeit, Energie, Geld und trägt die Kosten von (drohendem) Arbeitsplatzverlust, Freizeitmangel und wenig Erfolgsaussichten auf eine neue bzw. die alte Beziehung. Dadurch könnte ein Teufelskreis entstehen, in dem der Einsatz der

Investitionen mit einer zunehmenden Anspruchshaltung und Ungerechtigkeitserleben einhergeht. Aufgrund des hohen Ausmasses an Investitionen könnte es dem Stalker im Verlauf auch Schwierigkeiten bereiten, das Stalking ohne Gesichtsverlust vor sich selber bzw. Dritten zu beenden (Mullen et al., 2009). Der Basisfaktor Investitionen, welcher per se ein normalpsychologisches und nicht zwingend pathologisches Phänomen beschreibt, steht aber in Zusammenhang mit dem in den Arbeiten 2 & 3 postulierten Warnverhalten pathologische „Fixierung" auf eine Person oder einen Sachverhalt.

Der psychosoziale Schaden beim Opfer und beim Stalker beeinflussen sich gegenseitig und können die Einschätzung des Gewaltrisikos mitbeeinflussen. Folgerichtig listen Risikoeinschätzungsinstrumente - wie das Stalking Risk Profil (SRP) - Faktoren auf, welche den psychosozialen Schaden beim Stalker erfassen sollen (MacKenzie, McEwan, Pathé, James, Ogloff, & Mullen, 2010). Daher ist eine frühzeitige Unterbrechung des Stalkingverhaltens von Relevanz. Stalkingopfern werden dementsprechend konkrete Verhaltenstipps im Umgang mit der Stalking-Situation erteilt. Insbesondere auch, dass man sämtliche Kontaktversuche konsequent ignorieren sollte, um das Stalkingverhalten (Investitionen) nicht intermittierend zu verstärken. Lediglich einige Kontaktversuche zu ignorieren, führt lernpsychologisch betrachtet dazu, dass das unerwünschte (Stalking-) Verhalten schwer löschbar gemacht wird, da Persistenz in unregelmässigen Abständen belohnt wird (Dessing & Gass, 2005). Im Rahmen von polizeilichen Gefährderansprachen erhöht sich die Chance, dass Stalker auf ihr normverletzendes Verhalten aufmerksam gemacht werden und frühzeitig dafür Sorge getragen wird, dass sie – falls akzeptiert -psychosoziale Unterstützung erhalten (Beratungs- bzw. Therapiegespräche: Umgang mit Verlust). Dadurch könnte die Entwicklung einer z.B. depressiven Erkrankung vermieden werden. Stalker weisen -im Vergleich zur Allgemeinbevölkerung, aber auch gegenüber anderen Straftätergruppen - ein erhöhtes Suizidrisiko auf (McEwan, Mullen, & MacKenzie, 2010).

Hinsichtlich weiterer Forschungsbemühungen in diesem Bereich, sollte das Konstrukt des Narzissmus und des Selbstwerts vertieft untersucht werden. Dabei wäre z.B. eine Unterscheidung zwischen offenem (overt) Narzissmus, welcher sich in offenkundigem grandiosen und selbstüberschätzendem Verhalten ausdrückt, und dem Konzept des verdeckten (covert) Narzissten, der sich durch einen instabilen Selbstwert, Emotionalität sowie einer (nicht sofort) offensichtlichen Tendenz zu einer Anspruchshaltung auszeichnet, sinnvoll. Der ängstliche Bindungsstil, wie er bei einem Teil der Stalker postuliert wird, soll gemäss Dickinson & Pincus (2003) mit dem Konstrukt des verdeckten Narzissmus im Zusammenhang stehen In der künftigen Forschung betreffen psychologischer Konstrukte sollte die Dauer des Verhaltens in die Definition von Stalking mit einbezogen werden.

2.4 Arbeit 5: Stalking-Viktimisierung bei Schweizer Polizisten

2.4.1 Theoretischer Hintergrund

Es existieren bisher noch keine Daten zur Stalkingprävalenz in der Schweizer Allgemein-bevölkerung. Obwohl die Forschung an den unterschiedlichen Definitionen von Stalking krankt, bleibt festzuhalten, dass Stalking kein vernachlässigbares Phänomen ist. Gemäss Dressing & Gass (2005) werden ca. 4 – 7% der Männer bzw. 8-12 % der Frauen einmal in ihrem Leben Opfer von Stalkingverhalten. Die geschätzten gesundheitsökonomischen Kosten sind ebenfalls von Relevanz (z.B. 340 Millionen Euro für Deutschland/Jahr; Inanspruch-nahme des Gesundheitssystems, Produktivitätsverlust wg. Krankschreibung, Dressing & Gass, 2007). Grundsätzlich kann jedermann bzw.- frau in den Fokus eines Stalkers geraten. Dennoch zeichnen sich aus der Forschung bestimmte Risikofaktoren, wie das weibliche Geschlecht, eine kürzlich erfolgte Trennung (Meloy, 2007), oder das Vorliegen einer psychischen Erkrankung ab. Darüber hinaus scheinen bestimmte Berufsgruppen Attribute aufzuweisen, die eine Stalkingviktimisierung im Vergleich zur Allgemeinbevölkerung

wahrscheinlicher machen. Empirisch gut dokumentiert ist diese Feststellung in Bezug auf Personen, die im öffentlichen Leben stehen (Hoffmann, 2006). Ebenfalls in erhöhtem Ausmass von Stalking betroffen, scheinen Mitarbeiter des Gesundheitssystems zu sein, da diese mit psychisch kranken Menschen zusammenarbeiten, die je nach psychischer Erkrankung oder Persönlichkeitsauffälligkeiten zu Stalkingverhalten neigen, da sie die empathische Haltung innerhalb einer therapeutischen Beziehung missverstehen und/oder bei wahrgenommener Zurückweisung oder Kritik zu dysfunktionalen Coping-Strategien (Stalking) greifen. Berufsgruppen, die einem erhöhten Risiko für Stalkingverhalten ausgesetzt sind, könnten in der Wahrnehmung der Stalker als einflussreich, hilfreich und/oder für sie schädigend wahrgenommen werden. Da diese Attribute auch auf die Profession der Polizei zutreffen und diese ebenfalls mit psychisch kranken Personen zu tun haben, wurde in der Arbeit 5 untersucht, wie oft Polizisten in ihrem beruflichen und privaten Umfeld Opfer von Stalking werden. Polizeibeamte sind im Rahmen ihrer Berufsausübung einer hohen Wahrscheinlichkeit ausgesetzt sind, Opfer von Drohungen und Gewalt zu werden. Diese Vorfälle könnten den Start einer Stalkingepisode begründen bzw. einen Teil davon darstellen (MacKenzie & James, 2011). Der Untersuchung in Arbeit 5 wurde die Stalking-Definition von Dressing et al. (2005) zugrunde gelegt (zwei unerwünschte Kontaktversuche über mindestens zwei Wochen, Anwendung mehrerer Stalkingmethoden Angst beim Opfer).

2.4.2 Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse

Die Lebenszeitprävalenz lag bei 5.2 % (N=28), was eher am unteren Ende des Kontinuums innerhalb der internationalen Forschungsergebnisse liegt (van der Aa & Kunst, 2009). Die Mehrheit der gestalkten Polizisten wurde im privaten Umfeld Opfer von Stalking (4.1%, n = 22), während lediglich sechs Polizisten (1.1 %) konstatierten, dass sie berufsbedingt (durch Beschuldigte, Zeugen etc.) Stalkingopfer wurden. Obwohl die berufsbedingte Stalking-Viktimisierung lediglich bei 1.1% lag, muss festgehalten werden, dass dies die zweithäufigste

Beziehungskonstellation für eine Stalking-Viktimisierung darstellte. Im Einklang mit der bisherigen Forschung lag die Lebenszeitprävalenz für eine Stalking Viktimisierung für Frauen bei 10% bzw. bei 4% bei Männern (van der Aa & Kunst, 2009). Stalking im Trennungskontext von Ex-Partnern war auch in dieser selektiven Stichprobe die häufigste anzutreffende Konstellation (mehr als ein Drittel der Fälle). Die Mehrheit der Stalker war männlich. Knapp 20% aller gestalkten Polizisten wurden Opfer eines tätlichen Angriffs durch den/die Stalkerin, die Mehrheit der Stalkingopfer berichtete über negative psychische bzw. physische Folgen des Stalkings.

Im berufsbedingten Stalking war Rache das am häufigsten von den Polizisten vermutete Motiv für das Stalkingverhalten, was gut mit Mullen's et al. (1999) Stalkertyp des rachsüchtigen Stalkers vereinbar ist. Die Mehrheit der Polizisten teilte zwar ihrem privaten Umfeld das Stalking-Verhalten mit (79%), nur 50% teilten diese Information jedoch mit ihren Polizeikollegen oder dem Vorgesetzten. Dies unabhängig davon, ob das Stalking berufs-bedingt auftrat oder auf privaten Beziehungen beruhte. Mehr als 20% erfuhren von ihren Arbeitskollegen auch negative Rückmeldungen und drei von 14 von stalkingbetroffenen Polizisten, die ihre Viktimisierung im beruflichen Umfeld öffentlich kundtaten, hätten sich mehr Unterstützung von ihrem Arbeitgeber gewünscht. Während es zahlreiche Gründe gab, die Viktimisierung nicht anzusprechen, stellte sich als ein Grund die Haltung heraus, dass „Polizist-sein" und „Stalkingopfer" inkompatibel miteinander sei und man aus Scham geschwiegen habe. Knapp 20% der Teilnehmer gaben an, dass dies einer der Gründe gewesen sei, von einer Anzeige gegen den Stalker abzusehen.

2.4.3 Implikationen für Praxis und Forschung

Die aus der Studie gewonnenen Ergebnisse zu Stalking stehen im Einklang zu Studien aus europäischen bzw. angelsächsischen Ländern. Ob die tiefe Prävalenzrate für die berufsbedingte Stalking-Viktimisierung in anderen Studien repliziert werden wird, bleibt

abzuwarten. Erfahrungen aus dem polizeilichen Alltag weisen darauf hin, dass Polizisten zwar relativ häufig Gewalt und Drohungen ausgesetzt sind, doch persistierendes berufsbedingtes Stalkingverhalten kein sehr relevantes Problem darstellt (persönliche Mitteilung Mai 2015, H. Schmid, Leiter Gewaltschutz, Kantonspolizei Zürich). Es erscheint einerseits denkbar, dass Polizisten aufgrund ihrer Erfahrung im Umgang mit schwierigen Klienten, eine höhere Schwelle aufweisen, was sie als „Stalking" definieren würden und/oder diese Verhaltensweisen als „berufsbedingtes Risiko" eher tolerieren. Dass Polizisten eine höhere Schwelle hinsichtlich der Abgrenzung von noch normalem und belästigendem Verhalten aufweisen, zeigte sich ebenfalls in der Studie von Kamphuis et al. (2005).

Gleichwohl muss vor dem Hintergrund der in der Arbeit 5 berichteten dysfunktionalen Einstellungen, dass Polizisten keine Stalkingopfer sein *dürfen*, in Betracht gezogen werden, dass von Stalking betroffene Polizisten nicht an der Umfrage teilgenommen bzw. keine korrekten Angaben hinterlegt haben und somit die tatsächliche Viktimisierungs-Rate höher ist. Es scheint, dass von Stalking betroffene Polizisten über ähnlich dysfunktionale Einstellungen verfügen wie andere Stalkingopfer auch und diese Haltung sie daran hindern kann, Unterstützung in Anspruch zu nehmen (Elliott et al., 2011).

Im Rahmen der eingangs vorgestellten Arbeit 1 wurde argumentiert, dass Opfer von Stalking durch geschulte bzw. von Polizeibeamten mit einer professionellen Haltung beraten werden sollten. Dieser Standard sollte auch innerhalb der Polizeibehörden implementiert werden, in dem in der Polizeischule explizit der Umgang mit persönlicher bzw. professioneller Viktimisierung „trotz" des Berufs des Polizeibeamten und der angeblichen „Inkompatibilität" dieser beiden Aspekte thematisiert wird. Polizeiinterne Anlaufstellen für die Einholung von Unterstützung in Stalking-Fällen sollten für verfügbar sein.

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Anhang I –VI (Publikationen und Curriculum Vitae)

Knowledge and Attitudes on Stalking among Police Officers

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Abstract

Stalking denotes the persistent contacting of a person against his or her own will. This type of harassment affects women more frequently than men, especially if perpetrated by former partners. Due to the psychological and social sequelae as well as a manifest risk for the victim's well-being, stalking is a relevant problem. Stalking, however, is not a criminal offense in several countries, including Switzerland. Using an online survey, the knowledge, previous professional experience, and attitudes of police officers ($N = 517$, 23% women) concerning stalking were surveyed. Officers without previous professional experience or without prior information on stalking on average supported attitudes more strongly that minimized the relevance of stalking. Female officers in general were less supportive of such problematic attitudes than their male colleagues. Female police officers also were less prone to blame the victim for the stalking occurring. Putting blame on the victim was most predictive of whether police officers reported that they had dealt with actual stalking cases rather quickly. In comparison with police officers from other European countries the Swiss participants on average showed lower levels of attitudes that minimize the impact of stalking or put blame on the victim. The results highlight the relevance of specific training of police officers on the topic of stalking. Alternatively, the implementation of specialized units within the police force seems warranted.

Keywords: stalking, police, attitudes, knowledge, blame

Knowledge and Attitudes on Stalking among Police Officers

Stalking is a complex phenomenon which is not easily captured in a single commonly accepted legal or scientific definition. Most definitions of stalking contain the following elements: Repeated unwanted attempts to contact, communicate with and / or pursue the victims in a manner that causes a) subjective anxiety or fear in the victims for their safety or b) could cause anxiety or fear in any reasonable person (Dressing, Kuehner, & Gass, 2005; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2009; Owens, 2015). Whether the definition of stalking requires the victim's perception of fear is a subject of ongoing discussion (Owens, 2015). The duration that would allow differentiating between stalking and other forms of harrassment was examined by Purcell, Pathé, and Mullen (2004). These authors were able to show that harrassment episodes which continue beyond two weeks will typically continue for months and thus constitute stalking behavior. Bearing the lack of a commonly accepted definition in mind, international studies report lifetime stalking victimization rates between 9% and 23%. These figures imply that stalking is not a negligible phenomenon (Van der Aa & Kunst, 2009). Although stalking behavior can result from any kind of relationship or even without any previous connection (i.e., toward strangers, e.g., in a delusional image of a relationship), the individuals most commonly affected by stalking are women subsequent to separation from their partner (Dressing et al., 2005; Meloy, 2007).

Stalking constitutes a chronic stress situation for the victims due to the perceived lack of control, fear of violence, lifestyle restrictions, as well as due to financial expenses and time-consuming visits to administration and the police (Guldimann, Fuerstenau, & Ermer, 2010). Systematic studies of the psychopathology of stalking victims are still rare. According to Blaauw, Winkel, Arensman, Sheridan, and Freeve (2002), stalking victims display high levels of psychopathology (with 78% meeting the criteria for a psychiatric disorder). In the study by Blaauw and colleagues psychopathology signs as measured with the general health

questionnaire GHQ-28 (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979) were largely independent of the stalking experience as such. Only 9 percent of the variance in psychopatholgy symptoms were explained by stalking-related factors in their sample of 241 victims. Rather, the authors suggested that individual vulnerability would better account for the variance in explaining psychopathology (e.g., adverse life events, previous psychological problems). Kamphuis, Emmelkamp, and Bartak (2003) showed that 78% of 131 female victims of stalking by former intimate partners met the frequently suggested cut-off for significant post-traumatic symptomatology on the Impact of Event Scale (IES; Horowitz, Wilner & Alvarenz, 1979). In comparison with controls, stalking victims on average reported higher scores on scales measuring fear, shame, sense of loss, decreased trust in others, increased sense of alienation/isolation, and self-blame. Post-traumatic stress (PTS) symptoms were best explained by a combination of stressor–related and individual-related variables. Twenty-two percent of the variance in the IES responses was explained by stalking severity, including duration, variation of stalking behavior, and exposure to violence. Even though stalking violence was most predictive of PTS symptoms, indices of non-violent stalking severity exerted an additional effect on the development of PTS, suggesting that experiences of violence are not responsible for all psychological problems associated with stalking. About 8% of the variance in PTS symptoms was explained by person-related variables such as passive coping behavior, withdrawal, rumination and (lower) openness to experiences as measured with the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992). Engaging in a more active way by coping with a problem-focused approach (e.g., getting involved with the police) may increase the sense of control on behalf of the victim (Kamphuis et al., 2003).

Purcell, Pathé, Baksheev, MacKinnon, and Mullen (2012) examined 236 stalking victims in a community sample in order to understand the extent to which variance in post traumatic (IES) and general psychopathology (GHQ-28) is accounted for by stalking

victimization-related factors and individual-vulnerability factors. In accordance with Kamphuis et al. (2003) Purcell and colleagues (2012) reported that avoidant forms of coping as well as being subjected to threats significantly influenced general psychopathology and post-traumatic reactions. Interventions aimed at stopping stalking at the earliest opportunity were considered the best solution to reduce longterm psychiatric morbidity (Purcell et al., 2012).

In order to end this stressful situation, victims turn to support agencies, especially to the police, for help. The police are crucial since they are often the first agency to respond to a stalking situation. Galeazzi, Bucar-Rucaman, DeFazio, and Groenen (2009) reported, however, that stalking victims from Belgium, Italy, and Slovenia rated the police as the least supportive agency. According to this study the stalking victims perceived the police as neither taking victims seriously nor as being particularly effective at stopping the stalking. Ranking potentially helpful individuals or agencies with regard to effectiveness, police officers came last after family, friends, lawyers, and colleagues. Galeazzi et al. (2009) reported that every seventh stalking victim who did not file a complaint about the stalking to the police officially acted in this way because of concerns that he/she would not be taken seriously anyway. Another important obstacle in failing to report the stalking was the perception that police officers would not be able to help. Van der Aa and Groenen (2010) conducted in-depth interviews with 45 stalking victims from the Netherlands and Belgium. The results of this study indicate that a proportion of the stalking victims criticized a lack of police activity (e.g., not writing a report) and a lack of proper stance (e.g., blaming the victims for their situation, conveying the conviction that stalking was no serious crime).

The results summarized above, especially from the studies by Galeazzi et al. (2009) and by van der Aa and Groenen (2010), indicate that elements of procedural justice may have been violated in the way in which police officers handled stalking cases. Research suggests

that there is a distinction between procedural justice and distributive justice. In short, the former describes the quality of the treatment (respect, concern, empathy) and the fairness of the processes by which decisions are made through authorities. Distributive justice, in contrast, refers to the fairness of legal desicion as such (eg. conviction of offender, Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, Sargeant & Manning, 2013).

Elliott, Thomas, and Ogloff (2012) examined the effect of procedural justice in contact with the police from the perspective of 110 crime victims, 4% of whom were victims of stalking. One of the major points of dissatisfaction on behalf of these crime victims was not that the police had not been able to apprehend or stop the offender (i.e., aspects of distributive justice). Rather, a subgroup of (mostly stalking) victims surveyed expressed that police officers didn't take more decisive action in their cases and would not follow up on their cases (i.e., aspects of procedural justice). Herman (2003) suggested that the insensitivity shown by individuals working within the criminal justice system can contribute to or exaberate the suffering experienced by victims of crime. The concept of secondary victimization was first noted by Symonds (1980) who found that victims tended to interprete professional detachment of investigating police officers as a sign of rejection. The actual victimization can trigger a range of negative psychological phenomena already (see, for instance, the sequelae of stalking as reported by Purcell et al., 2012). In a vulnerable time interval following the victimization the resistance of individuals may not be as strong as usual. Symonds (1980) warned of a possible secondary victimization during this sensitive phase.

Research on coping with experiences of sexual aggression shows that non-blaming attitudes on behalf of the police were very important to the victims (Campell, 2006). Elliott et al. (2012) suggested that participants already felt responsible for putting themselves in the situation that led to the crime. This circumstance may explain why victims are particularly sensitive to blaming attitudes (e.g. statement like "You should have been more careful.")

since their biggest fear or shortcoming seems to get confirmed. In comparison with extant research on police attitudes on, say, sexual aggression or domestic violence (Campbell, 2006; Gover, Pudrzynska Paul, & Dodge, 2011) not much research has been conducted yet on the subject of stalking.

The Modena Group on Stalking (2005) examined the perception of stalking of general practitioners (GPs) and front-line police officers from Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The results suggested that the participants from Italy were the least sensitive to these issues and that only 20% of Italian police officers had heard of the term stalking before. Kamphuis et al. (2005) extended the study mentioned above and examined the recognition of and attitudes toward stalking among police officers and GP's in Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and the United Kingdom again. The participants were asked to rate on a seven-point Likert-type scale whether the events depicted normal or abnormal behaviour and if they represent issues they should be concerned with professionally. In all countries, police officers were more inclined to think that the behaviour depicted in the vignettes was a normal, transient phenomenon, while GP's stated more often that the behaviour constitutes abnormal unwanted attention. The higher threshold among police officers could be explained by the police officer's professional exposure to these sorts of behaviors (Kamphuis et al., 2005).

To examine stalking-related attitudes more explicitly, the authors conducted a principal component analysis on a 34-item questionnaire on stalking-related attitudes developed by McKeon, Mullen, and Ogloff (at that point unpublished) which yielded an eight-factor solution (54% variance explained). The subsequent varimax rotation suggested that the first three factors explained 35% of the original variance. The final three subscales consisted of six items for "Stalking is flattery" (Cronbach's α = .80), seven items for "Blaming the victim" (α = .78) and 6 items for "Stalking is a nuisance" (α = .74). Recently, McKeon, McEwan, and Lubbers (2014) stated that they found a three factorial-solution in

their analysis of the original 34 items regarding underlying stalking-related attitudes which they call a) stalking isn't serious, b) stalking is romantic and c) victims are to blame suggesting similar underlying components as the findings in Kamphuis et al. (2005).

Among the police officers, the Dutch were least likely to agree with maladaptive staking-related attitudinal statements. In sum, attitudes on stalking proved to be highly relevant as they explained most of the variance in the recognition of stalking in all countries. Overall, the Italian professionals lacked sensitivity above and beyond the effects of stalking-related attitudes. Kamphuis et al. (2005) argued that the lack of a legal framework in Italy might have contributed to this result.

Currently, the Swiss Penal Code is also missing a legislation on stalking. As discussed above the professional management of stalking cases requires adequate attitudes on stalking and — in our opinion — at least basic knowledge about stalking. Both aspects are crucial in the management of stalking cases to prevent unprofessional conduct and additional detriment to the victims. In a large sample of Swiss police officers we thus explored the following resarch questions:

1. What do Swiss police officers know about stalking?

2. Can we replicate the factor structure of the stalking-related attitudinal questionnaire reported by Kamphuis et al. (2005) in a German translation based on a Swiss sample of police officers?

3. How do Swiss police officers fare on these attitudes scales in comparison to other nations?

4. Which variables (sociodemographic, knowledge about stalking, stalking attitudes variables) predict police officers behavior during stalking management?

Method

Participants

Initally, 542 police officers took part in the study, but 25 did not complete the whole section on knowledge and attitudes and were excluded. The response rate varied across the Swiss cantons resulting in an overall rate of 18.6%. The majority of the remaining 517 participants were male police officers (77%, $n = 400$) whereas about one-fourth (23%, $n = 117$) were female police officers. Nearly one-third (29%, $n = 149$) served as police officers in Berne, about half (54%, $n = 281$) in Zurich, and one-sixth (17%, $n = 87$) in Solothurn. The mean age was 37 years ($SD = 9.5$; range = 18 to 63 years). The average duration of service was 13 years ($SD = 9.6$; range = 1 to 40 years).

Materials and variables analyzed

Questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study was an extended version of a questionnaire developed by Stompe and Ritter (2009). The questionnaire is comprised of four sections: (a) Police officers' knowledge about stalking; (b) their professional experiences with stalking cases; (c) their attitudes toward stalking; (d) their personal experiences as stalking victims. This paper is based on the results of the knowledge and attitudes sections.

Members of the cantonal police forces of Berne and Solothurn, as well as of the city police of Zurich took part in an online survey between September and October 2010. An online link was either sent to the police officers' professional e-mail accounts (Zurich, Solothurn) or could be accessed over their agency's internal network service (Berne). The e-mails were sent to individuals with an official police status in Zurich and Solothurn (not to administration staff). In Berne, recipients were also notified that only individuals with an official police status should take part in the survey. It was required that the police officers were currently or previously serving as front-line police officers. The online link was active for five weeks. A reminder e-mail was sent to the officers or posted on their internal network after two and four weeks. The link was accompanied by a short note explaining the reasons for the survey and highlighting the voluntary nature and anonymity of the survey. The study

was approved by all three police commanders in charge; no decision by an ethics committee was required.

Stalking definition. Due to the lack of a stalking legislation in Switzerland, no legal definition could be used as a framework. In accordance with other scientific definitions, however, stalking was defined as repeated unwanted attempts (on at least two occasions) of contacting or approaching a specific victim for at least two weeks, using multiple methods and causing fear or apprehension through these behaviors (e.g. Dressing et al., 2005). After the participants had stated whether they had heard the term "stalking" before, the stalking definition by Dressing et al. (2005) was presented to them to check if their idea of "stalking" corresponded with the actual definition.

Stalking knowledge index. A 16-item stalking questionnaire was developed and presented to the participants. The questions were developed based on stalking literature and aimed to cover different areas of practical relevance: Estimated stalking prevalence (1 item), gender of stalker/victim (2 items), relationship stalker/victim (1 item), stalking and mental illness (1 item), threats and violence during stalking (4 items), effect of stalking on victims (1 item), professional advices for stalking victims (1 item), false stalking victims (2 items), distinction from other phenomena such as mobbing (2 items), and the legal situation in Switzerland (1 item). The question format was multiple choice with either one or multiple correct answers. The participants were instructed not to guess and not to be influenced by their professional (practical) experience with stalking cases but to choose the option "I don't know" if uncertainty occured. Questions answered correctly were scored with one point each. It was possible to answer the multiple choice questions only partially correctly resulting in an adjusted score (e.g., 0.5 points). An index of stalking knowledge was created by summing up all correct answers per participant and converting them into a percentage of the maximum number of correct responses.

Stalking-related attitudes questionnaire. We used the 19-item version reported by Kamphuis et al. (2005). The three subscales were "Stalking is a nuisance" (6 items), "Blaming the victim" (7 items), and "Stalking is flattery" (6 items). With the kind permission by the original author (B. McKeon) the questionnaire was translated into German by the first author and translated back by a native English speaker according to international research standards. Participants were asked to rate his or her agreement on a Likert-type scale (1 = absolutely untrue to 7 = absolutely true). In order to be able to compare the attitudes expressed by the Swiss police officers with those expressed by police officers internationally in the study by Kamphuis et al. (2005), these researchers kindly provided the original data set to the current authors. As in Kamphuis et al. (2005), the sum scores of the three attitude subscales were converted into T scores (i.e., upon z standardization, scores are transformed into a scale with an overall mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10).

Further variables of interest. Besides sociodemographic variables, we assessed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7 their past professional management of stalking cases (interest in stalking case, paperwork, 1 item).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with SPSS version 20. The type I error rate was set at $p = 0.05$. Effect sizes (Cohen's d, and phi) are reported and interpreted according to Kraemer, Morgan, Leech, Gliner, Vaske, and Harmon (2003), with d scores equal to or above 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80 representing small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The corresponding values for the correlative measures (r_s, Φ) are .1, .3, and .5, respectively.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted with Mplus, version 6.12 for Macintosh (Muthén & Muthén, Los Angeles, CA). Within the CFA, a two-index strategy for assessing model fit was adopted (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Bentler, 1990) was used as an incremental measure of model fit, and the Root Mean Square

Error of Approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990) as an absolute index of model fit. Cutoff values signifying model fit have been suggested as CFI > 0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) and RMSEA ≤ 0.07 (Steiger, 2007). The CFA solution was estimated through a robust weighted least squares algorithm (WLSMV).

RESULTS

Descriptives

Nearly half of the officers (47%, $n = 241$) stated that they had professional experience with stalking cases at some point in their career. While 44% ($n = 225$) indicated that their employer had given them information about stalking at some point, the majority (56%, $n = 292$) did not receive any information. As expected, there was a significant correlation between these variables, suggesting that officers with professional experience more often received information about stalking by their employer ($\Phi = .17$, $p < .001$).

Knowledge about stalking

Four-fifths of the respondents (81%, $n = 417$) stated that they had heard the term "stalking" before the announcement of the study and "knew" what the term meant. One-fifth (19%, $n = 100$) had heard the term before and were somewhat certain that they could define it. After presenting the stalking definition by Dressing et al. (2005), all of the participants stated that the definition corresponded with their idea about stalking. *Table 1* presents detailed information about the number of correct answers per items in the whole sample.

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE:

On average, 48% of the 16 items were correctly answered ($M = 48.23\%$, $SD = 15.88\%$). The knowledge score varied between 2.81% and 91.46%. There was no significant difference between respondents from the three participating Swiss cantons (Berne: $M =$

49.04%, *SD* = 16.17%; Zurich: *M* = 47.65%, *SD* = 15.86%, Solothurn: *M* = 48.23%, *SD* = 15.88%; *F*[2, 514] = .42, *p* > .05, η = .01). There was a slight knowledge difference between female (*M* = 49.34%, *SD* = 15.12%) and male police officers (*M* = 47.90%, *SD* = 16.08%). This difference was not significant however: *t*(515) = -.86, *p* > .05, *d* = 0.09. No significant correlations were found between police officers' knowledge index and their age (*r* = -.03, *p* > 0.5) or number of years of police service (*r* = .-02, *p* > 0.5).

Police officers who stated that they had been given information on stalking by their employer at one point during their career on average scored significantly higher (*M* = 51.67%, *SD* = 15.56%) than their peers without such information from the employer (*M* = 45.59%, *SD* = 15.61%, *t(482.192)* =- 4.396, *p* < .001, *d* = 0.39. In contrast, police officers who stated that they relied on media coverage about stalking on average scored significantly lower on the stalking knowledge index than police officers who did not name media reports as a source for answering the questions (*M* = 46.93%, *SD* = 15.72% versus *M* = 52.39%, *SD* =15.73%, *t*[203.766] = 3.356, *p* < .001, *d* = 0.35.

There was a difference in knowledge between police officers who had professional experience with stalking cases compared with those who did not. Those with professional experience on average scored significantly higher than those without professional experience (*M* = 52.60%, *SD* = 15.07% versus *M* = 44.41%, *SD* = 15.60%, *t*[509.786] = - 6.07, *p* < .001, *d* = 0.54).

Stalking-Related Attitudes Scales

Reliability and factor structure. Cronbach's α coefficient of internal consistency was .75 for "Stalking is a nuisance", α = .71 for "Blaming the victim", and α = .80 for "Stalking is flattery" indicating satisfactory to good values. For the full set of 19 items Cronbach's α was .86 which indicates good to excellent reliability (Bortz & Doering, 2006). The omission of items did not result in improved estimates of reliability.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The three-factorial solution reproduces the data structure well. The item-to-factor loadings varied from .50 (item: "Those who are upset by stalking are likely more sensitive than others.") to .88 (item: "Even if they were annoyed, most women would be at least a little bit flattered by stalking."). The inter-correlations between the three latent variables (factors) ranged from .73 to .79. Fit for the CFA solution was good, with CFI = .98 and RMSEA = .054 (95% CI = [.047, .061]). The χ^2 test of model fit (χ^2[149] = 371.11, $p < .001$) pointed toward a mismatch of model and data but this is attributable to the comparatively large sample ($N = 517$). Consequently, one can be confident that the structure of the 19-item attitude questionnaire comprising three factors describing stalking as a nuisance, as a reason for blaming the victim, and as some form of exaggerated flattery which was found to be adequate for a mixed sample from Belgium, Italy, the Netherland, and the United Kingdom (Kamphuis et al., 2005) similarly describes the covariance structure in the responses of the current sample of Swiss police officers well.

Comparison with European police officers. Given the overlap between the structure of the 19-item attitude questionnaire for the current sample with police officers internationally, comparisons between samples of police officers from four different countries from Kamphuis et al. (2005) with the current sample were conducted. *Table 2* shows the corresponding T scores. Note that the T scores for the Swiss sample were obtained based on the mean and *SD* from the four other samples of police officers pooled together. The range of the T scores across the three subscales was as follows: Nuisance (range = 38.91 to 84.49); Blame (range = 33.07 to 71.89); and Flattery (range = 38.69 to 79.05). Overall, Swiss police officers on average showed lower levels on the attitudes subscales than their European colleagues, Cohen's *d* revealed small to medium effect sizes and even large effect size when the Swiss officers were compared to the Italian police officers (Cohen's *d* = 0.58 to 1.00).

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE:

Stalking-related attitudes sum scores in the Swiss sample scales.

Table 3 summarizes the means and *SD*s of the sum scores on the three attitudes scales for the whole sample and for the sub-samples with and without professional experience. On average, police officers who had professional experience with stalking cases had lower scores on all three attitude scales, albeit at negligible (blame, $d = 0.11$) or small effects ($d = 0.26$ and 0.28 for nuisance and flattery, respectively) compared with their colleagues without such professional experience. Age or years of service showed no or only small correlations with the three attitude subscales (all $|r|$ coefficients $< .12$). Gender was, however, associated with the three subscales, indicating that females scored lower on all three scales. Cohen's d suggested small to medium effect sizes between gender and the three stalking attitudes scales ($d = 0.18$ to 0.51). A similar pattern regarding gender differences emerged within the subgroup with professional experience ($n = 241$, $d = 0.33$ to 0.52).

Participants who had reveived information on stalking on average had slightly lower scores on the nuisance and flattery attitude scales ($d = 0.25$ and $d = 0.16$, respectively) compared with their colleagues who had not received such prior briefing. The difference between the two groups regarding blame was in the same direction (i.e., lower average among informed police officers) but the magnitude of the effect was negligible ($d = 0.04$). For the sample as a whole, the correlation coefficients between the three attitude scales and the stalking knowledge index were -.27 and -.15 for nuisance and flattery, respectively. Hence, there were small to moderate negative associations for these two subscales. Regarding blame, however, the magnitude of the correlation with the stalking knowledge index was negligible (-.04).

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE:

Multiple Regression. A multiple regression was conducted in order to analyze which variables would predict the management of stalking cases in the subgroup which had professional experience ($N = 241$). Within this group, a smaller subgroup of individuals was chosen who dealt with stalking cases several times ($n = 177$), especially with ex-partner stalking. The criterion variable was "Since I did not feel like dealing with this relationship stuff, I put the case and the paperwork behind me as soon as I was able to" (behavioral indicator). The following predictor variables were entered simultaneously (forced entry) into the regression analysis: Sociodemographic variables (age, gender), knowledge-related variables (information about stalking by employer, stalking knowledge index), and stalking attitude variables (sum scores on the three attitudes scales). The assumptions of multicorreality were not violated. None of the predictor had a variance inflation factor (VIF) greater than 10. Except for the three stalking-related attitudes scales (VIF 1.8 - 1.9), all VIF scores were close to 1. Tolerance was never below 0.1 (i.e., 0.5 to 0.9) (Field, 2009).

Results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that one predictor explained one fifth of the variance, adjusted $R^2 = .20$, $F(7,169) = 7.16$, $p <.001$. Blaming the victim significantly predicted fast paperwork and management of stalking cases ($\beta = .45$, $p <.001$). None of the other predictors were statistically significant (see Table 4). As far as the other two attitude scales (i.e., flattery and nuisance) are concerned both have negative (albeit small) regression weights (of -.003 and -.01, respectively) despite positive zero-order correlations (of .27 each) with the criterion. This pattern of a negative sign for the regression weight in multiple regression although the bivariate zero-order correlation is positive is indicative of net suppression (see, e.g., Lewis & Escobar, 1986, p. 23).

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to examine the knowledge and the attitudes of police officers on stalking in an online survey. The term stalking and the corresponding definition was familiar to all participants ($N = 517$). The results suggest that the knowledge of Swiss police officers on stalking is open to improvement in some areas. As an analysis at the level of individual items revealed, for instance, only 12% of the police officers surveyed were aware of the fact that uttering threats poses a relevant risk factor in stalking cases. Half of the police officers did not know that a specific type of previous relationship (i.e., former intimate partners) increases the potential for a violent escalation (Meloy, 2007). Such basic knowledge would be essential in order to be able to gauge the potential seriousness of a case accurately and to take appropriate measures. A sizable proportion of respondents also revealed uncertainty concerning legal issues. In Switzerland, victims may report stalking incidents to the Swiss police in order to check if general (i.e., non-stalking specific) measures of the Swiss penal code apply to file for legal proceedings against an offender (e.g., due to uttering threats). At the time of writing, Switzerland is, however, still lacking specific measures concerning stalking within its penal code. About one-third of the police officers who participated in the survey were not aware of this fact.

On the other hand, the results also showed that officers who had received information on stalking by their employer previously on average scored slightly higher on the corresponding knowledge index than their colleagues without any prior information. This seems encouraging especially since the information provided to the officers during their career tended to be brief and were diverse in depth and nature. Solid knowledge on the topic

is an essential ingredient to the recognition of stalking cases and in assessing the threat posed to the victims. The usefulness of the specific training of police officers with respect to threat assessment was demonstrated by Storey, Gibbas, Reeves, and Hart (2011).

Although causal effects cannot be inferred from cross-sectional data, it is at least plausible to assume that professional information on stalking may have affected the attitudes which the respondents had concerning the phenomenon. Officers with such previous information, on average, had lower scores on scales measuring derogatory attitudes according to which stalking was some form of flattery or merely a nuisance, although the effects were small. Similarly, police officers who had previously dealt with stalking cases professionally on average had lower scores on the same two attitude scales than their colleagues who were naïve to handling stalking cases. Neither previous information nor prior experience was associated with differences in terms of a third derogatory attitude, namely blaming the victim.

Gender, in contrast, did make a difference, also with regard to blaming the victim. Female police officers tended to score lower on all three attitude scales independently from their professional experience with stalking. The size of the effect was small to moderate. A similar gender gap was reported by McKeon et al. (2014) as well as by Lippmann and Ward (2014) who used the same stalking attitudes questionnaire as in the current study. As women are more frequently victims of stalking, female police officers may approve less of blaming and minimizing attitudes as they may have personal experience with the problem from their private lives.

The particular relevance of attitudes condoning secondary victimization (i.e., blaming the victim) became apparent in a multiple regression analysis. Here, blaming the victim was the only variable that significantly predicted the way in which police officers handled the paperwork and the stalking case as such. This result also seems in line with research that

concluded that participants tend to attribute more responsibilty to a victim if the stalker is an ex-partner than a stranger or acquaintances (Scott, Lloyed, & Gavin, 2010).

      The fact that the 19-item-questionnaire on stalking-related attitudes had the same factorial structure as originally described by Kamphuis et al. (2005) and similar to the three-factorial structure in the original set of 34 items reported by McKeon et al. (2014) opened up the possibility of international comparison. On all three attitude scales—stalking is a nuisance, blaming the victim, and stalking is flattery— in comparison with samples of police officers from four European countries (Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom; Kamphuis et al., 2005), the Swiss police officers from the current study were least supportive of the stalking-related attitudes. Rather than the mean profile of the Italian police officers—Italy being the only other country without an explicit legislation on stalking at the time—it was the mean profile of the Dutch officers that matched the profile of the Swiss officers most closely. Therefore, it seems that socio-cultural factors rather than anti-stalking laws are relevant for attitudes that condone stalking or at least minimize its impact.

      The management of stalking cases is based on complex determinants and interactions. Police officers harbour individual attitudes towards stalking which may be innate and independent from any professional experience with stalking cases. Alternatively, these attitudes may have been shaped by frustrating professional experiences such as a victim returning to the stalking ex-partner, psychological pressure exhibited by the victim, the futility of attempts at making stalking stop, or the perception of one's own uncertainty and helplessness. By comparison, victim's behavior in this stressful situation may be influenced by self-blame or shame (see Purcell et al, 2012), previous negative experiences with police officers, or mental disorder which may have exacerbated due to the experience of being stalked or even developed due the chronic stress situation. Blauuw et al. (2003) and Purcell et al. (2012) showed that stalking episodes can contribute to the intensity of psychological

problems. Moreover, Dressing and Gass (2010) found an incidence of stalking victimization among patients in a German psychiatric hospital ($N = 300$; 21%) which was twice as high as the rate estimated for the German general population (12%, Dressing et al., 2005). In the majority of these cases the mental disorder had manifested itself before the first stalking incident. This suggest that suffering from a mental disorder increases the risk of becoming a victim of stalking. The psychosocial stress elicited by stalking behavior and /or the presence of a mental disorder may interfere with the victim's ability to protect him-or herself. This, in turn, could lead to behavior that appears erratic or strange from the point of view of a police officer trying to help a crime victim.

In our view, our results and the results of previous research underline the importance of professional training for front-line police officers. A second practical implication would be the implementation of specialized units. Specialized units and so called threat assessment units have been first established in a police setting in California, USA (Threat Assessment Unit, Los Angeles Police Deparment) and then for continental Europe in England (Fixated Threat Assessment Center; James, Kerrigan, Forfar, Farnham, & Preston, 2010). They assess individuals who threaten, stalk or exert domestic violence and are trained in helping victims or else will refer them to other support agencies. An advantage of some of these units is the close cooperation with professionals from the mental health system, some have incorporated (forensic) psychologists and psychiatrist into the threat asssessement team. Stalkers who harrass strangers or acquaintances often suffer from a psychotic disorder and reasearch suggests that ex-partner stalkers show acentuated personality traits or disorders, affective disorders and substance abuse is also a problem among certain types of stalkers (McEwan & Strand, 2013; Mullen et al., 1999). As Storey et al. (2013) as well as Scott, Nixon, and Sheridan (2013) have shown specialist police officers working in, say, Domestic Violence Units were less susceptible to erroneous conceptions (such as the false belief that stranger

stalkers would pose a greater threat to the victim than stalkers who harrassed aquaintances or ex-partners).

Limitations

Despite the comparatively large sample the results of the current study are not necessarily representative of police officers in Switzerland. Only individuals working in three (out of 26) cantons were asked to participate. Furthermore, all these are German-speaking cantons thereby neglecting Italian, Romansh- and French-speaking ones. The overall response rate was rather low (18.6%). A selection effect cannot be excluded since it is possible that only participants who were interested in stalking per se took part.

Moreover, a limitation ought to be acknowledged with regard to the comparison with data sampled from police forces in other European countries. The data for the study by Kamphuis et al. (2005) were collected more than five years before the Swiss data. Thus, it remains unclear whether the emerging public focus on stalking may have had an influence on Swiss police officers knowledge and attitudes (i.e., a cohort effect). We did not control for socially desirable response style concerning the attitude scales in our study.

Finally, the cross-sectional survey data from the current study do not imply causality even with regard to the prediction of actual police work (i.e., putting stalking cases behind oneself as quickly as possible) especially since the criterion was assessed in retrospect. More formal tests of the putative link between stalking-related attitudes and actual behavior could be assessed in a prospective format, possibly using a rigorous theoretical framework like the theory of planned behavior by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975).

Conclusion

Early and adequate professional intervention from competent police officers and/or an interdisciplinary team is vital in stalking cases since the severity of psychosocial consequences for victims also seems to be related to its duration (Kamphuis et al., 2003;

Purcell, Pathé & Mullen, 2005). Negative experiences with the police force likely violate key

elements of procedural justice and could hypothetically result in avoidant forms of coping

with stalking which would, in turn, be detrimental for the stalking victims health and well-

being (Purcell et al., 2012). On the other hand, adhering to basic elements of procedural

justice improves the willingness for cooperation among victims (Mazerolle et al., 2013).

Police officers should receive training on stalking, including information that helps reducing

problematic attitudes. Alternatively, specialized stalking units should be implemented within

the police.

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Note

Datasets and other information of relevance can be accessed through the authors of this paper.

Tables

Table 1

Shortened items of the stalking knowledge index and percentages of correct answers

	Items (shortend)	Correct answer	Percentages of correct answers (*N* = 517)
1	Between 10–20% of the general population are once affected by harrassment resp. stalking behaviors.	True	12%
2	Is one of the sexes more frequently the victim of stalking?	Females	76%
3	Is one of the sexes more frequently the stalker?	Males	55%
4	In which context does stalking most often occur?	Among ex-intimates	52%
5	Stalking is a mental illness.	Not true	29%
6	Threats are risk factor for stalking violence	True	12%
7	How often do you think violence occurs in general during stalking?	20 - 40 %	10%
8	Is there any form of relationship between stalker and victim that increases the risk for violence?	Yes	40%
9	Which victims will be most likely attacked?	Ex-Partners	32%
10	Stalking doesn't cause much psychological harm to the victims	Wrong	79%
11	What kind of professional advice should be given to stalking victims?	*Ignore the stalker *Documentation of stalking	60% 84%
12	Many stalking victims are in fact „false" stalking victims	Not true	21%
13	What reasons could someone have to present him/herself as a „false" stalking victim?	*suffers from mental illness * need for attention	51% 70%
14	Mobbing is in comparison to stalking mainly a problem in schools and workplace settings	True	55%
15	There are no differences between stalkers and querulants	Not true	89%
16	There is no anti-stalking penal legislation in Switzerland	True	66%

Note. *List of options given to rate true or not true

Table 2

Means, standard deviations and Cohen's effect size of the stalking related attitudes scales by country (T-Scores)

	Belgium (B)	United Kingdom (UK)	Netherlands (NL)	Italy (I)	BE/UK /NL/I	Switz- erland (CH)	d CH- EU	d CH–I	d CH-NL
Nuisance	N =125	N = 79	N = 62	N = 50	N =316	N = 517			
	51.09	48.57	45.80	53.04	49.73	47.38	0.26	0.63	0.19
	(10.57)	(8.56)	(7.35)	(11.38)	(10.00)	(8.71)			
Blaming the victim	N =119	N = 79	N = 60	N = 50	N = 308	N = 517			
	52.36	46.77	47.07	55.45	50.40	46.82	0.40	1.0	0.03
	(9.36)	(8.76)	(8.08)	(9.44)	(9.55)	(8.59)			
Flattery	N =125	N = 79	N = 62	N = 50	N = 316	N = 517			
	52.62	51.25	46.06	51.94	50.88	46.92	0.45	0.58	0.11
	(10.20)	(9.14)	(6.94)	(11.05)	(9.75)	(8.34)			

Note. Cohen's *d* = 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80 representing small, medium, and large effects

Table 3

Mean scores and standard deviations of sum scores in whole sample, with/without professional experience

	Whole sample (N = 517)		Without professional experience (n = 276)		With professional experience (n = 241)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Stalking is a nuisance	10.46	4.95	11.01	4.83	9.82	4.20
Blaming the victim	16.92	6.12	17.23	5.86	16.56	6.54
Stalking is flattery	10.89	4.96	11.54	4.81	10.15	4.81

Table 4

Mutiple Regression Analysis Summary for variables predicting fast paperwork and management of stalking cases

Variables	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*t*	*p*
(constant)	1.22	.68		1.79	.075
Age	.00	.01	.02	.20	.766
Gender	-.24	.24	-.07	-1.01	.316
Stalking is a nuisance	-.00	.03	-.02	-.08	.934
Blaming the victim	.10	.02	.45	4.81	.000
Stalking is flattery	-.01	.03	-.05	-.48	.630
Information about stalking by employer	-.38	.21	-.13	-1.82	.071
Stalking knowledge index	-.01	.01	-.07	-.99	.319

Note. adjusted R^2 = .20 (*n* = 177), *p* < .001 (forced entry)

Stalking Einstellungsfragebogen (Stalking related attitudes questionnaire)

Skala	English items/ Deutsche Items 1.Stalking ist ein Ärgernis/Stalking is a nuisance, 2. Dem Opfer die Schuld geben/Blaming the victim, 3. Stalking ist schmeichelhaft/Stalking is flattery.(1 = absolut unwahr - 7 = absolut wahr). Intercorrelations between three latent factors: Nuisance * Blame =.73 ; Nuisance * Flattery = .78 ; Blame * Flattery : .79	Factor loading
1	The concept of 'stalking' is just a fad Das Konzept « Stalking » ist nur eine Modeerscheinung	.68
1	'Stalkers' are a nuisance but they are not criminals Stalker sind ein Ärgernis, aber keine Kriminellen	.62
1	'Stalking' is just an extreme form of courtship Stalking ist einfach eine extreme Form einer Person den Hof zu machen	.68
1	If there is no actual violence, it shouldn't be a crime Wenn keine Gewalt verübt wird, sollte Stalking nicht als eine Straftat angesehen werden	.83
1	'Stalking' should be dealt with in civil, not criminal, law Mit Stalking sollte sich das Zivilrecht, nicht das Strafrecht befassen	.75
1	Stranger 'stalking' is the only 'real' stalking Jemanden Fremdes zu stalken, ist das einzige echte Stalking.	.72
2	A woman who dates a lot would be more likely to be 'stalked' Eine Frau, die häufig Verabredungen hat, wird wahrscheinlich öfter gestalkt	.55
2	If a woman just ignored the man, he would eventually go away Wenn eine Frau den Mann einfach ignorieren würde, würde er letzendlich verschwinden	.72
2	Victims of 'stalking' are often women wanting revenge on their ex-boyfriends Stalkingopfer sind oft Frauen, die sich an ihren Ex-Freunden rächen wollen	.53
2	A woman may be more likely to be 'stalked' if she cannot clearly say 'No' Eine Frau wird wohl eher gestalkt, wenn sie nicht klar Nein sagen kann	.55
2	If a woman gives any encouragement, the man has a right to continue his pursuit Wenn eine Frau den Mann in irgendeiner Form ermutigt, dann hat der Mann das Recht dazu, sie weiter zu verfolgen	.69
2	Those who are upset by 'stalking' are likely more sensitive than others Jene, die wegen Stalking aufgebracht sind, sind wahrscheinlich empfindlicher als andere	.50
2	'Stalkers' only continue because they get some sort of encouragement Stalker machen nur weiter, wenn sie in irgendeiner Form ermutigt werden	.69
3	Women find it flattering to be persistently pursued Frauen finden es schmeichelhaft, wenn sie hartnäckig verfolgt werden	.77
3	Women often say one thing but mean another Frauen sagen oft das Eine, meinen aber das Andere	.58
3	Some women actually want to be 'stalked'; they see it as a compliment Einige Frauen wollen „gestalkt" werden; sie sehen dies als ein Kompliment	.78
3	Repeatedly following someone, making phone calls and leaving gifts doesn't actually hurt anyone Jemanden wiederholt zu verfolgen, anzurufen oder Geschenke zu hinterlassen, schadet eigentlich keinem	.81
3	Even if they were annoyed, most women would be at least a little flattered by'stalking' Selbst wenn sie verärgert wären, wären die meisten Frauen wenigstens ein bisschen geschmeichelt von dem Stalking	.88
3	If someone continues to say nice things and give nice gifts, then 'stalking' is far more acceptable : Wenn jemand damit fortfährt nette Dinge zu sagen, schöne Geschenke zu machen, dann ist „Stalking" viel akzeptabler	.84

The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment: An Exploration and Suggested Typology

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The concept of warning behaviors offers an additional perspective in threat assessment. Warning behaviors are acts which constitute evidence of increasing or accelerating risk. They are acute, dynamic, and particularly toxic changes in patterns of behavior which may aid in structuring a professional's judgment that an individual of concern now poses a threat – whether the actual target has been identified or not. They require an operational response. A typology of eight warning behaviors for assessing the threat of intended violence is proposed: pathway, fixation, identification, novel aggression, energy burst, leakage, directly communicated threat, and last resort warning behaviors. Previous research on risk factors associated with such warning behaviors is reviewed, and examples of each warning behavior from various intended violence cases are presented, including public figure assassination, adolescent and adult mass murder, corporate celebrity stalking, and both domestic and foreign acts of terrorism. Practical applications and future research into warning behaviors are suggested. Copyright © 2011 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Discussions of threat assessment and targeted violence have their origins in the 19th century work of Laschi and Lombroso (Laschi & Lombroso, 1886; Lombroso & Laschi, 1892) in Italy and Régis (1890) in France. Since the contemporary research of Dietz and Martell (1989), Fein, Vossekuil and Holden (1995), Fein and Vossekuil (1998, 1999), and Calhoun (1998), threat assessment has advanced in a variety of areas, with studies in different domains of intended and targeted violence such as workplace violence, campus and university violence, school shootings, public figure assassination, adolescent and adult mass murder, terrorism, and the development of both threat assessment protocols and threat assessment organizations. As the nascent discipline of threat assessment matures, it is pertinent to revisit and refine terminology to standardize both practice and further research. One such concept is that of "warning behaviors" (James et al., 2007, 2008, 2011), variously termed by others as "signaling the attack" (Vossekuil, Reddy, Fein, Borum, & Modzeleski 2000), "tell-tale behaviors" or "high risk indicators" (Calhoun & Weston, 2003), "stalking-type

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behavior" (Mullen et al., 2009) and "pre-attack signals" (Dietz & Martell, 2010). These concepts in turn are also closely linked to those of "leakage" (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011; O'Toole, 2000) and behaviors on a "pathway to violence" (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein et al., 1995). Below, some of the concepts elaborated by such authors are organized into a unified framework of "warning behaviors." In this article the authors define the term, place it in the context of violence risk and threat assessment, trace its genesis through existing risk and threat assessment literature, discuss various types and illustrative case examples of warning behaviors, theorize on the reasons for warning behaviors, and make suggestions for operational application and further research.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Threat Assessment and Risk Assessment

Threat assessment and risk assessment have developed as somewhat overlapping fields. Violence risk assessment has an older provenance, and is a method by which the probability of generally violent behavior is estimated for an individual based upon his membership in a particular at-risk group. Threat assessment is concerned almost wholly with the risk of targeted violence[1] by a subject of concern, and has a behavioral and observational policing focus. Risk assessment may address different domains of risk than threat assessment, and typically relies on more historical and dispositional (status) variables.

Threat and risk assessment both involve the reaching of a professional judgment by a person trained in such assessment. In a violence risk assessment, judgment is informed, but not necessarily dictated, by structured consideration of the presence or absence in a given case of factors which have been found through research to be statistically associated with violence. These are termed risk factors, and they are produced from analysis of group data. The problem of describing risk of intended or targeted violence in any given individual (as opposed to a group) is the very low base rate in any population under consideration, and the guarantee of an unacceptably high false-positive rate. Given the very low base rate, predicting which subject will be violent among those at risk for violence is impossible. Risk factors allow the separation of individuals into risk groups, typically high, medium, or low. Typing someone as high risk is not a probability estimate that he or she will behave in a violent way; rather, it is a statement that the subject shares important statistical associations with that group of people from which the few individuals who will go on to commit the behavior are most likely to emanate.

Risk factors are usually placed in the framework of an "instrument" or "protocol," in other words a structured formulation (or *aide-mémoire*) of such factors, which can be applied by the violence risk assessor to ensure that all relevant risk factors are considered and incorporated into the assessor's judgment (Skeem & Monahan, 2011). All violence risk factors can be divided into those that are static (status) and not susceptible to change (e.g., previous convictions for violence, gender) and

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[1] Targeted or intended violence is inherently predatory (instrumental) and not affective (reactive, impulsive), whereas general violence risk assessment is concerned with both modes of violence, but has historically not differentiated between the two when instrumentation has been developed (Meloy, 2006).

those that are dynamic (state) and changeable (e.g., weapons possession, drug use, proximity-seeking). The latter can act as potential management targets for lowering risk. Recent work has emphasized the usefulness of further dividing state factors into those that do slowly change over time (stable) and those that can rapidly change over time (acute) (Douglas & Skeem, 2005). Most structured instruments – heretofore the domain of risk assessment rather than threat assessment – divide risk into one of three to five summary risk categories, at least three of them often labeled low, moderate, or high risk [see, for example, the HCR-20 (Webster, Douglas, Eaves & Hart, 1997); Monahan & Steadman, 1996].

In risk assessment, there is often a history of violence and the evaluation is usually done in a static setting, in other words one where the person is in a contained environment, such as prison or hospital (e.g., evaluation for release from prison to parole). In threat assessment, there may be no history of violence. Intelligence has developed around a subject of concern which has placed him or her on the radar of the threat assessor, and the evaluation is often acutely dynamic, unfolding in real time as the threat evolves toward an identified or as yet unidentified target (Borum, Fein, Vossekuil & Bergland, 1999).

Risk or Level of Concern?

An adjunctive concept to risk is that of "level of concern" (Scalora et al., 2002a). Concern differs from risk in two main ways. The concept of level of concern is particularly applicable to threat assessment in dynamic, operational conditions, because it is judged on what information is currently available, which may be quite incomplete. A risk judgement, by contrast, requires all relevant information to have been gathered. Secondly, concern levels can reflect circumstance. For instance, a man who is assessed as being at high risk of violence will become of low concern if intervention results in his incarceration in a high-security facility, even if his risk level remains the same. Concern levels, as with risk levels, are generally rated as high, moderate, or low. The proportion of high-concern individuals who will act if no intervention is taken is probably rather small. However, few who go on to act will not come from the high-concern group. This is of practical importance in two ways. First, if all those in the high-concern group are selected for intervention and risk-managed, then the outcome of concern can be prevented in the very few who would go on to commit it without the need to attempt the impossible task of predicting whom they are. Second, resources can be refocused on the high-risk group, and the majority of cases who will not be found in the high-concern group can be eliminated or subject to less intensive interventions. Concern levels are reviewed on a regular basis in operational circumstances, and can be used as a measure of change.

"Red Flag" Indicators

Not all risk factors have an equal value, and some may be accorded predominance. Some risk assessment instruments employ the term "red flag indicators" to designate risk factors which, if present, will singly determine that a case ranks as a high risk or concern until proven otherwise. For instance, the Stalking Risk Profile (MacKenzie, McEwan, Pathé, James, Ogloff, & Mullen, 2009), which is a structured professional judgment approach to assessing stalking risk, includes five such items in the assessment

of violence: suicidal ideation, homicidal ideation, last resort thinking, high-risk psychotic phenomena, and psychopathy. These are essentially psychological parameters which, although they may manifest in some observable behavioral change, do not necessarily do so. They are most suited to risk assessments where clinical examination of the subject of concern can be incorporated. In the Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk (WAVR-21;White & Meloy, 2007), another structured professional judgment instrument – and one that focuses on discerning a pathway to violence – the first five coded items would be considered red flag indicators or "the system blinking red"[2]: motives for violence; homicidal ideas, fantasies or preoccupations; violent intentions or expressed threats; weapons skill and access; and pre-attack planning and preparation.

Likely Severity and Probability of Outcome

Other concepts that need to be taken into account in assessing risk of violence are those of severity of outcome and probability. Severity of outcome, in other words "the stakes," does not predict whether or not the act will occur, but often influences the extent of the response given the predicted severity of the act. For example, information that a subject of concern both possesses and has the skill to use firearms may establish "the stakes" as severe injury or death. The probability of a terrorist incident, where high severity would equate with multiple fatalities, a major loss of faith in security services and damage to international reputation, often compels a rapid and comprehensive response that may be viewed as onerous by the public if the incident is successfully thwarted and minimized after the fact. Security assessments generally cross-reference severity against assessment of probability, which incorporates levels ranging from high or imminent, where there is definite intelligence of a group in the late stages of planning a specific attack, to low where there is no evidence of any group with the intent or capability to mount an attack.

Imminence

Imminence of the behavior of concern, although it is explicitly a prediction of the brevity of time between the assessment and the act, also infers an increasing probability of the act occurring within a specific time-frame. As such, it is a further variable which may influence both concern level and, within a given concern level, necessary speed of interventional response. High concern status may be accorded to a case involving risk of moderately harmful, but imminent behavior, and to a case involving non-imminent risk of the most serious harm. Imminence, as with many other components of risk, need not be static, and this points to the fact that level of risk or level of concern may change with time. Risk is a dynamic process and it is necessary to repeat the consideration of risk factors (the "threat assessment") in the light of new information, as each occasion that risk is considered constitutes simply a "snapshot" of a moving scene – a still frame from a movie.

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[2] This phrase was attributed to CIA Director George Tenet in the summer of 2001, prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It appeared to have been a statement of imminency by an individual privy to all the intelligence being gathered by various agencies at the time concerning a planned terrorist attack on the U.S. (Woodward, 2006).

Some risk assessment instruments try to adapt such snapshots to the changing picture by the use of scenarios or scenario planning (Hart, Kropp, Laws, Klaver, Logan, & Watt, 2003). This involves constructing likely narratives of how things might change for the better or worse. In other words, an attempt is made to project the risk factors into the future and look at ways in which they might evolve, if certain changes in the situation were to occur.

WARNING BEHAVIORS

Threat assessment can be supplemented by the use of an additional concept to add further perspective, specifically to patterns of change in risk over time. The present authors adopted the term "warning behaviors" specifically to indicate factors which constitute change, and which are evidence of increasing or accelerating risk. The warning behaviors model is not a classification of risk factors, but a useful means of conceptualizing behavioral patterns[3] indicating increasing threat. Warning behaviors constitute particularly toxic changes in patterns of behavior which require an operational response. Such patterns may contain individual and dynamic risk factors, but are not simply risk factors in themselves. All warning behaviors are subject to observational monitoring if intelligence gathering is sufficient.

The term warning behaviors is not new to the threat assessment literature; what is new is a clear definition and typology. Warning behaviors as indicators of increasing or accelerating risk of violence are defined and categorized in a typology which presents them in an organized and comprehensive manner and points to their individual significance.

Warning behaviors contain within them dynamic rather than static variables, the former making substantial, and often more accurate contributions to assessments of acute and short-term violence risk (Gray, Snowden, & MacCulloch, 2004; McNiel, Gregory, & Lam, 2003; Nicholls, Brink, Desmarais, Webster, & Martin, 2006; Skeem & Mulvey, 2001). Acute, fast-changing, or accelerating risk is typically the domain of threat assessors who are attempting to operationally manage very low-frequency, but intentional acts of violence directed toward a specific individual or target (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). Although threat assessment was developed as an idiographic approach to overcome this low-base-rate problem by emphasizing risk management rather than prediction, and the lack of applicability of more traditional nomothetic (in the purest sense, actuarial) models for predicting general violence among large groups of individuals (Borum et al., 1999), warning behaviors as single or multiple accelerating actions may be relevant to both idiographic and nomothetic approaches.

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[3] The use of the term "patterns" emphasizes the nonlinearity of risk assessment. For example, in another applied science such as oceanography, a linear approach would suggest that high winds make for high waves. The nonlinear approach indicates that intermittent winds will build resonance (transferred energy) within waves over time, leading to the risk of a huge rogue wave in the absence of a high wind (Casey, 2010). A corollary example from the threat assessment literature would be a paranoid individual predisposed to committing a mass murder due to the perceived humiliations by others over a course of years; and then one precipitating event, such as his job termination, leads him to actually commit a civilian massacre at his workplace (Hempel, Meloy, & Richards, 1999; Meloy et al., 2004a; Mullen, 2004).

PREVIOUS RESEARCH RELATED TO WARNING BEHAVIORS

In the following, elements are traced in previous research in different domains of targeted or intended violence which are subsumed within the warning behaviors concept as defined above and elaborated below.

Public Targets

Emerging research supports the belief that warning behaviors are important in problematic approaches toward public figures, and should be construed as much broader than a specific threat (Meloy et al., 2010; Scalora et al., 2002a, 2002b, 2003). Warning behaviors show an intensity of effort to further a particular quest, usually some highly personal cause, but they could include a fixation on a public individual. They often predict an approach (Meloy et al., 2010), but with some exceptions (Scalora et al., 2003). Intensity has been measured in frequency of contact, duration of contact, multiple means of contact, and multiple contacts with other public figures (target dispersion; Scalora et al., 2002a), and is also associated with the presence of serious mental disorder in the public figure approach research (James et al., 2009; Scalora et al., 2002b).

Warning behaviors are also present in the public figure attack research. In contemporary western European attacks upon politicians (James et al., 2007), 46% of the subjects evidenced warning behaviors before attacking,[4] and were more likely to have a mental disorder (phi = 0.77 effect size), to be psychotic at the time (0.65), and to show clear evidence of delusional beliefs (0.65) at the time of the attack. In the Exceptional Case Study Project (ECSP) conducted by the U.S. Secret Service (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999) – despite the very low frequency of directly communicated threats toward the target or law enforcement (7%) – the majority of the subjects had a history of verbal or written communication about the target (77%), one out of four communicated to the target (23%), and 63% had a history of indirect, conditional, or direct threats about the target. According to Dietz & Martell (2010, p. 344),

> every instance of an attack on a public figure by a lone stranger in the United States for which adequate information has been made publicly available has been the work of a mentally disordered person who issued one or more pre-attack signals in the form of inappropriate letters, visits or statements.

Specific warning behaviors may be another moderating variable between the public figure problematic approach and the attack research (Meloy, 2011); but there are, as yet, no empirical studies which have assessed the relationship between certain warning behaviors and subsequent intended violence. There are many case studies, however, which retrospectively identify certain warning behaviors after an attack as predictors of that attack, but such circular reasoning does not advance predictive science; it would

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[4] In the European study, warning behaviors included posters, newspaper advertisements, attempted lawsuits against the government, chaotic deluded letters to politicians and the police, threatening letters, leafleting the public, telling friends of the intent to attack, and, in one case, attempted self-immolation in front of the eventual victim's place of work.

be most useful to determine both the specificity (true negatives) and sensitivity (true positives) of certain warning behaviors in relation to a public figure attack, a task easier said than done. However, the first difficulty with warning behaviors is a lack of clarity in definition, which in turn hampers measurement.

Psychiatric Patients

Monahan and colleagues (2001) provided important data relevant to warning behaviors in their MacArthur study of a large sample ($N = 939$) of acute psychiatric patients discharged to the community who were subsequently violent toward others. Despite the fact that they focused upon general violence risk rather than targeted violence, within their main effects logistic regression model and iterative classification tree were several clinical risk factors that resonate with certain warning behaviors in the targeted violence literature: violent fantasies (single target focus), violent fantasies (escalating seriousness), violent fantasies (target present), threats at admission, and grandiose delusions.[5] Grandiosity in another study of public figure approachers, for example, was found to be the single best predictor of a problematic approach toward a member of the British Royal Family (James et al., 2010a), and in an earlier study, significantly differentiated those who approached US celebrities from those who did not (Dietz & Martell, 1989). All five of the MacArthur variables were assessed by clinicians through observation or structured clinical interview, but could be inferred through overt behavior in a more naturalistic environment and indirectly measured in a threat assessment context.

Adolescent Mass Murderers and School Shooters

Among adolescent mass murderers, warning behaviors in the form of leakage and directly communicated threats appear to be quite frequent. Meloy, Hempel, Mohandie, Shiva, & Gray (2001) found that 58% of their adolescent subjects ($N = 34$) made threatening statements concerning their mass murder beforehand, usually to third parties. However, the majority of adolescent mass murderers also threatened their targets. Examples of direct threats included, "Tomorrow you find out if you live or die." An example of leakage included the statement, "Wouldn't it be fun to kill all those jocks?" (Meloy et al., 2001, 2004a). This was very similar to other research on adolescents. O'Toole (2000) found among a sample of school shooters in her F.B.I. study that all subjects demonstrated some type of what the present authors term warning behavior before the shooting. The F.B.I. study included a wide range of both direct and indirect forecasting behaviors underpinned by different and/or multiple motivations. These included leakage, and ranged from subtle threats to innuendos to diary entries, doodling or videotapes. The recurring themes were violence, hopelessness, despair, hatred, isolation, loneliness, nihilism, or an "end of the world" philosophy. Another type of warning behavior in the F.B.I. study comprised attempts by the subject to persuade unwitting or knowledgeable family members, friends, or others to help with preparations for the violent act.

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[5] All five of these variables were significant $p < 0.05$, and three of these variables produced odds ratios > 1.8; however, some of these five variables, such as delusions, do not have an independent relationship with violence outside a logistic regression or iterative classification model, illustrating "the difficulty of identifying main effect or univariate predictors of violence" (Monahan et al., 2001, p. 90). Violent fantasies did have an independent relationship with violence risk, especially if the patients continued to report such thoughts.

The U.S. Secret Service (Vossekuil et al., 2000) used the term "signaling the attack" behaviors to designate what the present authors would term warning behaviors in their study of school shooters. In 81% of their cases ($n=37$) at least one person knew the shooter was thinking about or planning the incident, and in 59% of the cases, more than one person knew about the planning. In 93% of the cases, the attackers engaged in some pre-offense "disturbing" behavior that created concern in those around him. These behaviors ranged from actions directly related to the impending incident, such as accessing a firearm – what we call a "pathway" warning behavior (see below) – to writing a poem or essay containing homicidal and/or suicidal themes – what we call a "fixation" or "identification" warning behavior, depending on the details of the writing. There was subject overlap in the F.B.I. and U.S. Secret Service studies, and they should not be treated as independent samples. A similar pattern of warning behaviors was found in a small sample of seven German school shooters (Hoffmann, Roshdi, & Robertz, 2009). All of the incidents were planned at least days, but more often weeks, months or even years before the attack. Warning behaviors were present, such as suicidal ideation (57%), displaying a weapon or threatening another person with a weapon before the attack (86%), fascination with other school shooters or violent offenders (86%), and leaking their intent to other individuals, usually peers (100%).

Adult Mass Murderers

Among adult mass murderers, defined as subjects 18 years of age or older who killed at least three people in one incident, the majority appear to leak their intent to third parties before they attack – one type of warning behavior. Hempel and colleagues (1999) found that 67% of a sample of 30 mass murderers, a non-random sample of convenience, engaged in leakage. Half of these individuals made a specific threat verbally or in writing, which described the location, victims, or time of the killings. The other half made either a generalized threat (no location or victim pool identified) or a mixed threat (generalized threat combined with a specific threat). An example of a generalized threat would be "I'm going hunting" (the words of James Huberty, referenced in Hempel et al., 1999). An example of a specific threat would be a suicide note that described the massacre in detail. Again, the contrast with the low frequency of directly communicated threats in this study is notable: 20% of the non-psychotic mass murderers directly threatened their target beforehand, and none of the psychotic mass murderers, who also had the highest lethality rate, directly threatened their target beforehand.

Spousal Homicide Perpetrators

Some incidents of spousal homicide indicate a predatory mode of violence (planned, purposeful, emotionless), while most are affective (reactive, impulsive, intense emotional arousal) (Meloy, 2006). The concepts of targeted violence and warning behaviors will most likely apply to those with a history of predation toward their spouses. Research suggests a number of risk markers for spousal homicides (Campbell, 2004; Campbell et al., 2003; Campbell, Glass, Sharps, Laughon, & Bloom, 2007; Echeburua, Fernandez-Montalvo, de Corral, & Lopez-Goni, 2009). Warning behaviors (see later) among these risk factors from the Danger Assessment (Campbell, 2004)

would include an increase in severity or frequency of violence (item 1 on the Danger Assessment; energy burst warning behavior), ownership of a gun (item 2; identification), direct threat with a weapon (item 5; directly communicated threat), direct threat to kill (item 6; directly communicated threat), forced sex (item 9; novel aggression), choking (item 10; novel aggression), control of daily activities (item 13; fixation), jealousy (item 14; fixation), beating while pregnant (item 15; novel aggression), threatening or attempting suicide (item 16; last resort), threats to harm children (item 17; directly communicated threat), and stalking (item 19; pathway). For spousal homicides, threat assessment and the utilization of warning behaviors described in the Danger Assessment (Campbell, 2004) would be most applicable to the generally violent/antisocial and dysphoric/borderline types of batterers (Dixon, Hamilton-Giachritsis, & Browne, 2008). The overcontrolled/catathymic spouse killer is different in his pattern of warning behaviors, and focused research on this is needed.

Workplace Violence Attackers

Although the prevention of workplace violence is a common field of practical threat assessment, surprisingly little systematic research has been done on warning behaviors preceding acts of targeted or intended violence in a workplace setting. Southerland, Collins and Scarborough (1997) analyzed media reports from the USA where employees, former employees, or spouses conducted lethal workplace attacks. They found that 27% of the offenders ($N = 282$) had previously threatened violence in the workplace. A research report regarding 15 workplace homicides by current or former U.S. Postal employees (The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 2000) found that 14 of 15 offenders had troubled histories, including substance abuse, past violence, mental health problems, and/or criminal histories, and three perpetrators had been terminated for threatening behavior at the workplace before the attack occurred – although there was no control group in this study. Only the latter factor would be considered a warning behavior, although the others would be considered status predictors of general violence risk. In a German study based on court and police files, Hoffmann and Dölitzsch (2006) detected a variety of warning behaviors in a group of 20 lethal or near-lethal workplace attacks. Crimes committed by strangers were excluded from the sample. Most of the perpetrators (90%) planned and prepared their attack beforehand, such as illegally obtaining a gun (30%), constructing explosives (10%), or starting surveillance of the residence of the targeted victim (10%) – all pathway warning behaviors. Seven offenders displayed final-act behaviors (35%), such as ensuring the financial well-being of their families or sending farewell letters to friends – an aspect of last resort or energy burst warning behavior. Final acts can also occur when people plan to commit suicide (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). A majority of the workplace violence offenders (60%) either directly threatened the victim or communicated to third parties their violent intent – what the present authors term directly communicated threat and leakage warning behaviors.

Federal Judicial Threateners and Attackers

Calhoun (1998) studied 3,096 inappropriate communications to federal judicial officials in the U.S. between 1980 and 1993. No subsequent violence occurred in 90% of the cases where there was a threatening or inappropriate communication to a judge.

In 3.9% of the cases violence resulted, and in another 4.1% the threat was enhanced with efforts to carry it out, but no violence resulted. Suspicious activity as a form of threat – such as presence in or around the courthouse at odd hours – was 40 times more likely to result in violence than threatening or inappropriate communications through writing, telephoning, verbalization, or a third party informant.

A TYPOLOGY OF WARNING BEHAVIORS

The typology delineates factors that are indicative of increasing or accelerating risk of targeted violence. It was constructed by identifying and contemplating patterns of data and theoretical formulations across the entire writing and research on targeted and intended violence, discussions with colleagues who do threat assessment, and the casework experience of the authors over the past several decades. It is a rationally derived typology that will need to be empirically tested. The proposed eight warning behaviors for threat assessors are as follows:

1. *Pathway warning behavior* – any behavior that is part of research, planning, preparation, or implementation of an attack (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999).
2. *Fixation warning behavior* – any behavior that indicates an increasingly pathological preoccupation with a person or a cause (Mullen et al., 2009). It is measured by: (a) increasing perseveration on the person or cause; (b) increasingly strident opinion; (c) increasingly negative characterization of the object of fixation; (d) impact on the family or other associates of the object of fixation, if present and aware; (e) angry emotional undertone. It is typically accompanied by social or occupational deterioration.
3. *Identification warning behavior* – any behavior that indicates a psychological desire to be a "pseudo-commando" (Dietz, 1986; Knoll, 2010), have a "warrior mentality," (Hempel et al., 1999), closely associate with weapons or other military or law enforcement paraphernalia, identify with previous attackers or assassins, or identify oneself as an agent to advance a particular cause or belief system.
4. *Novel aggression warning behavior* – an act of violence which appears unrelated to any targeted violence pathway warning behavior which is committed for the first time. Such behaviors may be utilized to test the ability (de Becker, 1997) of the subject to actually do a violent act, and may be a measure of response tendency, the motivation to act on the environment (Hull, 1952), or a behavioral *tryout* (MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood, & Mills, 1983). When homicide occurs within this warning behavior, it may be "proof of kill" (G. Deisinger, personal communication, February, 2011).
5. *Energy burst warning behavior* – an increase in the frequency or variety of any noted activities related to the target, even if the activities themselves are relatively innocuous, usually in the days or weeks before the attack (Odgers et al., 2009).
6. *Leakage warning behavior* – the communication to a third party of an intent to do harm to a target through an attack (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011).
7. *Last resort warning behavior* – evidence of a violent "action imperative" (Mohandie & Duffy, 1999), increasing desperation or distress through declaration in word or deed, forcing the individual into a position of last resort. There is no alternative other than violence, and the consequences are justified (de Becker, 1997). The subject feels trapped (S. White, personal communication, October, 2010).

8. *Directly communicated threat warning behavior* – the communication of a direct threat to the target or law enforcement beforehand. A threat is a written or oral communication that implicitly or explicitly states a wish or intent to damage, injure, or kill the target, or individuals symbolically or actually associated with the target.

These eight types of warning behaviors are not conceptually equivalent (L. Preston, personal communication, March, 2010), in that fixation and identification both describe psychological constructs inferred through behavior, similar to what Nock and colleagues (2010) referred to as "implicit cognitions," while novel aggression and energy burst describe overt behaviors without any inference as to motivation. Moreover, there is some potential overlap among types, such as pathway behavior and energy burst behavior. Nevertheless, this typology has face validity, embraces within its categories most of the universe of warning behaviors in intended and targeted violence, and may provide a useful beginning structure for further operational thinking and research.

CASE EXAMPLES

The typology is a synthetic theoretical formulation, constructed through the consideration of empirical case studies and group studies with substantial sample sizes of those who completed an act of targeted violence (Calhoun, 1998; Dietz & Martell, 1989; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999; Hoffmann, Meloy, Guldimann, & Ermer, 2011; James et al., 2007, 2008; Meloy, 2011; Meloy et al., 2004a, 2004b). The following cases are selected on the basis of their illustrative nature, and are intentionally taken from different domains of targeted violence to underscore that the various types of warning behaviors are relevant to each such domain. All cases are retrospective in nature with the corollary risks of hindsight bias, confirmatory bias, and over-determination of the importance of warning behaviors.

Pathway Warning Behavior

On September 6, 1901, U.S. President William McKinley attended the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. Leon Czolgosz, an avowed anarchist and follower of Emma Goldman, was in Chicago on August 29, and traveled to Buffalo by train. He intended to shoot the President but had not yet devised a plan. Once in Buffalo, he rented a room at a local bar and hotel owned by a Polish American. He stated that he went to the Exposition a couple of times a day. It was not until September 3, however, that he firmly decided to make the attempt on the President. It was on this day that he purchased a .32 caliber revolver and ammunition. That evening, Czolgosz went to the Exposition grounds near the railroad gate where McKinley was due to arrive that day. McKinley exited the train and entered the grounds, but Czolgosz stated that he was afraid to attempt that day due to the number of bodyguards, and he feared that he would be discovered and fail. He then returned to the Exposition on September 4 and was able to stand near McKinley during a Presidential speech. He again decided not to make the attempt because the crowd was large and he was being frequently jostled, which could have thrown off his aim. Czolgosz waited until Thursday, September 5, but could not get close enough for a clear shot. So he returned on the morning of September 6 to the Exposition grounds. "Emma Goldman's speech was still burning me up. I waited near the central entrance for the President, who was to board his special train

from that gate... I stayed on the grounds all day waiting" (*Buffalo Evening News*, September 7, 1901, p. 9). Czolgosz then conceived the idea of wrapping his handkerchief around his revolver in his hand so that he could bring the weapon to bear quickly. He went to the Temple of Music, where a final reception for McKinley was to be held before his departure. Czolgosz stood in line and waited his turn. "I got in line and trembled and trembled, until I got right up to him, and then I shot him twice through my white handkerchief. I would have fired more, but I was stunned by a blow in the face, a frightful blow that knocked me down" (*Buffalo Evening News*, September 7, 1901, p. 9). U.S. Secret Service Agents immediately jumped on him, but McKinley had been wounded in the chest and abdomen. The President died 8 days later (Biesterfeld & Meloy, 2008; MacDonald, 1902; McClure & Morris, 2004).

This case illustrates the dynamic movement along a pathway to violence and the final markers – planning, preparation, and implementation of an attack – along such a pathway (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999).

Fixation Warning Behavior

Stephen Wynn was concerned and frightened in the spring of 2001, more than he had ever been since his adolescent daughter was kidnapped over a decade ago – and subsequently recovered after payment of a $1.45 million ransom. Wynn was a multi-billionaire, a corporate executive and celebrity figure, who had almost singlehandedly rebuilt Las Vegas into a thriving world-class entertainment empire. But over the past year, a man who called himself Don Vici, a.k.a. Donald Eugene Phillips, was sending him dozens of letters, stating that Wynn was his half-brother and demanding payment of $50 million dollars. Phillips was on the move, had been in Las Vegas early in his pursuit, and now was somewhere on the U.S. west coast. The letters were increasingly angry and devaluing, and the most frightening events had just occurred. Someone delivered flowers to his home for his wife, Elaine, and they appeared to be from Phillips. And on March 31, 2001, Wynn's security received multiple telephone calls on their answering service, among them: "I just lost my ass tonight and I'm sick and I'm dying, and I ain't gonna fucking die alone." And then, "I'm gonna kill him with me."

His security had not contacted the local police, but subsequent to this homicidal threat, both the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the F.B.I. were brought into the case. Phillips was subsequently arrested in Florida, extradited to Nevada, and tried for aggravated stalking. He pled legal insanity. On evaluation, he was found to be a habitual con man with some violence in his history (PCL-R=35), psychiatrically impaired (bipolar disorder), and medically in trouble (HIV and hepatitis A and B positive). Phillips was judged to be legally sane and an imposter (Deutsch, 1953) – a man who consciously pretends to be someone he is not to manipulate others – by the jury, and since this was a third strike felony, was eventually sentenced to life in prison (Meloy & Mohandie, 2008). His primary motive appeared to be monetary gain, but emotionally driven by his envy of Stephen Wynn. He had written in one of his letters, "While I sit here and watch the Country Music Awards in my little fucking dump, I think of your rich fucking ass sitting there in your fucking palace and I envy the hell out of your blood. You just don't know man" (J.R.M.'s case files in *State v. Donald Eugene Phillips*; Meloy & Mohandie, 2008).

This case illustrates fixation warning behavior through an increasingly pathological preoccupation with Wynn (frequency and duration of communications), the increasingly angry and devaluing tone, and the incessant demands for money.

Identification Warning Behavior

Timothy McVeigh bombed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. He killed 168 people by detonating a 4,000-pound fertilizer bomb which he and Terry Nichols had constructed inside a Ryder truck the day before. The widely understood motivation for this bombing was McVeigh's fury toward the burning of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, exactly two years before. McVeigh attributed this conflagration to the intentional acts of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the F.B.I. (Michel & Herbeck, 2001).

His motivation, however, ran much deeper. Once he had failed the selection process for the U.S. Army Special Forces, and subsequently left military service, McVeigh became socially adrift and gravitated toward the Patriot Movement, a right wing anti-government, anti-Semitic assemblage of true believers who saw a conspiracy of the Zionist Operated Government (ZOG) at every turn. McVeigh had become a soldier without an army, developed a quite rigid and disciplined "warrior mentality" while in the military which was consonant with his own personality structure, and continued to collect military paraphernalia, including weapons, as well as peddling such materials at gun shows throughout the midwest and southwest U.S. He harbored a fantasy of wanting to be the "ultimate warrior," articulated in his written communications to his sister Jennifer; but most relevant, and as his fantasy coalesced into a bombing conspiracy, he believed he would be the first hero of the second American Revolution, a war that would be ushered in by his planned bombing. The date selected would not only coincide with Waco, but also the battle of Lexington-Concord, MA, on April 19, 1775, when the first shots of the American Revolution were exchanged between farmers and the British military. Evidence supporting this identification warning behavior came in five forms: (a) during the bombing he wore a T-shirt inscribed with the words of Thomas Jefferson: "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants;" (b) he had within his yellow Mercury Marquis a large assortment of Patriot Movement literature referring to this important event; (c) he communicated his desire to be the "first hero" to his sister in writing; (d) he carried with him in his pocket a commemorative coin for the Battle of Lexington-Concord, inscribed with the words of the American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The shot heard round the world;" and (e) he readily identified with the hero of William Pierce's book, *The Turner Diaries*, which also provided a template for his act of terrorism (Meloy, 2004; J.R.M.'s case files in *U.S. v. Timothy James McVeigh*). None of these behaviors advanced the preparation for the bombing, but they all contributed to his motivation for the bombing, which was a violent and grandiose narcissistic identification as an American war hero.

Novel Aggression Warning Behavior

On November 20, 2006, former student Bastian B. entered the junior high school in Emsdetten in the western part of Germany. The 18-year-old was wearing a black trench coat and was armed with pipe bombs and muzzle-loading rifles. He immediately

started shooting at teachers, students, and the janitor, injuring five of them. Police arrived shortly after the beginning of the shooting and entered the building. Feeling trapped, Bastian B. then committed suicide with one of his guns. Due to police intervention he was not able to detonate his explosives.

Bastian B. had identified himself with the U.S. school shooters in the 1999 Columbine attack, and had dreamt of committing a mass murder with a higher number of casualties than his role models (identification warning behavior). Two and a half years before the attack he had communicated in an internet forum that he was desperate and thought about starting a massacre (leakage warning behavior). Bastian B. was well known for his fascination with weapons and the military (identification warning behavior). In 2005 he proudly established a local Airsoft association with 20 members, calling themselves TASTE (Tactical Air Soft Team Emsdetten). They started training in the woods using replica firearms and wearing military clothes (pathway or identification warning behavior). Due to internal conflicts, TASTE disbanded in July, 2006. In the same month Bastian B. threatened two men with a tear-gas pistol at a local festivity (novel aggression warning behavior). Police were called and confiscated the weapon. He said to the policemen he had done this in order to settle a dispute. Never before had Bastian B. acted so aggressively in public. In October 2006 he obtained through the internet the guns he later used for the school shooting. A day before the attack, Bastian B. produced a video of himself. He bragged how he had frightened the two men and the police with the tear-gas pistol at the festival (J.H.'s case files).

This case illustrates a number of warning behaviors, but is utilized as an example of novel aggression warning behavior, an act of aggression committed for the first time that is unrelated to the eventual targeted violence. It may be a test of the subject's ability to be violent.

Energy Burst Warning Behavior

On January 8, 2011, Jared Loughner attempted to assassinate U.S. Congresswoman Gabriele Giffords, wounded 12 others, and killed Chief District Federal Judge John Roll and five others in a shopping mall outside Tucson, Arizona. The evening before, Loughner dropped off a 35mm roll of film at a Walgreen's drugstore to be developed, and then checked into Motel 6 shortly after midnight. At 0219 he picked up the photos and made another purchase at Walgreen's. He then left a telephone message with a friend. At 0412 he posted to his MySpace page a photo of a Glock 19 and the words, "Goodbye friends. . . ." He also conducted web searches intermittently through the night on "assassins" and "lethal injection." Just after 0600, he visited a Walmart and a Circle K store. He left the first Walmart where he did not complete a purchase because the clerk was concerned about his behavior, went to a second, and purchased 9mm full metal jacket ammunition and a black diaper bag at 0727. Shortly thereafter he was stopped by an officer for running a red light. He went home where his father confronted him about the contents of the bag, and Loughner ran away from him. He returned to the Circle K where a cab picked him up and took him to a Safeway supermarket where he insisted on obtaining change so he did not overtip the driver. Sixteen minutes later he began his rampage at 1010.

The other photos Loughner had picked up contained images of him in a red G string holding the Glock next to his crotch, and then next to his buttocks while looking

in a mirror. He came to the mass murder with a 31-round, fully loaded magazine, two 15 round magazines in his pocket, and a buck knife, with his money, driver's license, and credit card in a plastic bag (Lacey, Becker, & Dolnick, 2011).

This case illustrates energy burst warning behavior in a period of 12 hours before the mass murder in that behavioral activity significantly and noticeably increased in relationship to the intended violence. Pathway (preparation and implementation of targeted violence) and identification (researching other assassins) warning behaviors are also evident1

Leakage Warning Behavior

A number of examples of leakage can be found in Meloy & O'Toole (2011). The following is an unusual case of leakage involving the internet.

On April 20, 2010, the website "Revolution Muslim" posted the following internet statement directed toward Trey Parker and Matt Stone, the co-creators of the cartoon series, *South Park*: "We have to warn Matt and Trey that what they are doing is stupid and they will probably wind up like Theo van Gogh for airing this show. This is not a threat, but a warning of the reality that will likely happen to them." The statement was in response to their portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad in a bear suit, along with cartoon characters of Jesus, Buddha, and Moses in several episodes of the program a week earlier. Although not a direct threat, and carefully written as a "warning" to the co-creators that they would likely be killed by others for their sacrilege, the import of the statement was accentuated by photos of Theo Van Gogh's corpse in an Amsterdam street on November 2, 2004 following his assassination by Mohammed Bouyeri, a member of the Islamist Hofstad Group, which was planning and preparing to target members of the Dutch Parliament as well as Schiphol Airport and a nuclear reactor. The home and work addresses of the co-creators were also listed on the website, along with a sermon by a wanted Yemeni cleric outlining the punishments for blasphemy against the Muslim religion. The leakage to a third party, in this case, the entire internet, of intent to do harm to the writers, received an extraordinary publicity boost when it was widely covered by CNN on all their platforms that same evening, which focused upon the fear-driven stifling of free speech protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (J.R.M.'s case files; cnn.com, April 20, 2010; Buruma, 2006).

This case illustrates leakage warning behavior in that a threat explicitly directed at the targets was not conveyed, but done under the guise of a general warning of intent that many other third parties could see on the internet.

Last Resort Warning Behavior

Friedrich Leibacher was wearing a dark blue jacket bearing the word "police" when he approached the parliament in Zug, Switzerland, on September 27, 2001 at 1030. Bystanders later claimed that, as he entered the building, he declared that it was a "police operation" and stated: "I'll show them". He was carrying a rifle, a shotgun, a pistol (all legally obtained, one of them nine days before the attack) and a plastic canister with propellant. Within two minutes and 34 seconds, he killed 14 people and injured 15 others. He killed himself at approximately 1034 at the desk of the president of the parliament (Nyffeler & Schwyter, 2003). Towards the end of the attack he revealed his

identity and shouted: "...now, we deal with 'the complaint Leibacher'" (Weilbach, 2009, p. 164).

Friedrich Leibacher was involved in a three-year-long argument with public authorities after he threatened a bus driver with a gun in a bar on October 17, 1998 in a private argument, and later also accused him of driving under the influence. The bus driver and the Zug transport services sued Leibacher for his actions and claims. Complaints directed at various public authorities and politicians followed, indicating that Leibacher thought of himself as a "victim of the Zug mafia." During his "struggle," he had to endure numerous rejections (e.g., refusal of compensation) and a lack of response to his demands and his complaints, which resulted in his adopting a more aggressive style of writing. He also informed organizations such as Amnesty International and the European Court of Human Rights about the "torture" he was obliged to endure and begged for help from outside Switzerland. He claimed that the legal struggle had left him vulnerable to heart and stomach ailments, which he described in a letter to Amnesty International (Weilbach, 2009).

It is believed by the authorities that he was sitting in the audience when Zug politicians, unanimously and without discussion, rejected his complaint against them and others in May, 2001. He virtually ceased to write new letters to them after this latest rejection and began to focus his attention on gaining "justice" and recognition through means other than the legal system. In the end, he did not even bother to open the notification of the court's verdicts sent to him a few days before the attack. In a letter to his daughter's school director written on the evening before the attack, curiously in stilted English, he stated: "I am persecuted by the Swiss government for some critics... If these things are driving out of control, it is because I am completely tired to fight against that supremacy. I am forced to do the same as they do" (Weilbach, 2009, pp. 162–163).

While he had made some preparations for an escape (e.g., a rented motor scooter), the overall evidence suggests that he did not believe that he would survive. He sold his home in March, 2001, closed his bank accounts, and sold his stocks in August and September, 2001. In addition, he made a will on August 21, 2001, and 2 days before the attack, he telephoned a funeral director and arranged his cremation in the case of his death: "My ashes are to be scattered over the Atlantic Ocean" (Nyffeler & Schwyter, 2003, p.11). On the day before the attack, he sent a farewell letter to his mother who did not read it until two days after the attack. On the day of the attack, he sent his lawyer the key to a locker, in which the police later found nine folders containing material relevant to his case. During the attack, he was carrying a statement on a cord around his neck to the effect that he declined any form of medical attention. The police found a declaration entitled "Day of Rage" in his car outside the parliament, in which he explained the reasons for his actions and which he had begun writing ten days earlier (Nyffeler & Schwyter, 2003).

This case illustrates last resort warning behavior, in that his "final acts" (Calhoun & Weston, 2003) indicate that violence is justified, there is no other alternative, and he believes he is trapped.

Direct Threat Warning Behavior

A suicide bomber died and two others were injured when two explosions hit the city center of Stockholm, Sweden, on December 11, 2010. A car was detonated on the

shopping street of Drottninggatan at 1700, and a few minutes later, a man blew himself up with a pipe bomb approximately 200 meters from the demolished car.

The Swedish news agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå (TT) and the Swedish Security Police received an e-mail moments before the bombings which contained recorded audio messages in Swedish, English, and Arabic: "Now, your children – daughters and sisters – will die like our brothers and sisters and children are dying... our actions will speak for themselves. As long as you do not end your war against Islam and the insult against the prophet and your stupid support for that pig Vilks." This latter comment was in reference to general Swedish acceptance of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad drawn by the artist Lars Vilks in 2007. The message also demanded that Muslims in Sweden "Stop sucking up and degrading yourselves," and was a call to arms: "All mujahedeen... now it's time to attack. Do not wait any longer. Come forth with whatever you have, even if it is a knife, and I know that you can bring more than knives. Fear no one. Do not be afraid of jail. Do not fear death" (Anderson & Burns, 2010).

Curiously, he also apologized to his wife and children: "I love you all. Please forgive me if I lied to you. It wasn't very easy to live the last four years with the secret of being mujahid, or as you call it terrorist. Please do know one thing, you and the children are the best of what happened to me in this life."

The following day, an al Qaeda affiliated group, The Islamic State of Iraq, praised the "martyrdom operation" of the suicide bomber, Taimour al-Abdaly, called for the blessing of Allah, but did not claim responsibility for the attack. Al-Abdaly was a 28-year-old Iraqi Sunni who emigrated to Sweden at the age of 10 and spent some of the previous decade living in Britain and attending university (Burns & Somaiya, 2010).

This case illustrates directly communicated threat warning behavior, in that there is clear evidence that audio recordings in multiple languages were sent to media outlets just before the bombings to warn the intended victims of the attack, and the reasons for the violence.

WHY WARNING BEHAVIORS?

One warning behavior may detect ominous change in a subject of concern and indicate a need for risk management intervention, rather than relying on the accumulation of separate risk factors to attempt to predict intended violence. Warning behaviors appear to be both evidence of psychological preoccupation and movement toward achieving resolution through impending action. They may contain elements of *modus operandi* and also psychologically gratify through ritual or symbolism. For example, pathway warning behaviors would, in most cases, be driven by tactical necessity or creativity; while identification warning behaviors would likely enhance the narcissism of the subject through his attempts to be like those he admires (commandos, warriors, martyrs, previous assassins, etc.). In the psychoanalytic literature, these are called idealizing or twinship identifications and refer to the wish to worship someone else (idealizing) or be like someone else (twinship) (Kohut, 1971).

Warning behaviors may be motivated by fantasies which are conscious, somewhat unconscious, or completely outside the awareness of the subject of concern. For example, McVeigh's identification as a soldier of the Patriot Movement was fully conscious and articulated in his writings to his sister. On the other hand, energy burst behavior may be evident to the subject of concern, but it may be outside his awareness

that it has anything to do with the imminence of his targeted violence. Warning behaviors typically contain a variety of emotions, such as anger, fear, anxiety, exhilaration, excitement, or anticipation; but such emotions are quite dynamic and may change rapidly over time due to a variety of internal and external factors, ranging from the underlying neurobiology of the subject and his corresponding psychological dynamics, to his current situation, his perceived relationship to his target, and the target's behavior. None of the warning behaviors, however, are diagnostic of any particular mental disorder or personality disorder, although they may contribute to understanding both mental state and intention.

TARGET SELECTION

Warning behaviors can be detected and acted upon even when there is no definite knowledge of whom the target might be. In the case examples given above, McVeigh attacked a building which was representative of government, against whom his main grievance lay. Leibacher's anger was with local government, but also toward some of the specific individuals he intended to shoot. Taimour al-Abdaly was attempting mass indiscriminate killing, and by definition therefore had no specific target. There are also cases where the eventual target was intended but opportunistic (Calhoun & Weston, 2003), such as in the German cases of the attacks on Lafontaine and Schaeuble (James et al., 2007; Hoffmann et al., 2011); the intent in both cases was to bring attention to a grievance by attacking a prominent politician.

There are also cases where the recipient of a warning behavior may be a third party and a public figure. In the following example of last resort warning behavior (Cullen, 1996), the grievance was against an impersonal body, a local council, but the target was school children, and a message of last resort was sent, not to the council, but to the British Queen as the ultimate legal authority and head of state. In addition, the target was a third party which was a symbol of the real target of the grievance, or one that would cause major distress to the desired, but unavailable, target:

Thomas Hamilton was 44 at the time of his death. In 1974, the Scout movement had withdrawn his warrant as a scout leader, beginning a festering sense of grievance over the next 20 years, during which he ran a series of boys' clubs. The way he ran the clubs led to accusations of improper behavior on his part and resulted in his coming into contention with a number of local authorities which owned the school premises where his clubs met. His summer camps in 1988 and 1991 and a residential sports training course in 1992 were investigated by police, but no charges resulted. Hamilton countered these events by a campaign of complaints against the local authority and the police. He wrote letters of self-justification to parents and tried to enlist the help of his MP (Member of Parliament, a political representative in the U.K.). He became fixated on his grievance and made persistent complaints over a number of years. In February 1996, he wrote to Queen Elizabeth for help in restoring his dignity and stated that he was doing so as a "last resort." No action was taken upon receipt of the letter. From the report of the subsequent official inquiry, it is clear that ideas as to what he would do if all failed were already coalescing in Hamilton's mind. Three weeks later, he walked into the gymnasium of a local primary school and killed 15 children and their teacher. Another child was killed in subsequent firing before Hamilton turned the gun upon himself. He had been carrying two pistols and two revolvers and 743 rounds of

ammunition, of which he fired 109. He had a license for the weapons he owned. Following the massacre, the law was changed to ban the possession of hand guns by private individuals in the U.K.; the British Olympic pistol shooting team is now obliged to leave the British mainland in order to practice.

A secondary point is that public figures may receive material comprising a warning behavior in cases which have nothing to do with them. For instance, a man wrote to the British Queen from one of her dominions with the request that she grant him a license to kill children. This was taken as a form of leakage warning behavior, and the Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (Boyce, 2011; James, Kerrigan, Forfar, Farnham, & Preston, 2010b) arranged for the man urgently to be assessed by psychiatric services in his home town. He was found to be suffering from the delusion that the 12-year-old next door was being serially sexually abused by strangers and he had decided that the best way to help her would be to kill her. This example illustrates that those assessing a threat to an individual or institution need to be mindful that there will also be a need to act when a warning behavior indicates a threat to a member of the general public, rather than a public figure. It also emphasizes the point that, in cases of public figure harassment and stalking where the perpetrator is psychotic, those at greatest risk of violence are not the presumed target, but members of the perpetrator's family, those in his social or occupational circle, or members of the general public (Dietz & Martell, 1989; James et al., 2010b). This contrasts with the research concerning violence among ex-intimate stalkers, most of whom are not mentally ill, where the identified target is most at risk (Meloy, 1998, 2002; Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan & Williams, 2006).

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF WARNING BEHAVIORS IN THREAT ASSESSMENT

Threat assessment involves the assessment of levels of concern on a subject who has been flagged by some aspect of their behavior, and is based upon what (often limited) evidence is available at the time. Examples of agencies which operate in this manner in the field of public figures are the U.S. Capitol Police Threat Assessment Section (Scalora et al., 2002a; Schoeneman et al., 2011), the Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC; James et al., 2010a, 2010b) in London and the U.S. Secret Service (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999; Phillips, 2008). Warning behaviors in this context are intended to be used as indications of a recent or current significant increase in risk which requires a response. For example, the FTAC will place someone in the category of high concern, until or unless proof to the contrary can be established, if a warning behavior or a red flag is present; the U.S. Secret Service, on the other hand, investigates all cases that come to their attention. Warning behaviors are especially useful in the monitoring of risk in known cases, but they are equally relevant in cases being assessed *de novo*.

Warning behaviors can only constitute warnings if the behaviors are detected, and implicit in the description of these behaviors is the need for adequate intelligence gathering. This could range from the establishment of trust in a school or campus setting between students and their teachers so that behaviors of concern are talked about and investigated by a threat assessment team (Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill, & Savage, 2008; Mohandie, 2000), to formal intelligence-gathering efforts at a local, state, or national level that often involve both technological and human assets. Without such intelligence-gathering

efforts, however, threat assessment will not work; even when such efforts occur, there is always the risk of a "silo effect" – different domains of behavior are never linked together or synthesized to develop a comprehensive picture of the subject of concern, conduct further investigation, identify other warning behaviors, and actively risk-manage the case. The collection of such data is all the more difficult in a naturalistic environment where the subject of concern is often freely moving within his community, region, state, nationally, or globally; hence the need for a high degree of cooperation between law enforcement, intelligence, and security personnel across jurisdictions and interests. National security and state secrecy further complicate the data gathering and sharing. Such issues are beyond the scope of this article, but clarity of communication and preciseness of terminology are a step forward.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This typology is offered to aid in the development of threat assessment by separating and defining the patterns of accelerating or increasing risk in cases where concern for intended violence is being investigated. Its purpose is to contribute to the advancement of threat assessment from unstructured to structured professional judgment, a more reliable and valid method of assessment in violence risk research (Monahan, 2008).[6] The authors offer it to help structure professional judgment among threat assessors, and as a complement to other risk assessment instruments which address both dynamic factors and change over time. Much further research needs to be done; for example, whether such warning behaviors can be reliably identified, coded, and utilized in a valid manner (Skeem & Monahan, 2011). There is no predictive validity yet established for this typology, and any weighting of these warning behaviors would be dependent upon such research. Without prospective empirical data, a typology such as this should not be utilized to modify any legal standards of imminency of risk or involuntary civil commitment. One recent study (Hoffmann et al., 2011), however, applied this warning behavior typology (without last resort warning behavior) to the small universe of non-terrorist public figure attackers in Germany during the latter half of the 20th century ($N = 14$), and every warning behavior was evident, the most frequent being pathway and fixation, the least frequent being direct threat. This was the first empirical application of the warning behaviors typology as a test of its ecological validity, but was retrospective by design. Research needs to continue to see if this theoretical typology has broad empirical value and organizes data in threat assessment cases in a pragmatic and helpful manner.

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[6] Unstructured professional judgment relies on the notion of *ipsi dixit*, literally "He himself said it," and is colloquially understood to mean the assessor knows it is true because he is the assessor and he knows best. This is a method of prediction that has been shown to have poor reliability and validity (Ennis & Litwack, 1974; Faust, 1986; Grove & Meehl, 1996; Hanson, Morton, & Harris, 2003; Lidz, Mulvey, & Gardner, 1993). Structured professional judgment has gained a foothold in the traditional violence risk approaches which are dependent on base rates and more historical factors.

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Attacks on German Public Figures, 1968–2004: Warning Behaviors, Potentially Lethal and Non-lethal Acts, Psychiatric Status, and Motivations

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Fourteen non-terrorist attackers of public figures in Germany between 1968 and 2004 were intensively studied, with a particular focus on warning behaviors, attack behaviors, and the relationship between psychiatric diagnosis, symptoms, and motivations for the assault. A large proportion of the attackers were severely mentally ill, and most likely to be in the potentially lethal rather than the non-lethal group. A new typology of seven warning behaviors was applied to the data, and all were present, most frequently fixation and pathway warning behavior, and least frequently a direct threat. Psychiatric diagnosis could be closely linked to motivation when analyzed at the level of symptom and content of thought, often delusional. Most of the attacks were directed at political figures, and the majority occurred after 1995. Copyright © 2011 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

Although scholarly research on attacks and assassinations of public figures began over a century ago (MacDonald, 1911), the yield until recently has largely been limited to case studies (Clarke, 1982; Jones, 1992; Kaiser, 1970; Rosenberg, 1968). Fein and Vossekuil were the first to systematically study assassins and attackers of US public figures in their descriptive studies (Fein, Vossekuil & Holden, 1995; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999), and Calhoun (1998) introduced data on threats and violence toward the US judiciary during this same time period. The last decade has been marked by increasingly systematic attention to public figure attacks, whether they be royalty (James et al., 2009), European political figures (James et al., 2007), non-political US celebrity figures (Schlesinger & Mesa, 2008), or attempts to integrate these findings and relate them to the broader stalking and problematic approach literature (Meloy, 2011; Meloy et al., 2004; Meloy, Sheridan & Hoffmann, 2008). Incisive case studies also continue (Bugliosi, 2007; Sides, 2010; Unsgaard & Meloy, 2011).

The framework for these analyses has been *targeted violence threat assessment*, with a provenance in the work of Dietz and Martell (1989), defined and operationalized by

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Fein et al. (1995), and subsequently elaborated upon by Borum, Fein, Vossekuil, and Berglund (1999) and Calhoun and Weston (2003). This method of assessing and risk-managing threats toward an identified target has not been limited to public figures, but accounts for the planned, dynamic, and low base rate nature of the violence in these cases. The threat assessment method is idiographic and fact-based, and contrasts with the more nomothetic, static, and probabilistic methods of assessing general violence risk (Otto & Douglas, 2009). The purpose of threat assessment is both to assess and to risk-manage an identified subject of concern.

What has heretofore been lacking is a careful study of the proximal elements of targeted violence in a group of public figure attackers or assassins: namely, the warning behaviors that precede such attacks; behaviors and inferred psychological states of the attackers at the time of their violence; and the association, if any, between the psychiatric status of the attacker and his or her specific motivation to attack. Additional distal information, such as demographic characteristics and attachment pathology (Meloy, 1992) of the attackers, may also produce useful hypotheses for explaining a predisposition to targeted violence among such individuals.

The purpose of this research is to focus upon virtually all non-terrorist German attackers of public figures between 1968 and 2004 ($N = 14$), and systematically study these proximal elements in detail. This work should theoretically advance understanding of targeted violence, and empirically test the applicability of some new targeted violence constructs. Lethal intent is also compared with non-lethal intent attacks to discern similarities and differences.

METHODS

Sample

Online newspaper archives, internet search engines, and German criminological literature first identified incidents of attacks on public figures in Germany. The starting point selected for the research was 1949, when the Federal German Republic and the German Democratic Republic were founded.

The primary search criteria for this study were attacks on public figures in Germany committed by a lone offender. The attacks could be with lethal or non-lethal intent. Incidents which occurred during collective political protest action were excluded, for example, when protesters threw eggs at former German chancellor Helmut Kohl in 1991.

Excluded were all cases, whether perpetrated by an individual or a group, that had a clear terrorism motivation as defined by the FBI: ''the unlawful use of force or violence committed by a group or individual against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives'' (FBI, 1996; 28 C.F.R., Section 0.85). A study of individuals who attacked a public figure in Germany and were motivated by terrorism during the same time period will be the topic of a subsequent article. Terrorism can and should be legitimately considered a type of motivation for an attack on a public figure (Biesterfeld & Meloy, 2008), and the attacker's association with a group – whether at the time of the attack or previously – is another social variable to consider along with the ones advanced in this study. For example, all of the seven warning behaviors could be driven by a

terrorist motivation, which, in turn, could be influenced by a psychiatric disorder and a group affiliation.

Using the criteria described above, 17 cases were identified. Authors approached the public prosecutors' offices where the court hearings of each case took place in order to ask for access to court and police files of the incidents. Sufficient primary material for analysis was available on 14 cases between 1968 and 2004. All three attacks without primary data being accessible were minor incidents. Not enough material was gathered by law enforcement authorities due to the cases' low profile. This sample covers the entirety of serious violent incidents against German public figures since the end of World War II.

For every incident, primary data were used as the basis of analysis. The primary data consisted of court records, investigative files, and in some cases psychiatric reports. In addition to the primary data, more information from the public domain was gathered whenever this was reasonable, e.g., autobiographies or interviews with the attackers, or interviews with other individuals involved in the case.

Analysis

The research design is observational, archival, and descriptive. Due to the small sample size no inferential statistics were used.

Descriptive Data of the Attackers and the Victims

The public figure status of the victims and their physical injury were recorded. The study measured the attacker's age, gender, intimate and social relationships, and attachment history as a child. The latter variable was defined as loss or absence of a parent during childhood. Past psychiatric and suicidal histories, alcohol and drug problems, contacts with police, criminal convictions, and the work histories of the offenders were recorded. Unstable work history was defined as an individual who had never worked at all, had an unusually long period of unemployment, or had many (but brief) periods of employment. A loner was defined as someone who was perceived as a loner by others, who lived alone, or who preferred to be alone. Approach behavior and communication with the public figure victim were analyzed.

Comparing Potentially Lethal and Non-lethal Attacks

The sample was divided into potentially lethal and non-lethal attacks using the criteria of weapons involved. In potentially lethal attacks, deadly weapons like guns, knives or bombs were used by the attackers. In non-lethal attacks, no such weapon was present. Instead, the public figure was, for example, physically assaulted by a slap in the face, by thrown eggs, or by paint bombs. None of the weapons utilized by these attackers could kill the target.

Psychiatric Disorder and Motivation

A forensic report with a diagnosis was available in six of the cases (43%). The entire case material of every attack was also reviewed independently by a forensic psychologist

(A.G.) and a forensic psychiatrist (A.E.) in order to analyze the psychiatric and psychological status of every attacker according to *International Classification of Diseases-10* (ICD-10) criteria. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 4th edn-Text Revision* (DSM-IV-TR) criteria were used in order to assess for narcissistic traits or features. No formal interrater reliability was conducted. Instead the researchers thoroughly discussed each case until a consensus was reached on the reasonable probability of a ICD-10/DSM-IV-TR diagnosis. When there was substantial evidence that warranted a different diagnosis, although a forensic report existed, this different diagnosis is reported as well. When the authors came to the same conclusion as the forensic report, the diagnosis was taken from the latter.

Judgments about the personality were made according to verified statements given by attackers (e.g., "The peculiar coincidence of my birthday with the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, 150 years before I was born, is something I still think about…"), and actions committed by them, both related and unrelated to the attack.

Statements from laypersons (e.g., neighbors) or conclusions in the media (e.g., newspapers) were treated with great skepticism, and not relied upon, since statements such as, "He was psychotic/antisocial," don't necessarily correspond with the true meaning of the disorder as coded in the diagnostic manuals.

Since direct interviews with the offenders were not possible, and given the lack of other sufficient and reliable information to conclude that the general/entry criteria for a personality disorder according to ICD-10 (e.g., pattern since childhood, affects multiple areas such as cognition, interpersonal contact) were fulfilled, only the personality traits or features, if there were any, are reported in cases without a forensic report.

The variable of motivation was derived from direct statements of the offenders. In seven cases (50%), another underlying motive was apparent, which was distinctive and not consciously formulated by the attackers themselves. It often revealed a more self-centered reason that was hidden by altruistic claims of attacking for the good of other people.

Warning Behaviors

Warning behaviors are typically acute, dynamic, proximal, and accelerating, and may result in a threat assessor determining that the subject of concern poses a threat of violence toward the target. They are intended to help structure a threat assessment in a standardized manner (Meloy, 2011; Meloy & O'Toole, in press; Meloy, Hoffmann, Guldimann & James, in submission):

1. *Pathway* warning behavior – any behavior that is part of research, planning, preparation, or implementation of an attack (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).
2. *Energy burst* warning behavior – an increase in the frequency, variety, or intensity of any warning behavior.
3. *Novel aggression* warning behavior – acts of violence unrelated to attack behavior that are committed for the first time.
4. *Fixation* warning behavior – any behavior that indicates an intense preoccupation with a person or a cause (Mullen et al., 2009). We made a distinction between "mild" and "heavy" fixation, the latter indicating a pathological fixation which

increasingly becomes the centre of attention and activities in day-to-day life for the fixated individual, and leads to social and occupational deterioration.

5. *Identification* warning behavior – any behavior that indicates a psychological desire to be a ''pseudocommando,'' (Dietz, 1986), have a ''warrior mentality,'' closely associate with weapons or other military or law enforcement paraphernalia (Hempel, Meloy, & Richards, 1999), identify with previous attackers, or identify oneself as an agent to advance a particular cause or belief system.

6. *Leakage* warning behavior – the communication to a third party of an intent to do harm to a target (Meloy & O'Toole, in press).

7. *Directly communicated threat* warning behavior – the direct communication of a threat to the target or law enforcement beforehand.

Attack Behavior

We looked at the date, time, and place of the attack, which weapon was used, and if the offender came closer than 2 meters before he started his attack. An analysis was conducted to see if the perpetrator addressed his victim personally before the assault, a phenomenon first identified among mass murderers and referred to as a ''psychological abstract'' (Hempel et al., 1999).

RESULTS

All percentages represent the proportion of subjects where the variable was present. When *n* follows the percentage, it refers to the number of subjects where the variable could be coded, scored, or quantified due to sufficient data.

The Attackers and the Victims

Public Figure Victims of Attack

There were only two incidents in which the public figure targets had a non-political background (14%): one was an athletic star and the other a television presenter. In all of the other attacks the public figures were politicians. The majority were national politicians (43%), including a Chancellor, ministers in the federal cabinet, and a nationally known student leader. The second largest victim group were politicians at a German state level (29%) and were local representatives of parliaments. In two cases the victims were at a local level (14%) and included a mayor and a district administrator. In two cases there were secondary victims besides the target: a close protection officer was wounded in one case, and a number of politicians and their secretaries received letter bombs in another case.

In nine of the attacks, the public figure was injured (64%), in three of these cases (30%) in a life-threatening manner. None of the victims died during or directly after the attack, although one public figure perished by drowning due to an epileptic seizure caused by the shotgun wounds 11 years earlier.

Demographic Data of the Attackers

The oldest offender was 83 years old, the youngest 22, and the average age was 40 years (Table 1). Nine offenders were male (64%) and five were female (36%). All of the attackers were of German nationality.

Attachment History

There was a clinically significant frequency of loss of a parent in their childhood histories. In the 12 cases in which data on the attachment history were available, three of the offenders (25%) lost their mother or had almost no contact with her until the age of 16. Three other attackers (25%) lost their father as a child (Table 1).

Psychiatric History and Status

Almost half of the offenders (42%, $n = 12$) had a severe mental disorder and psychiatric history before the attack (Table 1). All cases warranted a psychiatric diagnosis or had identifiable psychiatric features (ICD-10/DSM-IV-TR) except for one. Five cases (36%) were psychotic at the time of the attack. Three of these cases were diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia (21%). The amount of previous suicidal ideation was substantial (75%, $n = 12$), and the frequency of suicidal attempts was clinically significant (45%, $n = 11$).

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Of the 11 cases where data were available, a small number of attackers had a history of alcohol (18%) or drug problems (18%) in the past. Only one offender (8%, $n = 13$) was intoxicated at the time of the assault.

Work History

The majority of the attackers (75%, $n = 12$) had an unstable work history, and this same number were unemployed at the time of the attack.

Police Records

More than half of the offenders (57%) had come to the attention of police before the attack. Half of the sample (50%) had a conviction for non-violent incidents. A slightly smaller group (39%) had a previously violent history. Data were missing in one case. Almost one-third (29%) had been in prison before their assault.

Social Behavior

Half of the attackers (50%, $n = 12$) were loners. Seventy-eight per cent of the attackers had no sexually intimate relationship at the time of the offence. One third (30%, $n = 10$) had a history of high geographic mobility.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of attackers

Variable	All 14 cases	Potentially lethal (n = 9)	Non-lethal (n = 5)
Gender			
Male	64% (9)	56% (5)	80% (4)
Female	36% (5)	44% (4)	20% (1)
Being in a partnership at the time of attack			
Yes	22% (2)	13% (1)	100% (1)
No	78% (7)	87% (7)	0% (0)
Mean age of offenders (years)	40	39	41
Loss of mother/almost no contact until age 16			
Yes	25% (3)	33% (3)	0% (0)
No	75% (9)	67% (6)	100% (3)
Loss of father/almost no contact until age 16			
Yes	25% (3)	33% (3)	0% (0)
No	75% (9)	67% (6)	100% (3)
Past psychiatric history			
Yes	42% (5)	56% (5)	0% (0)
No	58% (7)	44% (4)	100% (3)
Past suicide attempt			
Yes	45% (5)	63% (5)	0% (0)
No	55% (6)	37% (3)	100% (3)
Past suicidal ideation			
Yes	75% (9)	100% (9)	0% (0)
No	25% (3)	0% (0)	100% (3)
Paranoid schizophrenia			
Yes	21% (3)	33% (3)	0% (0)
No	79% (11)	67% (6)	100% (5)
Alcohol problems in the past			
Yes	18% (2)	25% (2)	0% (0)
No	82% (9)	75% (6)	100% (3)
Drug problems in the past			
Yes	18% (2)	13% (1)	33% (1)
No	82% (9)	87% (7)	67% (2)
Intoxicated at time of attack			
Yes	8% (1)	0% (0)	25% (1)
No	92% (12)	100% (9)	75% (3)
Unstable work history			
Yes	75% (9)	78% (7)	67% (2)
No	25% (3)	22% (2)	33% (1)
Unemployed at time of attack			
Yes	75% (9)	75% (6)	75% (3)
No	25% (3)	25% (2)	25% (1)
Violent/Non-violent incidents that came to the attention of the police			
Yes	57% (8)	56% (5)	60% (3)
No	43% (6)	44% (4)	40% (2)
Official violence convictions or known to police for violence against other people			
Yes	39% (5)	38% (3)	40% (2)
No	61% (8)	62% (5)	60% (3)
Official convictions or known to police for non-violent incidents			
Yes	50% (7)	44% (4)	60% (3)
No	50% (7)	56% (5)	40% (2)
In prison before			
Yes	29% (4)	22% (2)	40% (2)
No	71% (10)	78% (7)	60% (3)
Loner			
Yes	50% (6)	75% (6)	0% (0)
No	50% (6)	25% (2)	100% (4)

(Continues)

Table 1. (Continued)

Variable	All 14 cases	Potentially lethal (n = 9)	Non-lethal (n = 5)
Moves from place to place			
Yes	30% (3)	25% (2)	50% (1)
No	70% (7)	75% (6)	50% (1)
Communication with victim e.g., letters			
Yes	17% (2)	25% (2)	0% (0)
No	83% (10)	75% (6)	100% (4)
Approach or attempt to approach victim before attack			
Yes	46% (6)	50% (4)	40% (2)
No	54% (7)	50% (4)	60% (3)

All percentages represent the proportion of subjects where the variable was present. When *n* follows the percentage, it refers to the number of subjects where the variable could be coded, scored, or quantified due to sufficient data.

Approach and Contact Behavior Toward the Victim

A history of *persistent* contact and approach behavior toward a public figure, which the authors label stalking, was only present in the two celebrity cases, but not in any of the political incidents. Almost half of the sample (46%, $n = 12$) approached or tried to approach the public figure beforehand at least once, but were not persistent. Very few of the attackers (17%, $n = 12$) contacted the victim directly before the attack. In one case a stalker repeatedly approached the victim and spoke to him without uttering any threat. Another woman wrote at least one letter to the later victim but no more specific information was included in the files.

Comparing Potentially Lethal and Non-lethal Attacks

Because of the small sample size and the absence of inferential statistics, only clear-cut descriptive differences were considered to mark a distinction between these two groups. Based upon our definitions, there were nine potentially lethal (64%) and five non-lethal (36%) attacks.

Similarities between Potentially Lethal and Non-lethal Attacks

There were no noticeable differences between the two groups for unstable work history, prior convictions, or coming to the attention of the police before the attacks.

Differences between Potentially Lethal and Non-lethal Attacks

On a number of psychological and psychiatric characteristics the non-lethal attackers proved to be more stable and more inconspicuous than the potentially lethal offenders. No loss or absence of a father or mother figure were reported in their childhood. None of them had a past psychiatric or suicidal history. Although 75% of the potentially lethal attackers were loners, none of the non-lethal attackers proved to be isolated in this way.

Both cases in which the attacker tried to communicate with the victim before the attack were in the potentially lethal group.

The Link between Psychiatric Disorder and Motivation

In all of the cases (93%) where psychiatric features were present, a link between the psychiatric disorder and the motivation for the attack was observable (see Table 2).

Motivations for the different attacks varied widely. Different psychological levels or layers of motivation were sometimes present in the same offender. This was apparent in half of the cases where the motive that was self-admitted by the offender differed from the underlying psychological motive discerned by the authors of this article.

For example, one female attacker who had thrown a Molotov cocktail at a politician driving in a car said she had done this because she was fighting for social justice (Case 6). On a deeper and probably unconscious level, a feeling of exclusion from her peers presumably also contributed to her plan to attack the minister. The other political activist believed she was a police informer, and she may have wanted to do something "big" to prove them wrong.

Owing to the differing and not uncomplicated nature of motivation in this small sample, attempts to type or classify motivation were avoided. Nevertheless, two basic motivational dynamics emerged in the case material. One was to seek attention. The other was to fight against forces that threatened the attacker or other individuals. The first motivational dynamic was connected to narcissistic or histrionic traits; the second was linked with paranoid traits and disorders.

In all five cases where narcissistic and/or histrionic traits were prominent, the attacker clearly revealed a need for attention. This could normally be seen in the general communication style and interactional behavior of the offender.

An unemployed teacher slapped the German Chancellor during a party meeting (Case 13). He argued that he acted symbolically in the name of the whole nation. Seemingly happy about the public interest in him this generated, he re-enacted his assault in front of a TV camera a few days later. He told journalists he was proud of the attack, which he said was a great experience for him. Later at the court hearing he distributed his résumé to the media.

In Case 1 where fragile narcissism was paired with depression, a suicide-by-cop scenario emerged (Mohandie, Meloy & Collins, 2009). The young offender said that he was a "nobody" and wanted to do something "big" before he died. After having wounded a politically left-wing student leader with his revolver, the would-be assassin started a shootout with the police. The officers noticed that the young man deliberately missed them when he fired his weapon, and made no attempt to run for cover. He tried to poison himself, but survived, shortly before he was arrested. He subsequently committed suicide while in prison.

In all psychotic cases (36%), the content of the delusions was directly connected to the motivation. All delusions evidenced a paranoid dynamic – an irrational fear of imminent assault – and a majority of these attackers were suffering from paranoid schizophrenia at the time of their assaults. From their delusional point of view, the attacks were eminently rational and necessary to protect themselves or others from serious harm. This contributed to their determination to act with lethal intent, a likely correlate of the perceived lethality of the threat posed toward them. In Case 10 suicidal

Table 2. Diagnosis and motivation

Victim/perpetrator	Psychiatric diagnosis?	Specific motivation?	Related?
1) Rudi Dutschke, student leader/Josef B.	(FR) Personality disorder; traits not specified but mainly narcissistic and to a lesser extent antisocial, depressive development	(SA) He says he is a "nobody", he wants to do something "big" before he dies. He thinks victim is a "brilliant" head. He also says he hates the "communists" because they apprehended his uncle	Yes
2) Kurt-Georg Kiesinger, politician/Beate K.	No	(SA) Change of leadership, justice for all the Nazi victims	No
3) Oskar Lafontaine, politician/Adelheide S.	(FR) Paranoid schizophrenia; verbal hallucinations: Jesus told her to kill a politician; delusions: underground human factories	(SA) People must be made aware of human factories and be protected but it was also to reduce her intense tension	Yes
4) Wolfgang Schäuble, politician/Dieter K.	Paranoid schizophrenia; delusions: German state terrorizes him and others	(SA) He wants to make his agony public, attack was an act of self-defense	Yes
5) Monica Seles, tennis player/Günther P.	(FR) Personality disorder; traits not specified but likely anxious/avoidant traits, reactive depressive component also likely; perhaps also schizoid traits present	(SA) He wants to punish Monica Seles and prevent her from getting better than Steffi Graf ("teach her a lesson") (UM) Victim poses a threat to his idol's success (Steffi Graf) and since he was narcissistically linked with his idol she posed a threat to him as well	Yes
6) Manfred Püchel, politician/Eva-Maria H.	(FR) Paranoid, histrionic, narcissistic, compulsive personality disorder	(SA) She fights for social justice and she wanted to be taken seriously by the victim/talk to him (UM) She was friendly with political activists. These people later believed she was a police informer. She was excluded and probably wanted to do something "huge" (like throwing a Molotov cocktail) to prove them wrong	Yes
7) Eberhard Diepgen, politician/Dieter K.	Histrionic and narcissistic personality traits likely	(SA) According to him he wanted to protest against the construction work on the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. His victim had approved of the new buildings. He said he wants to send early "Christmas greetings" to the victim on December 20 via the egg (UM) He wanted to ridicule the mayor and it was a platform for showmanship to him	Yes
8) Joschka Fischer, politician/Samir F.	According to the verdict his "personality deviates from the average person"; histrionic traits likely	(SA) He fought against Germany's participation in the Kosovo war. He wanted to stop the war (UM) He probably was also motivated by getting attention	Likely

(Continues)

Table 2. (Continued)

Victim/perpetrator	Psychiatric diagnosis?	Specific motivation?	Related?
9) Hans-Christian Ströbele, politician/ Bendix W.	Anti-social personality traits likely	(SA) He said the "Greens" are responsible for "ecological" grievance in his home town. He was in a self-admitted bad state of mind as he was drunk after a party (UM) He is a known neo-Nazi with a violent past	Likely
10) Mr. C., TV moderator/S. G.	Likely psychotic	(SA) She claims she wanted to get killed by him. She wanted to kidnap him and then force him to kill her. In case he refused she would kill herself in front of him. She thought she needed a witness when she killed herself so that she couldn't back down from her intention	Yes
11) Various politicians, secretaries/Johann L.	Schizoid traits likely	(SA) He committed suicide, therefore we can only speculate that he wanted to raise awareness about the job situation in Germany. After he was called a "mad man" in the newspapers he sent an article about election fraud/lies and unhappy voters with one of the bombs (UM) He was unemployed. He may have been frustrated about his own situation and wanted to take revenge	Likely
12) Roger Kusch, politician/Yvonne C.	FR – Paranoid schizophrenia; delusions: she was haunted by right-wing politicians and others because she is of noble ancestry. She claimed she could also tell from a child's movements whether the child had been raped	(SA) She wanted to prevent children getting raped and didn't want people to vote for the victim's party because they are pedophiles	Yes
13) Gerhard Schröder, politician/Jens A.	Psychiatrist deemed him as likely "mentally disturbed", but there was no further evaluation; narcissistic traits likely, may be histrionic as well	(SA) He slapped the Chancellor because the Chancellor always talked about getting jobs for people (UM) He had been without work for years. He thought of himself as a victim of the system who had done everything he could. He was also seeking attention	Likely
14) Mr. S., politician/Alois K.	(FR) Organic personality disorder/differential diagnosis: dementia; delusions: there was a conspiracy against him. The border stone was at the wrong place, which is why he hit it with his car (not because of his age and driving skills)	(SA) He wanted to threaten his victim with the knife so that he would help him to settle the problem with the border stone. He also thought the victim had laughed at him before because he had to pay the bill for the measurement expertise	Yes

FR, forensic report available; SA, self-admitted motive; UM, underlying motive.

intent was prominent, but an irrational fear of protecting herself and revenge was also present.

In Case 4 a paranoid schizophrenic individual believed the German state was torturing his mind. He thought that the Chancellor and the minister of the interior were specifically responsible. He desperately wrote to other politicians asking for help. Then he noticed that the minister of the interior was coming to speak at an election rally close to where he lived. He went to the rally and shot the politician, wounding him in a life-threatening manner. The conscious, albeit psychotic motivation for this assassination attempt was self-defense.

In two cases where schizoid personality traits were present (Cases 5 and 11), a likely motivation for the attack was revenge. The schizoid attackers planned and prepared the attack secretly, probably due to their emotional detachment and preoccupation with fantasy.

For example, a young, isolated, and unemployed man sent a series of letter bombs to politicians (Case 11). One of the bombs was accompanied by an article concerning election fraud and the unhappiness of voters. Although case file data were limited, it appeared that he wanted to take revenge for his desperate life situation.

The two attackers with antisocial traits had a history of previous criminal record and aggressive behavior (Cases 1 and 9). The use of violence appeared to be a natural outcome of their grievance toward and dislike of politicians. It is notable that none of the 14 attackers were motivated by thwarted sexual, affectional, or affiliative desires for the targets.

Warning Behaviors

Pathway Warning Behavior

Detailed information on this warning behavior was available in 13 cases (see Table 3). In every single attack, whether potentially lethal or non-lethal, multiple steps along the way were readily identifiable. The research and planning phase was probably underreported since it often only takes place in the mind of the offender. Therefore, only research and planning behavior that brought the offender into contact with other individuals could be seen in the files. For example, one of the perpetrators asked a taxi driver for the victim's address on the day of attack (Case 1). Typical preparation behavior was the acquisition of weapons such as firearms or explosives in the potentially lethal group, or a paint bomb in the non-lethal group (Case 8). Prearrangements to be able to get close to the public figure were also reported. One offender even applied for membership of the party of the then German Chancellor in order to gain entrance to an event where he was giving a speech (Case 13). The implementation phase regularly started with breaching. In three of the cases the attackers employed a ruse. One attacker pretended to take journalism notes to fool security (Case 2); another concealed a knife in a bouquet of flowers, pretending to be a fan of a well-known politician (Case 3).

The only offence in which the pathway could not have been seen at all involved a more situational dynamic. A neo-Nazi with a violent past was returning home in the early hours after partying and drinking all night (Case 9) when he spotted a well-known Green party politician distributing flyers during an election campaign. The neo-Nazi

Table 3. Summary of warning behaviors

Case	Potentially lethal?	Pathway[1]	Energy burst	Novel aggression	Fixation (a, mild; b, heavy)	Identification[2]	Leakage	Direct threat
1	Yes	✔	24 hours	✔	Cause (a)	✔	✔	×
2	No	✔	72 hours	×	Cause (b)	×	✔	×
3	Yes	✔	3 months	✔	Cause (b)	✔	×	×
4	Yes	✔	×	×	Cause (b)	×	×	×
5	Yes	✔	72 hours	×	Person (b)	×	×	×
6	Yes	✔	1 year	✔	Cause (b)	✔	×	✔
7	No	✔	×	×	Person (a)	✔	×	×
8	No	✔	?	✔	Cause (a)	✔	?	×
9	No	?	×	×	Cause (b)	✔	×	×
10	Yes	✔	3 months	×	Person (b)	×	×	×
11	Yes	✔	×	?	Cause (?)	✔	×	×
12	Yes	✔	3 months	?	Cause (b)	×	×	×
13	No	✔	?	×	Person (a)	✔	?	×
14	Yes	✔	1 week	✔	Person (b)	×	×	×

[1](1) Research/planning; (2) preparation; (3) implementation of attack (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). [2](1) Warrior mentality/weapons fascination; (2) interest and study of previous assassins; (3) ideology: ✔, present; ×, absent; ?, not enough information.

did not like the politician because of his left-wing politics. He observed the member of parliament for 15 minutes with a "hate-filled" look, as a witness later reported. He then approached him from behind and hit him on the head fiercely. This pattern perhaps signified a shortened pathway to violence. The planning could have happened during the period of brief observation. As the attacker used his hand as a weapon, no preparation was needed. He started the implementation phase while walking purposefully in the direction of the politician.

Clearly detectable aspects of the early pathway warning behavior came to the attention of authorities or official security personnel in at least five of all cases (38%, $n = 13$). Two offenders tried to approach, or even attack, days or months before their final assault, but failed when security stopped them (Cases 2 and 6). In another case, the first control point found eggs on a notorious protester who was already known for his fixation on the politician and later victim (Case 7). The protester was then able to hide those clearly non-lethal weapons at the next security check before he approached the politician and started his egg attack. One delusional woman already known to authorities as a result of her mental illness twice tried to apply for a gun license but failed (Case 3). Another attacker suffering from paranoid schizophrenia asked for the addresses of several politicians at a police station (Case 12).

Energy Burst Warning Behavior

An increase in the frequency, variety, or intensity of any warning behavior in the time before the attack was noted in two-thirds (66%) of the 12 cases where information existed. The length of the energy burst behavioral pattern ranged from 24 hours to 1 year. If the time frame was rather short (72 hours or less), a combination of preparation and implementation behavior usually emerged. This could be seen in three attacks (Cases 1, 2 and 5). For example, in the last 3 days before the assault one offender (Case 5) demonstrated a series of behaviors as described in the last stages of the pathway

model (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). Before leaving his home, the stalker hid important belongings in his garden, believing he would go to jail for a long time. He then traveled to Hamburg where he followed a female sports star, desperately hoping for an opportunity to attack. Finally he was able to breach security while she was playing a public tennis match.

When energy burst warning behavior occurred 3 months or more before the attack, the grievance triggering the assault regularly played a role. For instance, one delusional woman, believing that children were in danger of becoming victims of sexual assault (Case 12), made child rape accusations against various people months before her attack. She also sent disturbing e-mails and insulted another person. One female stalker (Case 10) who obviously felt rejected by a public figure started a more offensive pattern of approach behavior. The targeted television presenter was so worried that he asked the police for help.

Novel Aggression Warning Behavior

Novel aggression was seen in five of the 12 cases (42%) where information on this factor was available. In four of these five cases (80%), the attackers were in the potentially lethal group. And even the non-lethal attacker showing novel aggression (Case 8) seriously injured a public figure. He threw a paint bomb with such force that he injured the eardrum of the politician who later had to be treated in hospital.

Two striking dynamics were observed in the novel aggression behavior patterns. First the novel acts of violence committed ahead of the attack were often of remarkable intensity. For instance, one offender (Case 1) tried to shoot other people on two occasions approximately 2 years before the attack. A delusional women (Case 3) set fire to the house of a relative 4 years before stabbing a politician. Another offender (Case 6) attacked a police officer with a brick a few months before her attack on a public figure.

A second dynamic regularly observed was a notable similarity between the novel aggression behavior and the *modus operandi* of the attack on the public figure. This form of novel aggression often seemed to be a behavioral trial run but was not necessarily part of a conscious preparation for the assault. For example, the attacker (Case 8) who injured the politician with a paint bomb had also thrown cans at a civic center a few months before. The female offender (Case 6) who threw a Molotov cocktail at a car of a politician had previously thrown small bottles filled with gas at a political demonstration. Finally the assassin (Case 1) who shot a left-wing student leader had in the past fired at a French policeman and at a guard on the East German border.

Eighty per cent of those exhibiting novel aggression warning behaviors were known to the authorities before the attack on the public figure.

Fixation Warning Behavior

All of the attackers demonstrated a fixation, at least in its mild form in which the individual has an intense preoccupation with a person or a cause. One example of a mild fixation was an attacker who had the strong political belief that the participation of German soldiers in the Kosovo war was wrong, but this issue did not become the main focus of his thinking or political activity (Case 8). Nine of the attackers (69%, $n = 13$) revealed a heavy and pathological fixation in which their obsessive preoccupations

compromised their social and/or emotional functioning. For instance, one delusional attacker believed that underground flesh factories existed in which humans were being killed and started putting up posters in the street and placing advertisements in the newspaper to warn the public (Case 3).

Almost all lethal attackers (88%, $n = 8$) had a ''heavy'' pathological fixation. In comparison the rate of pathological fixation for non-lethal attackers was not as high (40%, $n = 5$). The most common were fixations on a cause (64%) like political issues or delusionally based feelings of a threat against the attacker or against other individuals. In the group of five cases (36%) with a fixation on a person, two of the offenders were stalkers; three, including one of the stalkers, also had several personal contacts with the victim before the day of the attack. In the potentially lethal group, two-thirds of the attackers (67%) were fixated on a cause; a nearly identical rate was seen in the non-lethal group (60%).

Identification Warning Behavior

Identification warning behavior was shown by eight of the attackers (57%). As we subdivided the concept into three facets, sometimes more than one form of identification behavior was present in a single case.

The ''warrior mentality'' in which a person adopts the identity of an armed fighter was seen in only two cases (Cases 1 and 9) of the whole sample (14%). Both attackers were male, connected to a right-wing extremist movement, and people around them were aware of their fascination with weapons. Both men also had a past affiliation with foreign military forces, one as a mercenary in the post-Yugoslavian civil wars (Case 9) and the other spent a short period in the French Foreign Legion (Case 1). Due to their noticeable activities, their ''warrior mentality'' warning behaviors were also known to law enforcement.

Another facet of identification found that five of the attackers (36%) ''were interested or studied previous assassins''. Two of them identified with terrorists from the German left-wing extremist group, Red Army Faction (Cases 3 and 6); while two others (Cases 11 and 13) identified with the member of the German resistance leader, Graf von Stauffenberg, who tried to assassinate Hitler. One offender (Case 1) showed an interest in the murder of Martin Luther King a week before his attack. One perpetrator (Case 13) identified with another individual (Case 2) from our sample of German attackers of public figures without terrorist motivation.

The identification with another terrorist assassin by two of our female perpetrators was known to authorities. One (Case 6) sprayed quotes by a left-winged female terrorist on a ministry building, while the other (Case 3) sent flowers and a note to an imprisoned leader of the Red Army Faction.

Looking at the facet of identification as an agent to advance a particular belief system, five attackers (36%) were intensely related to a left- or right-wing radical political ideology. For all but one offender (Case 1) the identification with a radical ideology was known to German authorities before their attack. In general there was a good correlation between the nature of identification and the type of public figure being targeted. For instance, perpetrators who identified with right-wing extremism assaulted left-wing politicians, whom they saw as a political enemy. Another example was a former teacher (Case 13) who slapped the German Chancellor. He identified with a woman (Case 2) who slapped the Chancellor 35 years earlier.

Leakage Warning Behavior

Leakage behavior was documented in two of the 12 attacks where enough information was available (17%). One of the offenders (Case 1) told his acquaintances the day before the attack that they would hear from him on TV, on the radio and in the press. A female attacker (Case 2) communicated her intent to do harm to the target in a much less cryptic and cautious way. In a speech in front of 3,000 students in Berlin she announced that she would slap the German Chancellor, which she eventually did half a year later. In two other cases (Cases 8 and 13) it remained unclear due to the lack of detailed information whether or not the attacker had revealed his plans before to peers or family members.

Directly Communicated Threat Warning Behavior

A direct threat to the target was present in only one case (7%). The female attacker (Case 6) wrote threatening letters to various politicians – one of whom was the victim. Unfortunately the court files that we were able to review only mentioned that she threatened the later target of the attack in one letter. The exact wording of the written communication was not revealed.

Attack Behavior

Date of Attack

Although a time period of more than 60 years was covered in this study, the majority of cases (64%) took place in the most recent decade (1995–2004; Table 4). Before 1990 only two attacks on public figures (14%) were reported, both of them occurring in 1968.

Place of Attack

Most of the attacks (79%) were carried out in public places (Table 4). In nine of the cases (64%), the assault happened during an official event, e.g., an election campaign, a court hearing, or a sports event. In at least seven of these nine cases (78%), offenders deliberately planned and chose this place for the attack, learning from public sources where they would be able to find the target. Among the three assaults (21%) that were located in the office or close to the private home of the public figure, one was a serial bombing without the need for physical proximity, and the other two cases were knife attacks. In both of these latter cases there were several personal encounters before the potentially lethal attack took place. Repeated contact behavior may have increased the risk of an attack in a private or office environment.

Kind of Attack

The weapons most frequently used during the nine potentially lethal attacks were knives (56%), followed by equal use of firearms (22%) and explosives (22%). In the five non-

Table 4. Attack behavior

Case	Date/time of attack	Place of attack	Kind of attack	Security present	Reaching proximity (2 meters)	Addressing the victim personally during the attack	What happened to attacker
1	April 11, 1968/afternoon	Streets of Berlin in front of the students' headquarters	Shooting	No	Yes	"Are you Rudi D.?" Attacker claimed he also called him a "communist pig", but the victim denied that	Fled after people approached the scene, took sleeping pills, shootout with police, committed suicide in prison in 1970
2	November 7, 1968/morning	Political congress	Slapping	Yes	Yes	"Nazi, Nazi"	Overpowered by security. Trial on the same day, sentenced to 1 year in prison, appealed, released the same day. Full responsibility, sentenced to 4 months probation in 1969
3	April 25, 1990/evening	Political rally	Stabbing	Yes	Yes	Told him she wanted to give him the flowers because she admired him and asked him for an autograph	Security overpowered her. Judged irresponsible for crime, still in psychiatric hospital as of 2009
4	October 12, 1990/evening	Political rally	Shooting	Yes	?	No	Security overpowered him. Judged irresponsible for crime, admitted to psychiatric hospital, switched to monitored dormitory in 2004. Apologized to victim 5 years after the attack
5	April 30, 1993/evening	Tennis court	Stabbing	Yes	Yes	No	Security overpowered him. Diminished responsibility, suspended sentence (2 years), lives low-key in his home town today

(Continues)

Table 4. (Continued)

Case	Date/time of attack	Place of attack	Kind of attack	Security present	Reaching proximity (2 meters)	Addressing the victim personally during the attack	What happened to attacker
6	November 22, 1995/evening	Car on the street	Molotov cocktail	Yes	No	No	Attacker fled from scene, drove to victim's workplace, then drove to her home, saw police cars, fled, they followed her. Admitted to psychiatry, diminished responsibility by court, 1 year and 9 months suspended sentence, outpatient therapy. She wrote an apology letter to victim before Christmas 1995
7	December 20, 1995/afternoon	Courtroom	Bursting an egg	Yes	Yes	"Happy Easter, you Santa Claus"	Security overpowered him. Full responsibility, sentenced to 6 months in prison. He disappeared and staged his own suicide in 1998, appeared again in 1999, served prison time
8	May 13, 1999/morning	Party convention	Threw paint bomb	Yes	No	No	Security man overpowered him. Confusion at the scene, people (accomplices?) helped attacker, he escaped, gave interview to journalist, later turned himself in at police station. Full responsibility, 1,840 euro money fine, wore women's clothes at trial
9	September 20, 2002/morning	Street campaign stall	Hitting	No	Yes	"Whore pig"	Fled, victim followed him and called the police; caught by police at a house entrance. Full responsibility, 15 months in prison

	Date/time	Location	Type of attack			Statement	Outcome
10	December 2, 2003/night	Backyard of victim's home	Attempted stabbing	No	Yes	"You don't need to call the police, I'll come back to kill you anyway. I don't want to kill you. I want you to kill me."	Attacker caught in the backyard of a house, had made self-inflicted stabbing wounds to her belly with the knife. Judged irresponsible by court for crime, admitted to psychiatry
11	April–November 2004/morning	Office of politicians	Nine bombs	No	No	No	Attacker committed suicide (burnt himself) after getting an invitation to take a DNA test
12	February 12, 2004/morning	Political rally/information desk	Stabbing	No	Yes	"Fag pig/pedophile pig. You murdered my son"	Overpowered by victim's colleagues. Deemed irresponsible by court, admitted to psychiatric hospital
13	May 18, 2004/evening	Political reception	Slapping	Yes	Yes	To security: "That's all, I'm done."	Security overpowered him. He refused to answer police questions but gave a series of interviews to the media about the attack in the following days. He wore a shirt with his bank account number in front of the judge. No sign of diminished responsibility, 4 months on probation/100 hours community service. Attacker, who had put himself up as a candidate, got the best election result in his election district after the slap. Chancellor's party excluded attacker as a party member
14	February 23, 2004/morning	Mayor's office	Stabbing	No	Yes	"I get you, I get you"	Victim and co-worker overpowered him. Deemed not responsible for crime, admitted to psychiatric hospital, then to a retirement home

lethal assaults, two attackers slapped the victim (40%). The other three attackers knocked the target down, threw an egg, or threw a paint bomb.

Security

In eight of the incidents (57%) security personnel were present. In four of the eight cases (50%) where protection was provided, a potentially lethal attack occurred. In contrast, a dangerous assault occurred in five of the six cases (83%) without protection. There was a greater likelihood of a potentially lethal attack when there was no protection.

Reaching Proximity

In all but one case, information was available for this factor. In three-quarters of the offences (77%, $n = 13$), the attackers came closer than 2 meters to the public figure before launching their assault. No connection could be identified between the proximity factor and whether the offender wanted to act lethally or not.

Addressing the Victim During the Attack

In more than half of the cases (64%), the attacker made a statement during or directly before the assault. This kind of behavior was termed a "psychological abstract" (Hempel et al., 1999). It may provide insight into the perpetrator's conscious motivation for the attack. This was true in all of the German public figure attacks where a psychological abstract was uttered. In two of the nine abstracts (22%), an instrumental aspect was predominant. For example, a female attacker (Case 3) asked a politician if she might personally give him flowers in order to bypass security and come within close range, which she did. In five of the nine psychological abstracts (56%), anger and hostility were expressed. Sometimes this had a more political undertone, such as politicians being insulted with the words "Nazi" or "whore pig". Psychotic dynamics were also apparent during these utterances. In one case (Case 12), a delusional woman believed that children were being sexually abused by politicians. Before her stabbing, she called him a "pedophile." In four of the five cases (80%) where no psychological abstract was present, however, the attacker came from the potentially lethal group. Since most of the non-lethal attackers were trying to get attention with their act, the psychological abstracts appeared to enhance the dramatic orchestration of the assault. As also noted in Table 4, legal outcomes of the cases varied.

DISCUSSION

This is one of the first studies to analyze in detail warning behaviors, attack behaviors, and the relationship between psychiatric diagnosis and motivation for an attack in a non-terrorist universe of public figure cases. It is also the first study to compare potentially lethal and non-lethal attackers since the work of Fein & Vossekuil (1998, 1999).

Although all cases in Germany during this period that were motivated by terrorism were excluded, such cases are a legitimate area of inquiry and will be a comparative topic in a subsequent study. Recent authors of texts on terrorists' motivations have advanced the belief that: (i) they have normal personalities (Post, 2007); and (ii) their social networks are more important than their individual psychology (Sageman, 2004). Ironically, both of these writers are psychiatrists. We would argue, however, that the personality and psychopathology of the individual attacker should never be removed from the motivational equation, and can further our understanding of terrorist behavior. Fundamentally, all acts of terrorism are personal in the sense that individuals involved in the attack bring a resolve to their behavior and a ''commitment to act'' (Borum & Reddy, 2001) that is shaped by their character and/or psychopathology, regardless of the influence of the group (Meloy, 2004, in press; Pynchon & Borum, 1999). In some cases, *rejection* by the extremist group is a primary drive mechanism for the individual's terrorist act (Puckitt, 2001).

Within our non-terrorist universe, both the potentially lethal and non-lethal groups were following a pathway to targeted violence with clear behavioral indications of planning, preparation, and implementation of their attack. A predatory or instrumental mode of violence, reflected in such a purposeful approach to the public figure, is typical of most public figure attacks (Meloy, 2006; Meloy, Sheridan & Hoffmann, 2008). Both groups also had unstable work histories, difficulty in relationships, and conflicts with authority, usually the police and courts.

However, their psychological and psychiatric histories differed. The non-lethal attackers were more stable and without any psychiatric or suicidal history; the potentially lethal attackers were more often psychotic loners, suicidal, and had a history of severe mental illness: characteristics which do not distinguish them as a group when compared with many problematic approachers to public figures (Dietz & Martell, 1989; James et al., 2009, 2010; Meloy et al., 2008).

The potentially lethal attackers also had more unstable attachment histories. About 56% had lost a mother, a father, or both parents during childhood, and all cases where data were known were in the potentially lethal group. The role of attachment pathology has been extensively studied in samples of stalkers (Kienlen, 1998; MacKenzie, Mullen, Ogloff, McEwan & James, 2008), and theorized in case reports regarding attackers of public figures (Hoffmann & Meloy, 2008; Meloy, 1992; Sides, 2010). These are the first empirical data to suggest that insecure attachment may play a distal but significant role in the psychopathology of attackers of public figures.

The importance of psychotic disorders in public figure problematic approachers and attackers is quite apparent and continues to receive research attention (Dietz & Martell, 1989; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999; James et al., 2007, 2009, 2010; Meloy, 2011; Mullen et al., 2008). In the German sample, psychosis was also substantially present and the content of delusions was directly linked with the motivation for the attack. The risk assessment literature on the mentally ill has noted the principle of rationality within irrationality (Link & Stueve, 1994), and psychosis has a positive and significant relationship to violence risk, although the effect size is small, particularly when compared with personality disorder and/or drug abuse (Douglas, Guy & Hart, 2009). The present findings of a direct link between symptom content of psychosis and motivation for the attack is in agreement with Douglas et al.'s (2009) recommendation that this level of analysis will yield more salient data in understanding violence risk than just the diagnosis.

Personality disorder and attack motivation were also linked when studied at the level of discrete behaviors. Histrionic and narcissistic personality features were present in attackers who were looking for attention through the assault. This was mostly the case in the non-lethal attackers, but when combined with depression, it was occasionally present in the potentially lethal attacker group. The complexity of diagnoses in these cases is to be emphasized, as is the tendency to oversimplify the disorder among both mental health professionals and the public. Typically these cases will have both axis I conditions and apparent axis II traits, features, or disorders.

A warning behavior typology (Meloy, 2011; Meloy, Hoffmann, Guldimann & James, in submission; Meloy & O'Toole, in press) was tested empirically for the first time. This typology organizes, defines, and clarifies various attack signals, pre-attack behaviors, and warning signs concerning attacks on public figures which have been theorized and anecdotally illustrated in the threat assessment literature (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998, 1999; Calhoun, 1998; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; James et al., 2007, 2008; Meloy et al., 2008). Several new concepts, such as novel aggression and energy burst, are also introduced.

Pathway warning behavior, defined by the pathway model (Calhoun & Weston, 2003) proved to be very powerful. Almost every attack on a public figure included the sequential stages of planning, preparation and implementation. The mode of violence was predatory (instrumental), rather than affective (impulsive), in every case (Meloy, 2006).

The rise of suspicious activities in frequency and/or intensity which the present authors termed *energy burst* warning behavior may also be a valid pre-attack signal, which, if present, may mark a heightened risk for an imminent attack. This warning behavior, however, is difficult to code for several reasons: timelines vary considerably across cases, and establishing a baseline of energy for the subject from which to judge an "energy burst" is problematic. More work on this warning behavior needs to be done.

Novel aggression warning behavior that could be seen in the sample suggests that new forms of violent acts in the past and aggressive behavioral trial runs are reasonable factors for a public figure threat assessment. Novel aggression also empirically tests for the first time the last letter of the acronym JACA developed by de Becker (1997), that is, the ability to carry out the act. Novel aggression is the subject testing, although not necessarily consciously so, to see if he or she can be as violent as necessary to carry out the attack on the public figure.

Fixation warning behavior was also very powerful and present in every case, and underscores earlier thinking that pathological fixation focusing on a highly personalized cause is a marker for risk of an attack, particularly against a political figure (James et al., 2009, 2010; Meloy et al., 2008; Mullen et al., 2009). It also appears that the distinction between "mild" and "heavy" is useful.

Identification warning behavior with other public figure attackers, a warrior mentality, or identifying oneself as an agent of a radical ideology was present in more than half of the cases, offering useful data for risk assessment. Identification was originally used by psychoanalysts to describe an internalization process to adapt the characteristics of another (Meissner, 1970), and here specific behaviors were attached to infer such an internal process in subjects who may threaten a public figure.

The low rate of *leakage* warning behavior was surprising (O'Toole, 2000; Meloy & O'Toole, in press). This result was in sharp contrast to other forms of targeted violence such as mass murders and school shootings in which leakage is a very common

phenomenon (Meloy & O'Toole, in press). There may be different characteristic warning behavior profiles for different forms of targeted violence.

As noted in previous public figure attack studies (Fein et al., 1995; James et al., 2007, 2008; Meloy et al., 2004), *directly communicated threat* warning behavior toward the public figure before the attack was extremely rare. This is a logical extension of the stealth of most public figure attacks: a direct threat would convey a warning to the potential victim, and could interfere with a successful assault. The infrequent use of any alcohol or drugs during the attack is also consistent with maintaining a clear state of mind to advance an attack. This is in striking contrast to the use of alcohol in many cases of affective, reactive, or impulsive violence (Meloy, 2006).

It was remarkable how often warning behaviors were known to law enforcement or other authorities. Systematic information management and threat assessment to identify, assess and manage (Borum et al., 1999) potentially dangerous individuals through their warning behaviors toward public figures is clearly necessary. It would be fruitful for public figure protection in Germany and elsewhere to introduce systematic threat assessment procedures gleaned from programs already in use (Hoffmann & Sheridan, 2005; James et al., 2010; Scalora, Zimmerman & Wells, 2008).

Before this, warning behaviors have not been formulated into a systematic theory and then tested empirically. This study provides a theoretical model for empirically categorizing warning behaviors that may have predictive value. Further research is necessary to see if behaviors can be fully captured and reliably categorized by this warning behavior model, and then tested to see if they have concurrent and predictive validity. This will advance the science of threat assessment and provide an empirical foundation for arriving at the decision that a subject of concern poses a threat (Fein et al., 1995).

The results of the attack behavior made clear that known public appearances were often actively selected by the offenders for their assault. On the other hand, the presence of security lowered the risk for acts of severe violence. It was apparent in the German sample that most attacks happened at close range (< 2 meters) to the public figure (de Becker, Taylor & Marquart, 2008).

Similar to cases of mass murder (Hempel et al., 1999), the public figure attackers often made statements during the attack that offered a conscious insight into his or her motivation for the offence. Such "psychological abstracts" do not happen all the time before an attack, but appear to be frequent and significant enough to be studied retrospectively to understand why subjects believed they were mounting the attack. Conscious motivation, however, may differ from more unconscious reasons for the attack (attention-seeking, paranoia, retribution, etc.), which may be, in turn, more closely related to psychiatric diagnosis and specific symptoms which support the attack behavior.

This study is limited by its small sample size, some missing data, the lack of inferential statistics to test for differences, and its focus on public figure attacks in one country that may not generalize to others. However, it provides a template for further work in this area by empirically testing a typology of warning behaviors, describing in detail the comparative attack behaviors of the subjects, and demonstrating the close link between psychiatric diagnosis and motivation for the attack when the disorder is studied at the symptomatic and content level. This is an attempt to advance the science of threat assessment, an idiographic method of risk managing low base rate but highly consequential acts of intended and targeted violence.

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Freier Beitrag

Der Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigung des Ex-Partners, Trennungskontext, Bindungsstil und Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung

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Zusammenfassung. Die vorliegende Studie untersuchte via online-Befragung den Zusammenhang zwischen Ex-Partner-Belästigung und Trennungskontext, Bindungsstil sowie Commitment. Es wurde erwartet, dass jene Männer, die von ihrer Ex-Partnerin verlassen worden sind, eher zu Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber dieser tendieren als jene, die die Beziehung selber beendet haben. Des Weiteren wurde ein positiver Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigungsverhalten und ängstlicher Bindung erwartet. Schliesslich wurde erstmalig eine positive Beziehung zwischen Belästigungsverhalten und Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung postuliert. Für die Analysen wurden die Daten einer für die Universität Bern repräsentativen Stichprobe von männlichen Studenten und Doktoranden (N = 140) untersucht. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass insbesondere Commitment ein guter Prädiktor für Ex-Partner-Belästigung ist und dass der verlassene Partner zu mehr solchen stalkingähnlichen Verhaltensweisen neigt als der, der den Partner verlassen hat. Ebenfalls konnte eine Beziehung zwischen ängstlicher Bindung und Ex-Partner-Belästigung gefunden werden.

Schlüsselwörter: Belästigung, Trennung einer Beziehung, Unwanted Pursuit, Bindungsstil, Commitment

Correlation between post-relationship harassment, break-up context, attachment and commitment

Abstract. The present study investigated the correlation between post-relationship harassment, break-up context, attachment and commitment. Therefore an online questionnaire was used. Participants (N = 140) were men, being a representative sample of students at the University of Bern. It was assumed that male breakup sufferers were more likely to engage in unwanted pursuit behavior than relationship dissolvers. A positive relationship between unwanted pursuit behavior and anxious attachment was anticipated. For the first time the level of commitment was assumed to be directly proportional to unwanted pursuit behavior. Results show that breakup sufferers are more likely than relationship dissolvers to engage in stalking-like behavior. Commitment in particular is a significant predictor of unwanted pursuit behavior. A positive relationship between unwanted pursuit behavior and anxious attachment was found as well.

Keywords: harassment, relationship breakup, unwanted pursuit, attachment style, commitment

Einleitung

Die Trennung einer Liebesbeziehung hat in den meisten Fällen für beide Beteiligten negative emotionale Folgen. Diese können von einem vorübergehenden Gefühl der Trauer und Einsamkeit, über Kummer und Angst bis hin zu klinisch relevanten Phänomenen wie Depression oder gar Suizid führen (vgl. Gottman, 1994). Insbesondere jene Person, welche verlassen worden ist, leidet meist mehr und

verspürt häufig zusätzlich zu Trauer auch Wut, Ärger, Entsetzen und Eifersucht (Baumeister, Wotman & Stillwell, 1993; Buss, 2008), was dadurch erklärt werden kann, dass die Person, welche verlassen wird, eine Zurückweisung erfährt und über weniger Kontrolle bezüglich des Ausgangs verfügt, als jene, die die Trennung initiiert hat (Sprecher, Felmlee, Metts, Fehr & Vanni, 1998). Die meisten Menschen verarbeiten jedoch nach einer gewissen Zeit mithilfe von mehr oder weniger nützlichen Copingstrategien die

Trennung, wie bspw. darüber reden, weinen, den Ex-Partner meiden oder den Versuch, über die Trennung hinweg Freunde zu bleiben (Buss, 2008). Jedoch zeigen einige wenige Personen ein Verhalten gegenüber dem Ex-Partner, das sich durch Verfolgen, Belästigen und Nachstellen auszeichnet und im Extremfall als Stalking zu bezeichnen ist (e. g. Buss, 2008; Davis, Ace & Andra, 2000; Palarea, Zona, Lane & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999).

Die vorliegende Studie möchte untersuchen, welche Zusammenhänge zwischen einer ungünstigen Trennungsverarbeitung im Sinne eines Belästigungsverhaltens gegenüber dem Ex-Partner und bestimmten Personenmerkmalen sowie beziehungsbezogenen Faktoren bestehen. Dabei interessiert, ob es Aspekte im Bindungsmuster, im Commitment und in den durch die Trennung ausgelösten Emotionen gibt, die ein solches Belästigungsverhalten begünstigen. Da häufiger Männer zu Belästigungsverhalten oder Stalking neigen, sollen in der vorliegenden Studie männliche Studenten und Doktoranden mit Hilfe eines Online-Fragebogens zu möglichem Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber der Ex-Freundin untersucht werden.

Stalking wird in einer der gängigsten Definition als das beabsichtigte, böswillige und wiederholte Verfolgen und Belästigen einer Person bezeichnet, welches als Bedrohung der Sicherheit wahrgenommen wird (Meloy & Gothard, 1995). Im Allgemeinen wird dabei davon ausgegangen, dass es einen fliessenden Übergang von einem sehr ausgeprägten, unerwünschten Kontakt- und Annäherungsverhalten, welches aber noch den sozialen Konventionen entspricht, und dem Stalking gibt (Hoffmann, 2006). Da wir eine studentische Stichprobe untersuchen, beschränken wir uns im Wesentlichen auf die leichtere Form des Belästigungsverhaltens, welches im Vergleich zum Konzept von Stalking[1] enger gefasst ist und stärker den relationalen Aspekt betont. Unter unwanted pursuit behavior (UPB, deutsch: Belästigungsverhalten) versteht man ein andauerndes und vom Opfer nicht erwünschtes Verfolgen, welches gemäss den Autoren zu zwei möglichen Zeitpunkten zwischen zwei Individuen auftreten kann: (1) bevor eine einvernehmliche Partnerschaft eingegangen wird oder (2) nach der Beendigung einer Partnerschaft, wobei letzteres zweifelsohne häufiger vor kommt (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Palarea, Cohen & Rohling, 2000), weshalb wir uns in der vorliegenden Studie im Sinne einer homogeneren Untersuchungspopulation lediglich darauf fokussieren. Dass man eine andere Person auch ohne vorangehende oder nachgehende Beziehung belästigen oder im Extremfall «stalken» kann, versteht sich dabei von selbst, ist jedoch weder Gegenstand der vorliegenden Untersuchung noch der Konzeption von UPB oder ähnlichen Konstrukten, wie z. B. obsessive relational intrusion (ORI; Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998).

Zahlreiche Untersuchungen (e. g. Davis et al., 2000; De Smet, Buysse & Brondeel, 2011; Dye & Davis, 2003) konnten aufzeigen, dass vermehrt jene Personen ihren Ex-Partner belästigten, die von diesem verlassen worden sind, verglichen mit jenen, die die Trennung eingeleitet haben. Das erstaunt kaum, dienen Belästigungsverhaltensweisen nach einer Trennung doch in erster Linie der Wiederaufnahme der Beziehung (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000) sowie dem Ziel, ein gewisses Mass an Kontrolle (zurück) zu erlangen oder dem Wunsch nach Rache (vgl. Hoffmann, 2006). Da das Verlassen werden mit einem Kontrollverlust einhergeht und in den allermeisten Fällen zu intensiven negativen Gefühlen führt, wird folgende Hypothese formuliert: Personen, die vom Partner verlassen worden sind, zeigen eher Belästigungsverhalten als Personen, die die Trennung initiiert haben.

Die einflussreichsten Theorien zur Erklärung von sozialem Bindungsverhalten stammen von John Bowlby und Mary Ainsworth. Ersterer (1969, 1982) ging davon aus, dass das Bindungsbedürfnis des Menschen angeboren ist und während des ganzen Lebens bestehen bleibt. Seine Funktion ist es in erster Linie, das Überleben des Kleinkindes zu sichern, indem eine tiefe Beziehung vom Kind zu seinen primären Bezugspersonen hergestellt wird. Die Bindungstheorie geht weiter davon aus, dass der Aufbau einer engen vertrauensvollen Beziehung zu einer Bezugsperson in der Kindheit für die weitere Persönlichkeitsentwicklung sehr wichtig ist (ebd.). Das Fehlen einer sicheren Bindung im (Klein-)Kindesalter kann im späteren Leben zu Konflikten führen, vor allem in Situationen, die Ähnlichkeit mit der frühen defizitären Beziehung aufweisen (Hoffmann, 2006). Beispielsweise können im Kontext von Trennungen zwischen Partnern dysfunktionale Reaktionen erfolgen, wie etwa Wuthandlungen, die mit dem Gefühl der Vernachlässigung im Kindesalter zusammenhängen (ebd.). Ausserdem begünstigt eine unsichere Bindungserfahrung im Allgemeinen die spätere Entwicklung von psychischen Störungen, wie Verhaltens- oder affektive Störungen (vgl. Steinhausen, 2010). Diverse Studien weisen darauf hin, dass im Gegensatz zu Personen, die einen sicheren Bindungsstil aufweisen, vor allem solche Personen mit einem ambivalenten oder einem ängstlichen Bindungsmuster stärker und länger durch eine Trennung einer Liebesbeziehung belastet sind (e. g. Barbara & Dion, 2000; Davis, Shaver & Vernon, 2003; Sbarra, 2006; Sprecher et al., 1998), zu mehr negativen Copingstrategien, wie grübeln (Saffrey & Ehrenberg, 2007) oder Nähe zum Ex-Partner suchen (Davis et al., 2003), und schliesslich vermehrt zu Belästigungs- und Stalkingverhalten gegenüber dem Ex-Partner neigen (e. g. Dutton & Winstead, 2006; Dye & Davis, 2003; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000; Lewis, Fremouw, Del Ben & Farr, 2001; Wigman, Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2008). Das gemeinsame des ambivalenten und ängstlichen Bindungsstils ist die starke Angst vor dem Verlassen werden, verbunden mit dem Gefühl der eigenen Unzulänglichkeit in der Beziehung und

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1 Stalking beinhaltet ebenfalls eine relationale Komponente, jedoch resultiert Stalking nicht nur aus relationalen oder Intimität-suchenden Motiven (De Smet et al., 2011).

einer Hyperaktivierung des Bindungsverhaltens (Brennan, Clark & Shaver, 1998). Diese Angst vor dem Verlassenwerden kann bei einer Trennung zu einem stark klammernden Verhalten führen (Neumann, Rohmann & Bierhoff, 2007), mit der Absicht, die Beziehung zu retten und den Partner an sich zu binden (Hoffmann, 2006). Gaines et al. (1997) sowie Besser und Priel (2009) konnten zudem zeigen, dass Personen mit einer ängstlichen gegenüber einer sicheren Bindung auf einen Vertrauensbruch des Partners verstärkt mit aggressiven oder feindseligen Verhaltensweisen oder anderen heftigen Reaktionen antworten. Aufgrund dieser Befunde folgt die zweite Hypothese: Personen, die hohe Werte in der Bindungsdimension Angst erreichen, tendieren eher zu Belästigungsverhalten als Personen, die in der Bindungsdimension Angst tiefe Werte aufweisen.

Personen, die ein höheres Commitment gegenüber dem Partner aufweisen, emotional stärker in die Beziehung involviert sind und über weniger vergleichbar attraktive Alternativen verfügen als der Partner, leiden verstärkt nach einer Trennung (e. g. Davis et al., 2003; Sprecher et al., 1998). Nach Rusbult (1980) wird unter Commitment die Festlegung auf einen Partner verstanden, mit der klaren Absicht, die Beziehung aufrecht zu erhalten und die damit verbundene gegenseitige Abhängigkeit zu akzeptieren. Die Höhe des Commitments wird dabei durch die Höhe der Zufriedenheit mit dem Partner, die Qualität potentieller Alternativen zum Partner und die Höhe der getätigten emotionalen, sozialen und ökonomischen Investitionen in die Beziehung bedingt. Zahlreiche Studien belegen, dass das Commitment die Beziehungsstabilität sehr gut vorhersagen kann und dies als Funktion sowohl einer steigenden Zufriedenheit, steigender Investitionen als auch einer abnehmenden Attraktivität von Alternativen zu verstehen ist (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998). Ein hohes Commitment erhöht zudem die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass im Konfliktfall verschiedene kognitive und verhaltensbezogene Strategien angewendet werden, die der Aufrechterhaltung der Beziehung dienen (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro & Hannon, 2002; Rusbult, Olsen, Davis & Hannon, 2004; Slotter et al., 2012). So sind Personen mit steigendem Commitment eher zum Nachgeben bereit, neigen bei einem Vertrauensbruch des Partners eher zur Vergebung und zeigen eine höhere Bereitschaft, mögliche Alternativen zur Partnerschaft abzuwerten. Je mehr eine verlassene Person noch an ihrem Ex-Partner hängt, möglicherweise da sie viel in die Beziehung investiert hat, was bei einer Trennung verloren ginge, desto mehr könnte sie versucht sein, die beendete Beziehung zu retten und den Ex-Partner zurückgewinnen zu wollen. Finkel et al. (2002) und Slotter et al. (2012) können in ihren Studien belegen, dass mit steigendem Commitment gegenüber dem Partner auch eine Hemmung der Aggression verbunden ist. Ihre Studien beziehen sich jedoch nur auf bestehende Paarbeziehungen. Es ist daher fraglich, ob eine Aggressionshemmung auch dann noch angenommen werden kann, wenn eine Trennung erfolgt ist, aber gegenüber dem Ex-Partner nach wie vor ein hohes Commitment besteht. Diese Frage

wurde bisher noch nicht untersucht, aber es scheint denkbar, dass insbesondere die vom Partner verlassene Person, die sich nach wie vor an den Ex-Partner gebunden fühlt, bei ihren Bemühungen zur Wiederherstellung der Beziehung auch zu Bedrohungs- und aggressiven Verhaltensweisen greift. Aufgrund dieser Überlegungen wird postuliert, dass Personen mit hohem Commitment in Bezug auf ihre letzte Beziehung eher zu Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber dem Ex-Partner neigen als Personen mit tiefem Commitment.

Schliesslich ist es ein weiteres Ziel der Untersuchung, die mit einer Trennung verbundenen Emotionen verbundenen Emotionen zu erfassen und zu überprüfen, ob es einen Zusammenhang zwischen dem Belästigungsverhalten und negativen Emotionen gibt, wie dem Gefühl des Verletztseins oder Ärger und Wut.

Methode

Für die vorliegende Studie wurden 1000 zufällig ausgewählte männliche Studenten und Doktoranden der Universität Bern brieflich angeschrieben. Es wurden nur Männer mit Korrespondenzsprache Deutsch berücksichtigt, die in der Schweiz oder in Lichtenstein wohnhaft waren. Alle Probanden (Pbn) mussten mindestens eine beendete Partnerschaft aufweisen, um an der Untersuchung teilzunehmen. Von 142 antwortenden Pbn wurden zwei aufgrund ihres weiblichen Geschlechts ausgeschlossen, was schliesslich zu einer Stichprobengrösse von N = 140 führte. Die Pbn nahmen anonym an der Untersuchung teil und erhielten keinerlei Vergütung.

Erhebungsinstrumente

Belästigungsverhalten

Das Belästigungsverhalten wurde anhand des Unwanted Pursuit Behavior Inventory (UPBI; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000) erhoben. Dies ist ein 26-Item Fragebogen, welcher die Auftretenshäufigkeit von unerwünschten Verhaltensweisen gegenüber einem Ex-Partner auf einer fünfstufigen Likert-Skala misst (0 = nie; 1 = 1–2 mal; 2 = mehr als 2 mal; 3 = mehr als 5 mal; 4 = mehr als 10 mal). Das UPBI weist 13 leichtere (Item 1 bis 13) und 13 schwerere Verhaltensweisen (Item 14 bis 26) auf. Alle Items wurden von der Autorin vom Englischen ins Deutsche übersetzt und von einem bilingualen Übersetzer rückübersetzt. Aufgrund inhaltlicher Überlegungen wurde das erste Item in zwei Items aufgeteilt, womit Item 1 bis 14 die leichtere Form und Item 15 bis 27 die schwerere Form von UPB abbildet (vgl. Kasten 1). Es wurde sowohl ein Gesamtscore (mean number of UPB acts; Anzahl Verhaltensweisen) wie auch ein Schweregrad (mean UPB severity index) als gewichteter Score gebildet (vgl. Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000). Eine Reliabilitätsanalyse ergaben akzeptable interne Konsistenzen, mit einem Cronbach's Alpha von .77

Haben Sie eine der folgenden Verhaltensweisen gegenüber Ihrer Ex-Freundin angewendet, obwohl Sie gewusst haben, dass sie dies nicht wünscht oder gar keinen Kontakt mit Ihnen haben wollte?

Haben Sie/Sind Sie …

1. ihm/ihr Nachrichten auf dem Anrufbeantworter hinterlassen
2. ihn/sie angerufen und den Hörer wieder aufgehängt
3. ihm/ihr Briefe/E-Mails/Faxe/Geschenke gesendet oder hinterlassen
4. ihn/sie in ein Telefongespräch verwickelt
5. mit ihm/ihr in einem Internet Chat-Room gesprochen
6. ihn/sie in ein persönliches Gespräch verwickelt
7. ihm/ihr persönlich Sachen (z. B. Briefe/Geschenke) gegeben
8. Freunde über ihn/sie ausgefragt
9. seine/ihre Familie oder Freunde ohne seine/ihre Erlaubnis kontaktiert
10. an Orte gegangen, an denen sie dachten, er/sie könnte vermutlich sein
11. einen Umweg gemacht, um ihm/ihr «zufällig» zu begegnen
12. ihn/sie Zuhause überrascht
13. ihn/sie überraschend in der Schule, bei der Arbeit oder an anderen öffentlichen Orten besucht
14. vor seinem/ihrem Zuhause, der Arbeit oder der Schule gewartet
15. ihm/ihr gefolgt
16. ihm/ihr vage oder indirekte Drohungen ausgesprochen
17. ihm/ihr gedroht, Informationen preis zu geben, die für ihn/sie nachteilig sind
18. ihm/ihr gedroht, ihn/sie umzubringen
19. ihm/ihr gedroht, jemanden Nahestehendes oder sein/ihr Haustier zu verletzen oder um zubringen
20. ihn/sie mit einer Waffe bedroht
21. Informationen preisgegeben, die ihm/ihr geschadet haben
22. Sachen von ihm/ihr gestohlen
23. sein/ihr Eigentum beschädigt (z. B. Haus oder Auto)
24. jemandem, der ihm/ihr nahe steht oder seinem/ihrem Haustier Verletzungen herbeigeführt
25. ihn/sie körperlich verletzt
26. ihn/sie entführt oder ihn/sie gegen seinen/ihren Willen festgehalten
27. ihn/sie gezwungen an sexuellem Kontakt teilzunehmen

Kasten 1. Ins Deutsche übersetzte, rückübersetzte und erweiterte Version des Unwanted Pursuit Behavior Inventory (UPBI)

für den Gesamtscore Anzahl Verhaltensweisen und für den Schweregrad ein Alpha von .81.

Trennungskontext

Der Trennungskontext wurde mit der Frage, von wem die letzte Trennung ausgegangen war, erhoben. Dabei wurden folgende zwei Antworten angeboten: (1) Eher von meiner Partnerin, (2) Eher von mir. 47 % der Pbn gaben an, ihre letzte Trennung sei vom Ex-Partner ausgegangen und 53 % haben ihre letzte Beziehung selber beendet.

Bindungsstil

Zur Messung des Bindungsstils wurde der Bochumer Bindungsfragebogen von Neumann et al. (2007) hinzugezogen. Er besteht aus 36 Items, die die beiden Dimensionen Angst und Vermeidung messen und auf einer sieben-stufigen Skala (1 = stimmt überhaupt nicht; 7 = stimmt voll und ganz) beantwortet werden. Die interne Konsistenz ergab für die Skala Vermeidung ein Alpha nach Cronbach von .87 und für die Skala Angst ein Alpha von .88, was befriedigend ist.

Commitment

Die Beziehungsfaktoren des Investitionsmodells von Rusbult (1980) wurden mittels der deutschen Version der Investment Model Scale von Grau, Mikula und Engel (2001) erhoben, welche sich eng an den Originalfragebogen von Rusbult et al. (1998) anlehnt. Alle Items werden auf einer fünf-stufigen Skala (1 = stimmt nicht; 5 = stimmt völlig) beantwortet (Grau et al., 2001). Aus ökonomischen Gründen sind in den für diese Untersuchung verwendeten Fragebogen nur die globalen Items (vs. spezifische Items) der Skalen Zufriedenheit, Qualität der Alternativen und Investitionen sowie alle Items der Skala Commitment eingeflossen. Die Reliabilitätsanalysen ergaben für die Skala Zufriedenheit ein Cronbach's Alpha von .90, für die Skala Investitionen ein Cronbach's Alpha von .77, für die Skala Qualität der Alternativen ein Cronbach's Alpha von .70 und für die Skala Commitment ein Cronbach's Alpha von .85.

Emotionale Reaktion auf die letzte Trennung

Folgende Emotionen konnten auf einer fünf-stufigen Skala (1 = gar nicht; 5 = sehr stark) beurteilt werden: (1) be-

schämt, (2) verletzt, (3) traurig, (4) ärgerlich, (5) wütend. Diese negativen Emotionen wurden ausgewählt, da sie in einer Voruntersuchung am häufigsten als Gefühle nach einem Beziehungsabbruch genannt wurden, insbesondere auf der Seite der Verlassenen.

Durchführung

Die 1000 Studenten und Doktoranden wurden mittels Brief über das Ziel der Untersuchung informiert und gebeten teilzunehmen. Um zum online-Fragebogen zu gelangen, mussten die Pbn den im Brief vermerkten Web-Link eingeben und den Anweisungen folgen. Die Pbn nahmen an, es handle sich um eine Umfrage zum Thema Umgang mit Trennungen bei Partnerschaften, bei der untersucht wird, wie Menschen mit einer Trennung umgehen und wie sie diese verarbeiten. Die Erhebung fand zwischen dem 20. April und dem 31. Mai 2009 online mit Hilfe der Software EFS Survey von Globalpark auf der Web-Plattform Unipark statt.

Datenanalyse

Da einige Variablen die Voraussetzungen für die Durchführung von parametrischen Tests nicht erfüllten (Schiefe und Kurtosis), wurden nicht-parametrische Tests – der Mann-Whitney und Kruskal-Wallis Test für die Untersuchung von Gruppenunterschieden – angewendet. Für die Prüfung von Zusammenhangshypothesen wurden bivariate Korrelationen nach Spearman sowie einfache oder multiple (hierarchische) lineare Regressionen gerechnet. Alle statistischen Analysen wurden mit dem Statistik-Programm SPSS 17 für Windows durchgeführt.

Ergebnisse

Stichprobe

Das Alter der Pbn verteilte sich folgendermassen auf die fünf Alterskategorien: Ein Proband (Pb) (0.7 %) war jünger als 20 jährig, 82 Pbn (58.6 %) waren zwischen 20 und 25 Jahre alt, 33 Pbn (23.6 %) waren zwischen 26 und 30, 15 Pbn (10.7 %) zwischen 31 und 35 und neun Pbn (6.4 %) waren über 35.

Die Zugehörigkeit der Studenten und Doktoranden zu den Fakultäten der Universität Bern kann als vergleichbar mit der tatsächlichen Anzahl männlicher Studierender und Doktorierenden der jeweiligen Fakultäten betrachtet werden. Die gefundene Verteilung weicht nicht bedeutsam von der zu erwartenden ab ($\chi^2(7) = 9.51$, $p = .218$).

Bezüglich der Dauer der letzten Beziehung ergab sich folgende Verteilung: Bei 22 Pbn (15.7 %) dauerte die letzte Beziehung weniger als drei Monate, bei ebenfalls 22 Pbn (15.7 %) lag die Dauer der letzten Beziehung zwischen drei und sechs Monaten, 20 Pbn (14.3 %) gaben an, ihre letzte Beziehung habe zwischen sieben und 12 Monaten gedauert, 29 Pbn (20.7 %) gaben zwischen 13 und 24 Monaten an und bei 47 Pbn (33.6 %) dauerte die letzte Beziehung länger als 24 Monate.

Es zeigte sich, dass sowohl der Schweregrad von UPB wie auch die Anzahl Verhaltensweisen unabhängig vom Alter der Pbn (H(4) = 5.92, $p = .182$, resp. H(4) = 5.13, $p = .267$), deren Studienrichtung (H(7) = 6.77, $p = .465$, resp. H(7) = 5.72, $p = .591$) und der Länge der Beziehung war (H(4) = 3.91, $p = .426$, resp. H(4) = 4.84, $p = .305$).

Deskriptive Analyse

Häufigkeit des Belästigungsverhaltens

Von den 140 Pbn gaben 104 (74.3 %) an, mindestens einmal irgendein Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber der Ex-Partnerin gezeigt zu haben. Betrachtet man nur die Fälle, in denen eine Handlung mehr als zweimal stattgefunden hat, so zeigt sich, dass dies immer noch bei 62 Pbn (44.3 %) der Fall war.

42 Pbn (30 %) kreuzten eine oder zwei unterschiedliche Belästigungsarten an, wohingegen 44 Pbn (31.4 %) angaben, zwischen drei und fünf verschiedene UPB verübt zu haben. Schliesslich haben 18 Pbn (12.9 %) mehr als sechs unterschiedliche Belästigungsarten ausgeübt, wobei das Maximum bei zwölf von 27 möglichen lag. Einen Überblick über den prozentualen Anteil der Anzahl angewendeter Belästigungsverhaltensweisen liefert Abbildung 1. Der Mittelwert lag bei 2.61 unterschiedlichen Belästigungsverhaltensweisen (SD = 2.59)

Bezüglich des Schweregrads, welcher sowohl die Häufigkeit der gezeigten Verhaltensweisen wie auch deren Schwere berücksichtigt, ergab sich ein Mittelwert von 4.51 (*SD* = 5.81), wobei die Pbn einen Wert zwischen Null und 34 erreichten. Der maximal erreichbare Wert liegt bei 160.

Art des Belästigungsverhaltens

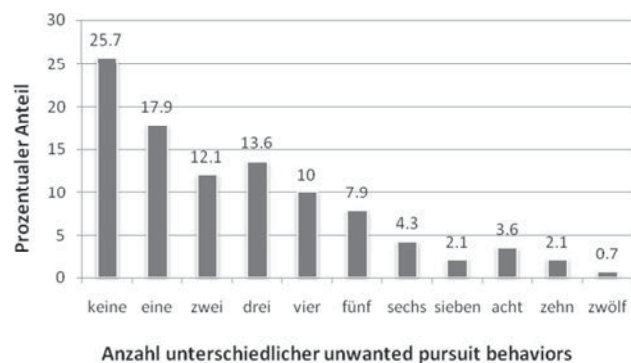Am häufigsten wurde das Opfer in ein persönliches Gespräch verwickelt (44.3 %), gefolgt vom Zusenden von

Abbildung 1. Prozentualer Anteil Anzahl unterschiedlicher Stalkingverhaltensweisen (*N* = 140).

Tabelle 1

Mittelwertsvergleiche zwischen Verlassenen und Beziehungsabbrecher in Bezug auf UPB

	Verlassene		Beziehungsabbrecher		Man-Whitney U
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Schweregrad	4.81	5.01	4.18	6.61	1959.00*
Anzahl Verhaltensweisen	2.99	2.46	2.20	2.68	1858.50*

Anmerkungen: * *p* < .05.

Tabelle 2

Interkorrelationsmatrix nach Spearman für die Variablen Belästigung (UPB-Schweregrad und Anzahl UPB), Angst, Commitment und Trennungskontext (einseitig)

	UPB Schweregrad	Anzahl UPB	Angst	Commitment
UPB Schweregrad				
Anzahl UPB	.97***			
Angst	.23**	.25**		
Commitment	.40***	.41***	.22**	
Trennungskontext	.17*	.21**	.36***	.37***

Anmerkungen: * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001.

Briefen, E-Mails, Faxe oder Geschenken (42.9 %), Ausfragen von Freunden über das Opfer (39.3 %), Verwickeln des Opfers in ein Telefongespräch (33.6 %) und persönlichen Übergeben von Sachen (z. B. Briefe, Geschenke) (23.6 %).

Bezüglich der schwereren Verhaltensweisen gaben zwei Personen (1.4 %) an, vage oder indirekte Drohungen gemacht zu haben, zwei Personen (1.4 %) haben gedroht, Informationen Preis zu geben, die für das Opfer nachteilig wären, und vier Personen (2.9 %) haben das Opfer verleumdet. Eine Person (0.7 %) hat das Eigentum des Opfers beschädigt und ebenfalls eine Person (0.7 %) hat das Opfer gegen dessen Willen festgehalten oder entführt.

Überprüfung der Hypothesen

Unterschiede im Belästigungsverhalten in Abhängigkeit vom Trennungskontext

Zur Überprüfung der ersten Hypothese wurde je ein Mann-Whitney Test mit der abhängigen Variable (AV) Schweregrad und der AV Anzahl Verhaltensweisen durchgeführt. Es ergab sich ein signifikanter Unterschied zwischen den vom Partner Verlassenen und den Beziehungsabbrechern (U = 1959.00, z = –2.04, p = .021, r = –.17) in Bezug auf den Schweregrad des Belästigungsverhaltens sowie in Bezug auf die Anzahl Verhaltensweisen (U = 1858.50, z = –2.47, p = .006, r = –.21) (Tab. 1). Diese Ergebnisse stützen die erste Hypothese.

Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigung und Bindungsdimension Angst. Tabelle 2 zeigt die bivariaten Korrelationen nach Spearman für den UPB-Schweregrad und die Anzahl Verhaltensweisen (UPB) sowie die Variablen

Angst, Commitment und Trennungskontext. Angst korreliert sowohl mit den Anzahl Verhaltensweisen (r_s = .25, p = .002) wie auch mit dem Schweregrad (r_s = .23, p = .003) signifikant positiv. Darüber hinaus korreliert die Bindungsdimension Angst auch positiv mit dem Trennungskontext (r_s = .36, p < .001) insofern als höhere Werte in der Angst mit einem Verlassen werden einhergehen. Diese Ergebnisse sprechen für die zweite Hypothese.

Zusammenhang zwischen Belästigung und Commitment. Commitment korreliert signifikant positiv mit dem Schweregrad (r_s = .40, p < .001) sowie mit der Anzahl Verhaltensweisen (r_s = .41, p < .001). Des Weiteren korreliert Commitment signifikant positiv mit dem Trennungskontext (r_s = .37, p < .001); tieferes Commitment geht dabei mit einem aktiven Verlassen des Partners einher. Diese Ergebnisse stützen Hypothese drei. Darüber hinaus zeigt sich, dass jeder der Basisfaktoren von Rusbult (Zufriedenheit, Investitionen, Qualität der Alternativen) einen eigenständigen Beitrag zur Vorhersage des Commitments leistet (vgl. Tab. 3).

Tabelle 3

Multiple lineare Regressionsanalyse zur Vorhersage von Commitment durch die Variablen Zufriedenheit, Alternativen und Investitionen (N = 140)

	B	SE B	β
Konstante	1.91	0.43	
Zufriedenheit	0.29	0.06	.30*
Alternativen	–0.32	0.08	–.25*
Investitionen	0.48	0.08	.41*

Anmerkungen: R^2 = .58. * *p* < .001.

Tabelle 4

Multiple hierarchische Regressionsanalyse zur Vorhersage der Anzahl Verhaltensweisen durch die Variablen Zufriedenheit, Alternativen, Investitionen sowie Commitment (N = 140)

	B	SE B	β
Schritt 1			
Konstante	−3.69	1.62	
Zufriedenheit	2.41	0.23	.09
Alternativen	0.14	0.30	.00
Investitionen	0.79	0.29	.23*
Schritt 2			
Konstante	−2.21	1.67	
Zufriedenheit	−0.04	0.24	−.02
Alternativen	0.33	0.31	.10
Investitionen	0.33	0.32	.11
Commitment	0.96	0.31	.38*

Anmerkungen: R^2 = .10 für Schritt 1; ΔR^2 = .06 für Schritt 2 (*p* = .002). * *p* < .01.

57.6 % der Varianz der Kriteriumsvariable Belästigungsverhalten konnte mit Hilfe der drei Prädiktoren erklärt werden. In einer multiplen hierarchischen Regressionsanalyse mit den drei Basisfaktoren als Prädiktoren im ersten Schritt, dem Commitment zusätzlich im zweiten Schritt und der Anzahl der belästigenden Verhaltensweisen als Kriterium zeigte sich nur der Faktor Investitionen als signifikanter Prädiktor. Diese Vorhersagekraft war jedoch im zweiten Schritt nicht mehr bedeutsam; das Commitment konnte darüber hinaus noch Varianz erklären (vgl. Tab. 4). Dieselben Ergebnisse ergaben sich in Bezug auf den Schweregrad als Kriterium.

Weiterführende Analysen

Emotionen nach der Trennung. Es zeigten sich signifikante Unterschiede in den folgenden Emotionen zwischen den Verlassenen und den Beziehungsabbrechern: «verletzt» (H(1) = 32.47, *p* < .001), «traurig» (H(1) = 9.54, *p* = .002), «ärgerlich» (H(1) = 11.90, *p* = .001) und «wütend» (H(1) = 20.66, *p* < .001). Belästigung korrelierte sowohl gemessen durch den Schweregrad wie auch durch die Anzahl Verhaltensweisen signifikant positiv mit den Emotionen verletzt, traurig und wütend (vgl. Tab. 5).

Vorhersage von Belästigung durch alle Prädiktoren

Als Prädiktoren gingen der Trennungskontext, die Bindungsdimension Angst, das Commitment sowie die Emotionen verletzt, traurig und wütend in die Regressionsanalyse ein. Für die Kriteriumsvariablen Schweregrad und Anzahl belästigender Verhaltensweisen wurden zwei separate Analysen gerechnet.

Tabelle 5

Interkorrelationsmatrix nach Spearman für die Variablen Belästigung (UPB-Schweregrad und Anzahl UPB), Trennungskontext sowie die Emotionen nach der Trennung (beschämt, verletzt, traurig, ärgerlich, wütend) (einseitig)

	UPB Schweregrad	Anzahl UPB	Trennungskontext
beschämt	.12	.11	−.10
verletzt	.33***	.33***	.49***
traurig	.29**	.32***	.26**
ärgerlich	.14	.12	.30***
wütend	.21*	.20*	.39***

Anmerkungen: * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001.

Tabelle 6

Multiple Regressionsanalyse zur Vorhersage des Schweregrads durch die Variablen Trennungskontext, Bindungsdimension Angst, Commitment sowie die Emotionen verletzt, traurig und wütend (N = 140)

	B	SE B	β
Konstante	−0.28	2.26	
Trennungskontext	−2.01	1.13	−.17[+]
Angst	0.40	0.52	.07
Commitment	1.48	0.65	.26*
verletzt	1.03	0.49	.25*
traurig	−0.01	0.54	.00
wütend	−0.18	0.45	−.04

Anmerkungen: R^2 = .157. [+] *p* < .10 * *p* < .05.

Tabelle 7

Multiple hierarchische Regressionsanalyse zur Vorhersage der Anzahl Verhaltensweisen durch die Variablen Trennungskontext, Bindungsdimension Angst, Commitment sowie die Emotionen verletzt, traurig und wütend (N = 140)

	B	SE B	β
Konstante	−0.84	0.99	
Trennungskontext	−0.41	0.49	−.08
Angst	0.27	0.23	.10
Commitment	0.62	0.28	.24*
verletzt	0.32	0.22	.18
traurig	0.20	0.24	.09
wütend	−0.01	0.20	−.00

Anmerkungen: R^2 = .184. * *p* < .05.

Bezüglich der Analyse mit dem Kriterium Schweregrad erwiesen sich die Variablen Commitment und die Emotion «verletzt» als signifikante Prädiktoren (vgl. Tab. 6). Der Trennungskontext wurde marginal signifikant. Das Modell erklärte 15.7 % der Varianz. Bezüglich des Kriteriums Anzahl der belästigenden Verhaltensweisen erwies sich nur

der Prädiktor Commitment als signifikant (vgl. Tab. 7). Das Modell konnte 18.4 % der Varianz aufklären.

Diskussion

Es war das Ziel der vorliegenden Studie, den Zusammenhang zwischen Ex-Partner-Belästigung und Trennungskontext, Bindungsdimension Angst sowie Commitment gegenüber der Beziehung empirisch zu überprüfen. Die Ergebnisse der deskriptiven Analysen zeigen, dass ein unerwünschtes Annäherungs- und Belästigungsverhalten nach einer Partnertrennung relativ häufig vorzukommen scheint. Nur 26 % aller untersuchten Probanden haben noch nie ihre Ex-Partnerin gegen deren Willen verfolgt oder belästigt. Immerhin haben 13 % der Befragten mehr als sechs unterschiedliche Belästigungsmethoden angewendet, was mit den Ergebnissen von Davis et al. (2000) vergleichbar ist. Bei einem solchen Ausmass des Belästigungsverhaltens kann zumindest vermutet werden, dass es vom Opfer als unangenehm, wenn nicht sogar beängstigend wahrgenommen wird, was für ein intensiveres Belästigungsverhalten oder gar Stalking spricht und einen fliessenden Übergang vom einen zum anderen nahe legt. Betrachtet man nur die vom Partner verlassenen Personen, so haben 82 % mindestens zu einem Belästigungsverhalten gegriffen. Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. (2000) konnten allerdings ein noch extremeres Bild anhand ihrer Ergebnisse zeichnen, denn danach zeigten sogar 99 % der verlassenen Personen mindestens ein Belästigungsverhalten.

Von allen Möglichkeiten der Belästigung, die im UPBI erfragt wurden, wurde in der vorliegenden Studie nur in 7 % der Fälle eine schwerere Form gezeigt, wie beispielsweise dem Opfer drohen. Bei Wigman et al. (2008) betrug dieser Anteil hingegen 27 %. Dies spricht dafür, dass in der vorliegenden Studie im Allgemeinen eine eher leichte Form von Ex-Partner-Belästigung, im Sinne von für das Opfer weniger gravierenden Verhaltensweisen, untersucht wurde. Bei Langhinrichsen-Rohling und Kollege (2000) fand sich zwar ein noch geringerer Anteil an schwereren Verhaltensweisen (3.3 %), jedoch konnten sie eine grössere Varianz an unterschiedlichen Belästigungsmethoden nachweisen.

Häufig gezeigtes Belästigungsverhalten war in der vorliegenden Studie (a) das Verwickeln des Opfers in ein persönliches (Telefon-) Gespräch, (b) das Zusenden von Briefen, E-Mails, oder Geschenken sowie (c) das Ausfragen von Bekannten über das Opfer. Dies ist mit den Ergebnissen von Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. (2000) oder deskriptiven Stalkingstudien (vgl. Hoffmann, 2006) vergleichbar.

Analog zu den Untersuchungsbefunden von Davis et al. (2000), De Smet, Buysse und Brondeel (2011) sowie Dye und Davis (2003) konnte auch in der vorliegenden Studie bestätigt werden, dass jene Personen häufiger ihre Ex-Partner belästigen, die von diesem verlassen worden sind, verglichen mit jenen, die die Trennung selber eingeleitet

haben. Oftmals haben die Verlassenen das Bedürfnis, die Beziehung weiter zu führen, während jene Personen, die die Trennung initiiert haben, davon ausgehen, ohne den Partner besser weiter leben zu können. Da in der Regel die Person, die den Partner verlässt, über mehr Kontrolle verfügt als jene, die verlassen worden ist, können bei letzterer durch die Zurückweisung und das Gefühl der Abhängigkeit mehr negative Emotionen ausgelöst werden, weshalb Verlassene mehr depressive Symptome zeigen und zu vermehrtem Grübeln neigen als der Initiator der Trennung (Buss, 2008). Die vorliegende Studie konnte diesbezüglich zeigen, dass Verletzungsgefühle, Trauer und Ärger bei den verlassenen Partnern signifikant stärker vorhanden sind als dies bei den Beziehungsabbrechern der Fall war. Zudem zeigte sich zwischen Verletzungsgefühl, Trauer und Ärger/Wut ein Zusammenhang mit dem Belästigungsverhalten, was die Vermutung aufkommen lässt, dass die negativen Emotionen auch ursächlich für das Belästigungsverhalten verantwortlich sein könnten. Verletzungsgefühle stellen den stärksten Prädiktor unter den negativen Emotionen dar, wobei das Gefühl des Verletzt seins im Kontext dieser Studie als Beeinträchtigung der psychischen Integrität, im Sinne einer Kränkung, verstanden wird. Wie andere Studien zeigten, kann das Gefühl des Verletzt seins infolge einer Zurückweisung zu sehr heftigen Reaktionen führen (e. g. Buss, 2008; Baumeister et a., 1993; Dye & Davis, 2003; Sprecher, 1994). Dabei kann jedoch nicht abschliessend beantwortet werden, ob Verlassene die Ex-Partnerin belästigten, um sie dadurch zurück zu gewinnen oder aber um sich an ihr rächen zu wollen. Obwohl letzteres plausibel erscheint, da einige Studien nachwiesen, dass insbesondere Männer nach einer Trennung verstärkt negative Emotionen und Reaktionen zeigen (Rubin, Peplau & Hill, 1981; Sprecher, 1994; Sprecher et al., 1998), unterstützen die Befunde zum Commitment tendenziell eher die Annahme, dass Personen belästigt haben, um die Partnerin zurück gewinnen zu wollen. Belästigungsverhalten scheint insbesondere dann als problematisch (für die belästigende Person), wenn dadurch negative Gefühle, wie Ärger und Wut, aufrechterhalten oder gar verstärkt werden, und eine eigentliche Verarbeitung des Verlusts verhindert wird. Wenn das Verlassen werden mit intensiven negativen Gefühlen und einem gleichzeitigen Belästigungsverhalten einhergeht, so sollte dies sowohl von Praktikern wie von Personen des sozialen Umfelds als Warnzeichen wahrgenommen werden.

Der Einbezug des Commitments bei Studien zu Stalking oder leichteren Ex-Partner-Belästigungen wurde bisher vernachlässigt. Gleichwohl konnte die vorliegende Studie zeigen, dass das Commitment bedeutsam mit der Belästigung des Ex-Partners verbunden ist. Demnach neigen Personen, welche nach der Trennung (noch immer) eine hohe Abhängigkeit von ihrem Ex-Partner verspüren, bzw. noch an diesem und der Beziehung hängen, eher zu Belästigungs- oder Verfolgungsverhalten als Personen, die weniger am Ex-Partner hängen. Das Commitment zeigte sich sogar als wichtigster Prädiktor für das Beläs-

tigungsverhalten. So können Verhaltensweisen, wie das Opfer gegen dessen Willen in ein persönliches Gespräch verwickeln oder ihm wiederholt Briefe oder Geschenke schicken, als Nähe suchendes Verhalten mit dem Ziel der Versöhnung angesehen werden. Eine mögliche Erklärung für den starken Zusammenhang zwischen Commitment und Belästigungsverhalten könnte im Ausmass der Investitionen in die Beziehung liegen. Es konnte gezeigt werden, dass von den drei Basisfaktoren nur die Investitionen einen eigenständigen Beitrag zur Vorhersage der Ex-Partner-Belästigung leisten. Da solche Investitionen, wie etwa Zeit und Energie, gebrachte Opfer, gemeinsamer Besitz oder gemeinsame Freundschaften, durch die Trennung verloren gehen oder an Wert verlieren, kann die Person möglicherweise versucht sein, durch Belästigung einen Ausgleich zu erwirken. Mit den Investitionen kann auch das Gefühl der Ungerechtigkeit verbunden sein, wenn man denkt, man habe mehr in die Beziehung investiert als der Partner.

Daneben zeigte sich, wie man gemäss den Studien von Rusbult (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998) erwarten würde, dass ein tieferes Commitment mit einem aktiven Verlassen des Partners resp. ein höheres Commitment mit einem Verlassenwerden einhergeht. Regressionsanalytisch konnte darüber hinaus auch die Annahme von Rusbult (1983) bestätigt werden, dass die drei Basisfaktoren, Zufriedenheit, Investitionen und Qualität der Alternativen, eigenständige Beiträge zur Vorhersage des Commitments leisten.

Schliesslich konnte auch die Hypothese, dass ein ängstlicher Bindungsstil mit Ex-Partner-Belästigung assoziiert ist, bestätigt werden. Personen, die Angst haben, vom Partner verlassen zu werden und sich in einer Beziehung eher unzulänglich fühlen, neigen eher zu belästigenden Verhaltensweisen gegenüber dem Ex-Partner als solche, die sich dispositionell durch eine geringe Verlassensangst auszeichnen. Dies konnte auch in anderen Studien nachgewiesen werden (e. g. Davis et al., 2000; Dye & Davis, 2003; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000; Sbarra, 2006). Dass auch aggressive Verhaltensformen bei ängstlich gebundenen Personen der Rettung einer Beziehung dienen, konnte schon Bowlby (1988) nachweisen, weshalb es auch nicht verwundert, dass in anderen Studien eine erhöhte Aggressivität in Partnerschaften bei ängstlich gebundenen Personen gefunden wurde (vgl. Dutton, 1988). Ferner konnte gezeigt werden, dass Personen mit einer ängstlichen Bindung häufiger verlassen werden als aktiv den Partner zu verlassen. Dies stimmt mit der Theorie von Brennan et al. (1998) überein, in welcher postuliert wird, dass sich ängstlich gebundene Personen besonders abhängig vom Partner fühlen. Demnach wäre es bei ängstlich gebundenen Personen therapeutisch wichtig, ihnen im Kontext einer Partnertrennung mehr Sicherheit zu geben, indem beispielsweise die empfundene Selbstwirksamkeit vergrössert und das Gefühl der Abhängigkeit vom Partner verringert wird. Spielmann, Mac Donnald und Wilson (2009) konnten etwa zeigen, dass sich Personen mit einer ängstlichen Bindung besser vom Ex-Partner lösen können, wenn sie dem Fin-

den eines neuen Partners optimistisch entgegen blickten. In diesem Kontext erscheint weitere Forschung zum Umgang mit Partnertrennungen insbesondere auch bei Angstpatienten und depressiven Erkrankungen essenziell.

Die Ergebnisse bezüglich der Belästigungsvariable Anzahl Verhaltensweisen wich kaum von jenen bezüglich des Schweregrades ab, was bei der gefundenen hohen Korrelation zwischen den beiden abhängigen Variablen auch nicht zu erwarten war. Es zeigten sich aber in der Multiplen Regression mit allen Prädiktoren Unterschiede zwischen diesen beiden Kriteriumsvariablen. Weshalb nur das Commitment bei beiden Kriteriumsvariablen ein stabiler Prädiktor darstellt und welche der beiden Kriteriumsvariablen das tatsächlich gezeigte Belästigungsverhalten valider erfasst, müsste jedoch in einer weiteren Untersuchung geklärt werden.

Auch wenn praktisch alle Hypothesen bestätigt werden konnten, ist gleichwohl auf einige Grenzen und Einschränkungen der Studie hinzuweisen. So sind insbesondere zwei Einschränkungen der Generalisierbarkeit der Befunde erwähnenswert. Zum einen wurden in der Studie fast nur Personen mit einer leichteren Form eines ungewollten Belästigungsverhaltens (UPB) und mit Studenten eine Normalpopulation erfasst, so dass offen bleibt, ob die Befunde, wie insbesondere der Einfluss des Commitments, auf eine klinische Population zu übertragen sind. Wie aber anfangs erwähnt wurde, wird auch von anderen Autoren davon ausgegangen, dass der Übergang vom noch normalen Trennungsverhalten über Belästigungsverhalten zum Stalking fliessend ist, also keine qualitativ verschiedenen Formen der Aggression vorliegen, und insoweit also auch Grund zur Annahme besteht, dass die gleichen Prädiktoren relevant sind. Die Tatsache, dass sich das Commitment als stärkster Prädiktor zur Vorhersage des Belästigungsverhaltens heraus gestellt hat, könnte in diesem Sinn sogar ein wichtiger Hinweis für eine erfolgreiche Intervention beim Stalking sein. Zum anderen wurden nur männliche Studierende der Schweiz in Bezug auf ihre heterosexuelle Beziehung befragt, wobei von den 1000 zufällig ausgewählten Personen lediglich 14 % an der Untersuchung teilgenommen haben. Dies mag zum einen daran gelegen haben, dass die Motivation für die Teilnahme gering war. Da die Teilnahme an der Untersuchung freiwillig war, kann aber auch vermutet werden, dass vor allem jene Personen mitgemacht haben, die eher Schwierigkeiten hatten, mit einer Trennung umzugehen. Insoweit ist eine gewisse Selbstselektion beim Zustandekommen der Stichprobe nicht ganz auszuschließen.

Da die Motive für ein allfälliges Belästigungsverhalten gegenüber dem Ex-Partner nicht erhoben wurden, können keine Schlüsse über den tatsächlichen Beweggrund der Belästigung gezogen werden. Dies wäre insbesondere im Hinblick auf zukünftige Studien ein zu berücksichtigender Faktor. Auch die Berücksichtigung der Opferperspektive wäre bei weiterführenden Studien eine wünschenswerte Erweiterung, da lediglich vermutet wird, jedoch nicht belegt werden kann, dass das hier untersuchte Belästigungs-

verhalten vom Opfer als unangenehm oder belästigend wahrgenommen wurde. Dies würde idealerweise eine Befragung von sowohl der Täter wie der Opfer voraussetzen, was grundsätzlich sehr zu befürworten ist, jedoch bei einer repräsentativ angelegten Untersuchung und unter Wahrung der Anonymität kaum realisiert werden kann.

Schließlich ist einschränkend darauf hinzuweisen, dass die Befragten ihre letzte Beziehung und die trennungsspezifischen Emotionen retrospektiv beurteilen mussten, so dass im Nachhinein veränderte Wahrnehmungen und Interpretationen nicht ausgeschlossen werden können.

Die vorliegende Studie zeigte, dass vermehrt jene Personen ihren Ex-Partner mit Annäherungsverhalten belästigen, die von diesem verlassen worden sind. Ebenso scheinen eine ängstliche Bindung sowie das Commitment in Bezug auf den Ex-Partner, bzw. die in die Beziehung getätigten Investitionen, wichtige Faktoren zur Vorhersage der Ex-Partner-Belästigung zu sein. Auch die durch die Trennung ausgelösten Emotionen scheinen eine grosse Rolle im Hinblick auf Ex-Partner-Belästigung zu spielen. Für zukünftige Studien wäre es besonders interessant, den ursächlichen Einfluss des Commitments und die Rolle des Bindungsmusters für sowohl das normale Trennungsverhalten als auch das klinisch relevante Belästigungsverhalten zu untersuchen.

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Items der Investment Model Scale (nach Grau et al., 2001)

Zufriedenheit:
1. Ich war eigentlich mit unserer Beziehung zufrieden.
2. Meine Beziehung war besser als die Beziehungen von anderen.
3. Meine Beziehung war nahezu ideal.
4. Unsere Beziehung machte mich sehr glücklich.
5. In unserer Beziehung wurden meine Bedürfnisse nach Intimität, Gemeinsamkeit etc. erfüllt.

Alternativen
1. Ich fand auch andere Personen als meinen Ex-Partner, mit denen ich eine Beziehung hätte haben können, sehr anziehend.
2. Ich hatte nahezu ideale Alternativen zu unserer Beziehung (andere Partnerschaft, mit
3. Freunden zusammen sein, allein sein etc.).
4. Auch wenn ich nicht mit meinem Partner zusammen gewesen wäre, wäre ich sehr gut zurechtkommen.
5. Die Alternativen zu meiner Beziehung waren für mich sehr reizvoll (andere Partnerschaft, mit Freunden zusammen sein, allein sein etc.).
6. Meine Bedürfnisse nach Intimität, Gemeinsamkeit etc. hätten mit Leichtigkeit in einer anderen Beziehung erfüllt werden können.

Investitionen
1. Ich habe viel in unsere Beziehung hineingesteckt, das ich verloren habe, als die Beziehung zu Ende war.
2. Viele Aspekte meines Lebens, die so eng mit meinem Ex-Partner verbunden waren
3. (Freizeitgestaltung etc.), sind durch die Trennung verloren gegangen.
4. Ich.fühlte mich sehr mit unserer Beziehung verbunden, weil ich viel hineingesteckt habe.
5. Meine Beziehungen zu Freunden und Familienangehörigen wurde kompliziert, als mein Partner und ich uns trennten (z.B. der Ex-Partner ist/war befreundet mit Leuten,
6. Verglichen mit anderen Leuten, die ich kenne, habe ich viel in die Beziehung zu meinem Ex-Partner investiert.

Commitment

1. Aus meiner Sicht hätte unsere Beziehung noch sehr lange dauern können.
2. Ich hatte mich darauf festgelegt, die Beziehung zu meinem Partner aufrechtzuerhalte
3. Es hat mich sehr aus der Fassung gebracht, als unsere Beziehung geendet hat.
4. Es war/ist sehr unwahrscheinlich, dass ich innerhalb des nächsten Jahres mit jemand anderem als mit meinem Ex-Partner zusammen sein werde.
5. Ich fühlte mich an unsere Beziehung und an meinen Ex-Partner sehr gebunden.
6. Ich hätte gewollt, dass unsere Beziehung für immer hält.
7. Ich orientierte mich an einer langfristigen Zukunft unserer Beziehung (z.B. stellte ich mir ein Zusammensein mit meinem Ex-Partner über viele Jahre vor).

1 = stimmt nicht ; 5 = stimmt völlig

Items des Bochumer Bindungsfragebogens (Neumannet al., 2007)

1. Ich zeige einem Partner nicht gern, wie es tief in mir aussieht.
2. Ich mache mir Gedanken darüber, dass ich verlassen werden könnte.
3. Ich fühle mich sehr wohl, wenn ich einem Partner nahe bin.
4. Ich mach mir sehr viele Gedanken über meine Beziehungen.
5. Immer dann, wenn mein Partner mir sehr nahe kommt, ziehe ich mich zurück
6. Ich mach mir Gedanken darüber, dass mein Partner sich nicht so um mich kümmert wie ich mich um ihn.
7. Ich fühle mich unwohl, wenn mein Partner mir sehr nahe sein will.
8. Ich mache mir sehr oft Gedanken darüber, dass ich meinen Partner verlieren könnte.
9. Ich fühle mich nicht wohl dabei, wenn ich mich einem Partner gegenüber öffnen soll.
10. Ich wünsche mir oft, dass die Gefühle meines Partners für michgenauso stark wären wie meine Gefühle für ihn.
11. Ich möchte meinem Partner nahe sein, halte mich aber trotzdem zurück.
12. Ich will mit einem Partner vollkommen verschmelzen, und das schreckt andere manchmal ab.
13. Ich werde nervös, wenn ein Partner mir zu nahe kommt.
14. Ich mache mir oft Gedanken über das Alleinsein.
15. Ich fühle mich wohl dabei, wenn ich meine innerstenGedankenund Gefühle mit meinem Partner teilen kann.
16. Mein Verlangen nach Nähe schreckt andere Menschen manchmal ab.
1 7. Ich versuche zu vermeiden, meinem Partner zu nahe zu kommen.
18. Ich brauche die Bestätigung, dass mein Partner mich liebt.
19. Es fällt mir relativ leicht, meinem Partner nahe zu kommen.
20. Manchmal merke ich, dass ich meinen Partner dränge, mehr Gefühl und Verbindlichkeit zu zeigen.
21. Ich habe Schwierigkeiten damit zuzulassen, von einem Partner abhängig zu sein.
22. Ich mache mir kaum Gedanken darüber, dass ich verlassen werden könnte.
23. Ich bin einem Partner nicht gern zu nahe.
24. Wenn ich es nicht schaffe, das Interesse meines Partners aufmich zu ziehen, rege ich mich auf oder werde ärgerlich.
25. Ich rede mit meinem Partner über fast alles.
26. Ich finde, mein Partner will nicht so viel Nähe wie ich.
27. Ich bespreche meine Sorgen und Probleme meistens mit einem Partner.
28. Wenn ich keine Beziehung habe, fühle ich mich irgendwie ängstlich und unsicher.
29. Ich fühle mich wohl, wenn ich von einem Partner abhängig bin.
30. Es frustriert mich, wenn mein Partner nicht so oft bei mir ist, wie ich es will.
31. Es fällt mir nicht schwer, einen Partner um Trost, Hilfe oder einen Rat zu bitten.
32. Es frustriert mich, wenn ich gern einen Partner hätte und niemand da ist.
33. Es hilft mir, mich an meinen Partner zu wenden, wenn ich es brauche.
34. Wenn ein Partner eine negative Meinung über mich hat, geht es mir richtig schlecht.
35. Ich wende mich oft an meinen Partner, z.B. wenn ich Trost und Bestätigung brauche.
36. Es ·ärgert mich, wenn mein Partner Zeit ohne mich verbringt.

1 = stimmt überhaupt nicht ; 7 = stimmt völlig

Stalking Victimization among Swiss Police Officers

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this study were to assess non-profession and profession-related stalking victimization in a selective sample of 542 Swiss police officers. The stalking lifetime prevalence rate was 5.2% ($N = 28$). Four percent (4.1%, $n = 22$) were stalked by non-profession related stalkers, while 1.1% ($n = 6$) of the police officers were stalked due to profession-related reasons. Lifetime stalking victimization among females was at 10 % and 4% for males in this selective sample. A number of police officers were reluctant to inform their private and professional network about the stalking due to various reasons, including embarrassment about stalking victimization as a police officer. Only the minority of the stalking cases were officially reported to the legal justice system. Further implications are discussed.

Keywords: Stalking, victimization, police officers, profession-related stalking, non-profession related stalking.

INTRODUCTION

Stalking has increasingly been recognized as a social and legal problem in Western countries during the last two decades (Meloy, 2007). The majority of scientific and legal definitions describe stalking as a repeated pattern of unwanted contact and approach behaviour that (could) cause(s) anxiety or fear in the stalking victim. Purcell, Pathé and Mullen (2004) showed in their study that a two week threshold distinguishes between brief instances of intrusiveness and protracted stalking. A meta-analysis of 175 studies by Spitzberg and Cupach (2007) found an average stalking duration of 22 months ($n = 28$). Even though plagued by the inconsistent use of definitions, the prevalence rates of epidemiological studies imply that stalking is a phenomenon that warrants attention. Van der Aa & Kunst (2009) summarized lifetime prevalence rates of 13 large-scales studies (N > 500) in the general population from the USA, Canada, England/Scotland, Australia as well as Sweden and Germany. The reported lifetime prevalence rates varied between 4.5% and 23%. The lifetime stalking victimization prevalence rates for women were generally higher (6% to 32%) than for men (2% to 15%).

Dressing, Kuehner and Gass (2005) conducted the first epidemiological study in continental Europe among a representative community sample. Stalking was defined as multiple episodes of harassment occurring over a time frame of at least two weeks, using more than one stalking method, and causing fear in the victim. The response rate was 34% and almost twelve percent of the 400 female and 297 male respondents were once stalked in their life. The lifetime prevalence rate for females was 17%; and 4% for males. No epidemiological data exist for Switzerland yet.

Stalkers and their victims

The breakdown of a relationship has been found the most vulnerable situational context in which stalking behaviors may emerge (Mullen, Pathé & Purcell, 2010). Stalkers can originate from all backgrounds in relation to gender, age or social class. However, a range of studies imply that stalkers are in the majority of cases male, between 30 - 40 years old, often single or separated at the time of the stalking (Meloy, 2007; Mullen, Pathé, Purcell & Stuart, 1999; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). Male stalkers usually pursue a female victim. Some studies also indicate that there are higher rates of same-gender stalking among men than women (Dressing et al., 2005; Purcell, Pathé & Mullen, 2002). This result could be an artifact, in that male victims take male stalkers more seriously and fail to report it to the police when a female stalks them, erroneously assuming that it is more embarrassing or less problematic when a female stalks them (Purcell, Powell & Mullen, 2005). Some studies found similiar or higher numbers in same-gender stalking for females (Meloy, Mohandie & Green, 2011; Strand & McEwan, 2011). In contrast to male stalkers who often want to restore a broken relationship, female stalkers tend to stalk individuals they would like to get newly involved in a romantic relationship (Meloy & Boyd, 2003; Meloy et al., 2011). Stalkers' motives are manifold and have been found to be associated with psychiatric disorders such as personality disorders, schizophrenic and delusional disorders, affective disorders and substance abuse disorders in forensic studies (McEwan & Strand, 2013; Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Mullen et al.,1999).

The majority of stalking victims are women, although male victims may be underreported since men could be more reluctant than females to admit being a victim or perceive themselves less often as a victim. By taking into account the duration, intrusiveness and perceived uncontrollability of the stalking situation, it is not surprising that a recent

review of 17 studies (2002 to 2010) concluded that stalking victimization seem to impair the victim's physical, psychological and social functioning in a substantial number of cases (Will, Hintz & Blättner, 2011).

Profession as risk factor

While stalking could happen to anyone, it has been suggested that certain professions may enhance the risk of stalking victimization (eg., Dressing, Martini, Witthöft, Bailer & Gass, 2007; MacKenzie & James (2011). A feature that could enhance the risk of stalking victimization are professions that require frequent human contacts. But the mere exposure to other fellow men seems not a sufficient criteria for stalking victimization. The stalkers perception of the profession and its representatives as a) influential b) helpful and/or c) harmful may be another essential ingredient. The profession can serve as a projection surface for various wishes or matters of concern.

Public Figures

Higher rates of stalking victimization than in the general population have been well established for public figures. Television presenters, members of royal families and other celebrities seem to be especially prone to stalking victimization (Hoffmann, 2006; Hoffmann, Meloy, Guldimann & Ermer 2011, Malsch, Visscher & Blaauw, 2002, Meloy et al., 2008). The influential status of a public figure serves like no other profession as projection service for (failed) dreams and disappointments. The increasing and constant availability of public figures in the (social) media and the sharing of – in some cases -daily, private details supports the triggering of unreasonable (emotional) attachments in unstable individuals.

Mental health professionals

Another profession in danger of stalking victimization are mental health professionals (for more details see Carr, Goranson, Drummond, 2014). A vulnerable situation arises when core elements of a therapeutic relationship like empathy or understanding are misinterpreted as a friendship or romantic relationship offer. These – not seldom socially isolated - patients delusionally and/or based on their personality traits misinterpret therapeutic interventions and subsequently cross boundaries. Such patients often lack adequate coping strategies in order to deal with real or perceived injustice, humiliation or rejection that could occur when a mental health professional rejects their romantic/friendship desires or confronts them with their shortcomings.

Purcell et al. (2005) studied a randomly selected sample of 1.750 registered Australian psychologists. The lifetime stalking prevalence rate was 19.5% (>10 intrusions, >2 weeks, fear). There was no difference regarding the psychologist's gender in becoming a stalking victim, but significantly more same-gender stalking occurred to male than female clinicians. Galeazzi, Elkins & Curci (2005) assessed the stalking of Italian mental health professionals using a similiar definition as in the Purcell et al. (2005) study and reported a 11% lifetime prevalence rate; male psychologists were significantly more often stalked than females. Krammer, Stepan, Baranyi, Kampfhammer & Rothenhäusler (2007) highlighted that lifetime prevalence for stalking (being harassed for more than two weeks) was 38.5% in their sample of 117 Austrian psychologists and psychiatrists. This rate was three times as high as the rate in the German epidemiological study (11.6%; Dressing et al., 2005). Male professionals were significantly more often targeted by a stalker than female professionals; noteworthy was the high percentage of female stalkers (60%) in this study. The Austrian authors reported slightly higher same-gender stalking for male psychologists than females. Gentile, Asamen, Harmell and Weathers (2002) also found that male professionals were more often targeted than their

female workmates. They reported that a high percentage of the stalking incidents involved female stalkers (68%) and that the female clients stalked their male psychologist almost four times more often than the male clients. According to Meloy and colleagues (2003, 2011), female stalkers often pursue a slightly older acquaintance in order to establish intimacy; an older and male psychotherapist would fit into this description (Purcell, Pathé & Mullen, 2001).

Journalists

Another profession that came into the researcher's focus were journalists who based on their professional profile (eg., investigative journalismn) also seemed at risk for stalking victimization. Dressing et al. (2007) sent an online link to 8'000 German journalists from which 493 journalists responded (6% response rate). Seventy people were stalked, 11 (15.7%) were stalked due to profession-related reasons, the remaining 59 (84.3%) were targeted by non-profession related stalkers (eg., ex-partners, friends). The lifetime prevalence rate among the non-representative journalist sample was 14.2%. The lifetime prevalence for non-profession related stalking was 12% - a number similar to their representative German community sample - while 2.2% of the journalists dealt with profession-related stalking once in their life. The authors concluded that the lifetime stalking prevalence rate in their journalist sample (14.2%) was slightly elevated in comparison to the rate found in their representative German community sample (11.6%; Dressing et al., 2005). The authors reported that there were no differences between the profession and non-profession related stalking victim group regarding the duration, health impact, or the journalists' measures towards the stalkers (eg., filling a police report).

Dressing et al. (2007) reported that significantly more male than female journalists were targeted in the profession-related victim group. The profession-related victim group tried more frequently to talk to their superiors or work colleagues about the stalking than the other group, whereby only 22% were satisfied with the support they received from their work environment. The victims in the profession-related group were less anxious about the stalking situation than the non-profession-related group, even though there was no significant difference regarding the number of threats or violent incidents in both groups. The authors hypothesize that the greater number of men among the profession-related stalking group and men's general reluctance to admit feelings of fear may contribute to explain this result (Dressing et al., 2007). Still, a further analysis showed that the lower anxiety levels in the profession-related group could not be explained by gender differences in coping with stalking, and might therefore be specific for profession-related stalking in journalists compared to non-profession related stalking (Gass, Martini, Witthöft, Bailer & Dressing, 2009).

Police officers

MacKenzie & James (2011) pointed out that in their professional experience, the police and judiciary are also at risk for stalking victimization. While the contact quality may not be as prolonged or intense as eg., in a therapy session, police officers also deal with mentally unstable individuals and/or criminals who have poor judgment and this may enhance the possibility of a stalking victimization based on romantic desires ("Officers as your friend in need") or revengeful intentions in this context as well.

To our knowledge, no studies of stalking victimization among police officers have been conducted so far. It was therefore of particular interest to us to analyze the following questions in an explorative manner:

(1) How high is the profession and non-profession related stalking prevalence rate in non-random sample of Swiss police officers?

(2) Are there differences between profession and non-profession related stalking cases?

(3) Are there differences between male and female police officer stalking victims?

METHOD

Participants

The questionnaire used in this study was an extensively modified version of a questionnaire by Stompe and Ritter (2009). The cantonal police of Bern and Solothurn as well as the city police of Zurich took part in the online study between September and October 2010. The police officers were asked about (a) their knowledge about stalking, (b) their professional experiences with stalking cases, (c) their attitudes toward stalking and, (d) their personal experiences as stalking victims. This article is based on the results of the police officer's personal experiences as stalking victims.

An online link was either sent automatically to the police officer's professional e-mail accounts (Zurich, Solothurn) or could be accessed over their intranet (Bern). The e-mail was sent to individuals with an official police status in Zurich and Solothurn (not to administration staff). In Bern, they were also notified that only police officers should take part. It was required that the police officers served or had served time as front line police officers. The online link was accompanied by a short note explaining the reasons for the study and highlighting the voluntariness and anonymity of their participation. The police officers were also notified about a consultancy group program for stalking victims at the first and last

authors' workplace (Guldimann, Fürstenau & Ermer, 2010). This notification served the

purposes a) to educate police officers about the existence of this program so that they would

be able to pass this information on to stalking victims and, b) to ensure that officers who

are/were stalked were also informed where they could seek help. The police officers were able

to participate in the online study for five weeks. A reminder e-mail was sent to the officers or

posted on their intranet after two and four weeks. The study was approved by all three police

commanders.

Stalking definition

Since there exists no stalking legislation in Switzerland, no legal definition can be

used as a framework. But in accordance with other scientific definitions, stalking was defined

as repeated (at least two) unwanted attempts of contacting or approaching a specific victim for

at least two weeks, using multiple stalking methods, and causing fear or apprehension through

these behaviors (e.g., Dressing et al., 2005). The participants were asked to declare if they

have been subjected to such incidents in their a) private and/or b) professionals lives and were

asked if they have been stalked by more than one perpetrator at different points in their lives.

Analyzed variables

Sociodemographic variables of the participants (canton, gender, age, years of service), aspects

of the stalkers and the stalking behavior/situation (duration, frequency, stalking methods,

frequency of violence, relationship between stalker and victim, assumed motives of the

stalker), as well as the impact on the victims (fear, general well-being, change of daily

activities, use of professional help), positive and negative reactions from the social and

professional network and the legal situation, were assessed. The questions were either single,

multiple choice or open ended questions.

Statistics

The data were analyzed with SPSS 18. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. The Chi-

square test was used for categorical variables and when expected values were less than five,

Fisher's exact test was used. As a measure of the effect size phi (Φ) correlations are reported.

According to Cohen (1988) a small effect size is 0.10, a medium effect size is 0.30 and 0.50 is

a strong effect size.

RESULTS

Participants

Five hundred forty-two police officers took part in this study and all of them finished this

section of the questionnaire. The response rate varied across the Swiss cantons resulting in an

overall response rate of 18.6%, with the Canton of Solothurn leading with 41% (94 out of

230), 33% (297 out of 904) in the City of Zurich and 8.5% (151 out of 1782) in the Canton of

Bern. The majority of the participants were male police officers (77%, $n = 420$); 23% ($n =$

122) were females. When the gender distribution of the participants in each canton is

compared with the gender distribution statistics of the police corps, females were

overpresented (eg., 16% female officers in the Canton of Bern, 24% female participants from

Bern).

The mean age of all participants was 37 years ($SD = 37.07$; range $= 20 - 63$ yrs) and

their average level of service was 13 years ($SD = 13.31$; range $= 1 - 40$ yrs). Comparing the

age ($M = 41.1$) and years of service ($M = 15.2$), distribution statistics from the police corps in

Bern with the participants from this canton revealed that they were similar regarding age ($M =$ 41) and years of service ($M = 16$). No more official statistics were available from the other police corps.

Prevalence of stalking

The lifetime stalking prevalence was 5.2% ($N = 28$). 4.1% ($n = 22$) were stalked due to non-profession related reasons. 1.1% ($n = 6$) were stalked in connection with their profession as police officers (see Table 1). There was no significant difference regarding the frequency of stalking victimization reported in the three cantons $\chi^2(2, 28) = .80$, $p > .05$, $\Phi = 0.04$.

The gender distribution among the 28 victims revealed that 57% ($n = 16$) were male, and 43% ($n = 12$) were female. The lifetime prevalence rate among the genders implied that 3.8% of all male police officers and 9.8% of all female police officers who participated in this study had been a victim of stalking. Hence, female police officers reported significantly more often experiences with stalking than their male counterparts $\chi^2(1, 542) = 6.92$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = 0.12$. All but four stalking victims were stalked in the past ($n = 24$, 86%) resulting in a point-prevalence of 0.7%. No victim reported multiple stalking victimization.

INSERT Table 1 here

Stalkers and their victims

Gender, age and relationship status

Seventy-five percent ($n = 21$) of the stalkers were described as male, 25% ($n = 7$) as female. The stalker's age range was between 20 - 61 years, with a mean age of 35 years ($SD = 12.3$). The stalkers were described as single in 75% ($n = 21$) of the cases. In three cases (11%) the

stalkers were reportedly in a relationship and in four cases (14%) the marital status remained unknown.

The stalker was in 36% (n = 10) of the cases an ex-intimate. Another 11% (n = 3) were stalked by a former partner of their current intimate. This means that in 46% of all stalking cases the stalking emerged from a broken romantic relationship. In 21% (n = 6) of the cases the victims were stalked by someone they met through their professional work (e.g., witness, accused). 14% (n = 4) were targeted by a stranger and 11% (n = 3) by a work colleague. One stalker was described as an acquaintance (3.5%) and another one (3.5%) as the boss of the stalking victim (see Table 2).

INSERT Table 2 here

Significantly more same-gender stalking occurred among males than females, no female stalker stalked a female victim (56% vs. 0%; $\chi^2(1, 28)$ = 7.00, p < .01, Φ = 0.50). All six profession-related stalkers were male. Four out of the six profession-related stalking victims were male (67%). But male stalking victims were not significantly more often targeted in the profession-related than in the non-profession group (67% vs. 55%; $\chi^2(1, 28)$ = .28, p > .05, Φ = 0.10. Female victims were more often stalked by an ex-intimate than male stalking victims (58% vs. 19%; $\chi^2(1, 28)$ = 4.68, p = .05, Φ = 0.41.

The assumed motives of the stalking reported by the police officers were multifaceted.The most frequent assumed motives for stalking were described as rage (54%, n = 15), love (50%, n = 14), jealousy (39%, n = 11), revenge (32%, n = 9), mental illness (28%, n = 8), power/control (25%, n = 7), reconciliation (18%, n = 5) and envy (7%, n = 2). In comparison to the non-profession related victims, none of the police officers who were

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targeted by a profession-related stalker assumed the stalking happened because of love (0% vs. 64%; $\chi^2(1, 28) = 7.64$, $p < .05$, $\Phi = .52$.

Stalking methods, threats and violence

Stalking behavior ceased in 32% ($n = 9$) of the cases between two weeks to three months. Fifty-four percent ($n = 15$) of the victims were stalked between three months and a year. In 14% ($n = 4$) of the cases, the stalking duration exceeded a year. The victims were contacted daily in 32% ($n = 9$) of the cases, 39% ($n = 11$) of the victims reported weekly contacts by the stalker, and 29% ($n = 8$) claimed that the contact intensity varied over time. Except for three officers (11%), all participants reported the use of multiple stalking methods. In the three cases with only a single method, the contact intensity was substantial and long-term.

The most frequent stalking methods were reported as following: Telephoning (68%, $n = 19$), text messaging (43%, $n = 12$), sending letters (43%, $n = 12$), appearing at victim's home (39%, $n = 11$), contacting third parties to collect information about victim (32%, $n = 9$), sending e-mails (25%, $n = 7$), slandering the victim (25%, $n = 7$), following victim around (25%, $n = 7$), appearing at victim's workplace (21%, $n = 6$), insulting victim (21%, $n = 6$), contact victim via third parties (21%, $n = 6$), following victim with the car (18%, $n = 5$), threats against victim's family (7%, $n = 2$) and property damage (4%, $n = 1$).

A third reported direct threats (29%, $n = 8$) against them. Stalking victims in this study were physically assaulted during the stalking episode in 18% ($n = 5$) of the cases. In four of these five cases the victim was physically restrained (eg., bruises on both arms), pushed around, slapped or punched, usually in the face. The fifth case also involved slapping, punching and additionally the threat with a firearm. There were no significant differences between the profession and non-profession related stalking groups regarding the stalking

methods, including threats and violent incidents during the stalking ($p > .05$). There were no significant differences between the gender of the stalking victim and the frequency of violence against them (13% male vs. 25% female victims; $\chi^2(1, 28) = .73$, $p > .05$, $\Phi = 0.16$. There was no significant difference in violent behavior between male and female stalkers (19% male vs. 14% female violent stalkers; $\chi^2(1, 28) = .08$, $p > .05$, $\Phi = 0.05$.

Impact on victims

Thirty-two percent ($n = 9$) of the victims admitted that they felt intense fear during the stalking. Female stalking victims admitted significantly more often being fearful than their male counterparts (58% vs. 13%; $\chi^2(1, 28) = 6.6$, $p < .05$, $\Phi = 0.49$). There was no difference between the profession and non-profession related stalking cases regarding the presence of fear (17% vs. 36%; $\chi^2(1, 28) = .84$, $p > .05$, $\Phi = .17$. Fifty-six per cent ($n = 5$) of the victims told other people about being afraid of the stalker, while 44% ($n = 4$) didn't. The remaining 19 victims (68%) did acknowledge that they felt at least anxious not just irritated about their situation.

A quarter of the victims ($n = 7$) adjusted their daily activities because of the stalking (eg., change route to work). The majority of the victims (64%, $n = 18$) reported that their physical (eg., headaches) and psychological (eg., tension inside) health was negatively affected by the stalking. The professional help of a psychologist or doctor was sought in 14% ($n = 4$) of the cases; one person went on sick leave due to the stalking. There were no significant gender-related differences found for change of daily activities, impact on health and use of professional help. Also, no significant differences were detected for non-profession and profession-related stalking between these variables ($p > .05$).

Informing private and professional networks

Insert Table 3 here

Private networks

Seventy-nine percent (n = 22) of the police officers informed friends and family about the stalking (see table 3). There was no gender difference in reporting the stalking to their private network (81% male vs. 75% female; χ^2(1, 28) = .16, p > .05, Φ = .07. There was also no significant difference in telling others if the stalking was profession-related or not (67% vs. 82%; χ^2(1, 28) = .64, p > .05, Φ = .15.

Negative reactions such as „I don't believe you"and trivialization of the situation were reported by 23% (n = 5, multiple answers possible) of the officers. Positive reactions such as understanding or offers of help/advices were reported by 57% (n = 13) and 45% (n = 10), respectively. The six officers who didn't inform their private network admitted that they were embarrassed that they were stalked despite being a police officer (66%, n = 4); 33% (n = 2) were afraid of recriminations and/or they claimed they could handle it alone (33%, n = 2).

Professional networks

In contrast, only half of the police officers informed their colleagues and/or their superiors about the stalking (n = 14). Again, there was no gender difference in reporting the stalking to their professional network (56% males vs. 42% females; χ^2(1, 28) = .58, p > .70, Φ = .14. There was also no significant difference in reporting the stalking to their peers/superiors if the stalking was profession-related or not (67% vs. 45%; χ^2(1, 28) = .85, p > .05, Φ = .17. Sixty-four percent (n = 9) were given advice on how to deal with the situation and 36% (n = 5) experienced understanding from their colleagues. One officer said that special precautions were installed to protect him/her from the stalker. Negative reactions such as trivialization

from their professional peers or superiors were experienced by 21% ($n = 3$). The same number would have expected more support from their employer.

Nine (64%) of the other half of the police officers ($n = 14$) who didn't disclose their stalking problem to their professional network did this based on the perception that they could handle the stalking alone. Twenty-nine percent ($n = 4$) admitted being silent due to embarrassment over being stalked as a police officer. One person was afraid that no one would believe him (7%, $n = 1$).

Legal outcome

The stalking behavior was officially reported to the police by three of the 28 stalking victims (11%). In two of the three cases (threat and actual bodily harm), the stalker was convicted. The self-reported police officers' motives for not reporting to the police were diverse (multiple answers possible): More than a third of the police officers ($n = 9$) were convinced that they could handle the situation without the help of the criminal justice system. 16% ($n = 4$) did threat the stalker with the filling of a police report or calling a lawyer and this was sufficient to stop the stalking. Twenty-eight per cent ($n = 7$) were afraid of the consequences (eg., provoking the stalker), and 12% ($n = 3$) thought a report to the police wouldn't be successful (no anti-stalking legislation in Switzerland). Twenty percent ($n = 5$) didn't contact the authorities since being stalked was embarrassing for a police officer.

DISCUSSION

Prevalence

This study is to our knowledge the first that attempts to analyze profession and non-profession related prevalence rates in a selective, non-random sample of Swiss police officers. Twenty-

eight officers or 5.2 % reported stalking victimization once in their life, 1.1% for profession-related and 4.1% for non-profession related reasons. The overall lifetime stalking prevalence rate is at the lower end when compared with rates from epidemiological studies ranging from 4.5% to 23% (van der Aa & Kunst, 2009). Our rate is also lower than the German prevalence rate found by Dressing et al. (2005, 207) in their representative community and journalist sample using the same stalking definition (12% resp. 14%).

Besides reflecting a real difference, a number of reasons could be attributed to the lower numbers of stalking victims: The overall lower prevalence rate could be partly explained by the fact that in comparison with other studies a rather restrictive stalking definition was used.

The gender distribution in our selective police sample is clearly male dominated (77% male participants), while the gender distribution of participants in representative community studies (eg., Dressing et al., 2005) or other specific samples are often equally distributed--or more females participate--resulting in a greater number of cases since females are usually stalked more frequently than men.

In addition, it is also possible that real stalking victims did not participate. Male as well as female police officers admitted that they did not inform their private and professional networks about the stalking since "this doesn't fit with the occupational image of a police officer". It may be possible that police officers with the same attitude did not even participate.

This being said, the lifetime prevalence rates reported separately for males (4%) and females (10%) in this study seem comparable though to rates from the German community sample (4% males, 17% females; Dressing et al., 2005) and other studies. It remains to be seen to compare this study's data with representative data from the general Swiss population.

Stalkers and stalking victims

The almost stereotypical description of stalkers as usually male, in their mid-thirties and single/separated in this study corresponds well with the results of previous research (Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Mullen et al., 2010). As reported in some previous studies, same-gender stalking was significantly more often a problem for male police victims than for females (56% vs. 0%; Dressing et al., 2005; Purcell et al., 2002). The effect size was large, but the small sample size warrants attention. It is not clear if this result reflects a real difference in same-gender stalking or if males more easily admitted being stalked by a male than by a female stalker. The latter might be more embarrassing to them. It is also likely that police officers did not take the females seriously enough or were concerned that they would not have been taken seriously by their social network or the legal system (Mullen et al., 2005; Mullen et al., 2010) In line with past research, ex-intimates were stalked most frequently (Dressing et al., 2005; Meloy, 2007; Mullen et al., 1999), while the most prevalent scenario was a female victim stalked by a male person.

Profession and non profession-related stalking

While most stalkers were ex-partners (36%) or ex-partners of the current intimate (11%), the second biggest group that targeted the officers were, in fact, profession-related stalkers (21%). Still, the lifetime prevalence rate for profession-related stalking victimization among the Swiss police was 1.1 %. This number seems considerably lower when compared with prevalence rates among other assumed "at risk" professions like, e.g., mental health professionals (11% to 38% profession-related victimization), and more akin to the lifetime prevalence rate for profession-related stalking among journalists (2.2%, Dressing et al., 2007).

While police officers might be at frequent risk for multiple occasions of threats and violence during their policing work, there could be a number of possible explanations why police officers might not be as often targeted for prolonged stalking episodes in their professional setting.

First of all, it seems reasonable to suggest that their status as police officers per se as well as the stalker's perception of a strong opponent (eg., police officers carry weapons) may keep a number of individuals, if not too mentally disturbed, away from stalking a police officer.

Secondly, while there exists a rather high percentage of female stalkers who target (male) mental health professionals, no female stalker stalked a police officer due to profession-related reasons in this study. All six profession-related stalkers were male and they stalked four male and two female police officers. This result could be associated with the fact that police officers more often have prolonged contact with male, rather than female, and sometimes mentally unstable, criminals/individuals. Moreover, a rather long-term and close relationship between, e.g. a female patient and a male psychologist, could provide a more fruitful ground for stalking behavior than a rather short encounter between a male officer and a mentally unstable female. As mentioned above, it's also possible that the male police officers simply neglected to report incidents involving female stalkers due to embarrassment or simply were not concerned. There was a significant difference in the stalking motives: None of the profession-related victims reported romantic desire as motive for the stalking. Anger and revenge were in their opinion the reasons for the stalking behavior. This is in line with Mullen's et al. (1999) revenge seeking stalker who targets professionals. T

Thirdly, police officers could be good at protecting their whereabouts and information concerning professional and private details and therefore might be– if not working at the same

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police station everyday – not that easy to find for stalkers. Unless the officers post private information on social networks. Other professions such as public figures or mental health professionals share more information on a eg. professional homepage (eg. curriculum vitae on mental health professional's homepage) in order to advertise themselves.

Similar to Dressing's et al. (2007) profession-related targeted journalists, there were more male than female victims in the profession-related police group but the difference was not significant in our study. The profession-related group also did not experience less fear-- unlike in the journalist study. In this study, male stalking victims reported less strong feelings of fear that their female counterparts. The effect size revealed a strong effect. Males may really perceive and judge the situation differently than a female stalking victim, or could simply be more reluctant to admit feelings of fear.

Independently from the reasons for this difference, there was no significant difference in the frequency of attacking male (13%) or female stalking (25%) victims in our small sample. It should also be noted that there was no significant difference regarding violent behavior of male (19%) and female stalkers (14%) in this study, and other research also suggests that female and male stalkers pose a similar threat for violence (Meloy et al., 2011).

Overall, sixty-four percent of the victims claimed that the stalking had a negative effect on their general well-being and a quarter had to change daily activities because of the stalking. There was no difference between professional or non-professional related stalking. While almost 80% of the victims informed their friends and families, only 50% informed their professional network about the stalking. A minority of police officers reported the stalking to the legal justice system.

Practical implications

General stalking guidelines propose that victims should inform their social environment about the stalking since stalkers tend to approach third parties to collect information about them or tell their side of the story. Besides this, witnesses confirming the stalking behavior may be valuable when filing a police report in the process.

Positive reactions from their networks were more often reported in both groups, but trivializing reactions were also reported for more than 20% of the participants in each group. 21% wished for more support from their employer (the police) during the stalking episode. Trivialization or victim blaming can making victims reluctant to ask for support in the future and can result in social isolation.

For a subgroup of the police officers it was a contradiction to be stalked and serve as a police officer. This view was independent of the origin of the stalking (private or professional). This attitude can be harmful in that victims don't allow themselves to get all the support they need and might have reinforced their believe that they should and must handle the stalking situation alone.

According to the Swedish Crime Survey (Dovelius, Holmberg & Öberg, 2006), only one third of the stalking victims reported the stalking to the police. Similar in this study, only three out of 28 victims reported the stalking officially to the police (11%).

As McKenzie and James (2011) pointed out, the filling of a police report is not suited for every case. Still, the involvement of the police and other helping agencies seem advisable in order to monitor the situation for possible changes in risk assessment (Mullen et al., 2010). It is also important to be informed about guidelines in dealing with stalking such as strictly ignoring contact attempts and involving third parties - such as the police- to set some bounderies. This is especially important in the early stage of stalking behavior to enhance the possibility of stopping the stalker before the stalking gets protracted. The longer a stalking

situation continues the harder it could be for the stalker to stop since he/she has already invested a lot of time, energy and other resources and the loss of face is difficult.

The reasons given by the police officers for their reluctance to involve the criminal justice system were manifold: In 16% of the cases the stalker stopped after he/she was threatened with legal consequences. Almost a third reported that they were afraid of an escalation, and 12% judged an official report as unsuccessful because of the legal situation in Switzerland. More than thirty percent claimed that they didn't need any help and dealt with the stalking by themselves, 20% were reluctant to report to the police based on their own profession.

In order to support police officers, the head of the police corps should be advised to make physical, sexual or psychological victimization of police officers and possible dysfunctional attitudes a subject in internal further education. Police officers should have access to a help point within the police system where they can report stalking behaviors and receive adequate support in dealing with the situation.

Limits of study

While there are some strengths in this study (eg., use of existing stalking definition, first Swiss prevalence rates), some methodological issues are obvious as well. Gathering a representative sample of Swiss police officers is difficult. The participants taking part in this study may reflect to a certain degree the gender, age and years of service of the officers in their cantons, but not all Swiss officers. Furthermore, female participants more often took part in the study than the general gender distribution in the three police corps would have suggested, probably underlining the findings from previous studies that stalking is often a problem that affects females. The decision to take part in a study depends on multiple factors

such as relevance of topic to the participant, and experiences with the topic or gender of the participant. It has been observed that males tend to participate less often than females in traditional (off-line) surveys (eg. Moore & Tarnai, 2002). It's not clear yet if the same gender gap applies to online surveys, but some results suggest that males also tend to participate less often online than females (Smith, 2008), an additional factor that may have contributed to the lower response rate in this male dominated sample.

When compared with other studies that report response rates between 6% and 76%, the rate of this study (18.6%) is rather low, although there were marked differences between the response rates in the cantons (Solothurn: 41%; Zurich: 33%; Bern: 8.5%). While it was possible to directly send the online link via e-mail to the police officers in two cantons, the online questionnaire was put on the intranet in the third canton and may have contributed to the low response rate in this canton. Despite the low response rate in Bern, the general distribution of age and years of service in this corps compared with the participants from Bern suggests that they are similar.

The responses are based on self-reports. There is no way to check for the validity of the answers. The questionnaire was only designed for German speaking police officers. There are a minority of police officers in the Canton of Bern whose mother tongue is French and we were told that the questionnaire could be too difficult to comprehend. We decided to exclude them as possible participants because of the language barrier. The questionnaire couldn't be translated to French due to time issues and because of cost-benefit considerations.

The sample studied here is a small, nonrandom sample, and this limits the generalizability of the results and they should be treated with the necessary caution. Moreover, statistically significant differences are harder to detect in small samples and such

small samples also limit the use of further statistical analysis. In addition to the statistical

significance, the effect size (Φ) was reported.

Conclusion

The stalking lifetime prevalence rate was 5% ($N = 28$). Most stalking episodes occurred in a

private setting, while 1% ($n = 6$) of the police officers were stalked due to profession-related

reasons once in their life. Lifetime stalking victimization among the genders were comparable

with rates from other studies. Some results found in previous studies about the context, nature

and impact of stalking were confirmed. It became clear that these stalking episodes went

unreported to the private and professional networks and the legal system in a relevant number

of cases, sometimes also due to the attitude that « being a stalking victim » and « being a

police officer » are incompatible: a fact that should be addressed in internal police education.

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APPENDICES

Table 1

Summary of stalking victimization rates

	Whole sample[1]	Non-profession related stalking[1]	Profession – related stalking[1]	Male officers[1]	Female officers[1]	Point- prevalence
	($N = 542$)	($N = 542$)	($N = 542$)	($N = 420$)	($N = 122$)	($N = 542$)
Prevalence	5.2% ($n = 28$)	4.1% ($n = 22$)	1.1% ($n = 6$)	3.8% ($n = 16$)	9.8% ($n = 12$)	0.7% ($n = 4$)

Note: [1]Lifetime prevalence rates

Table 2

Relationship between stalkers and their victim police officers

Relationship type	Percentage ($N = 28$)
Ex-Partner	36% ($n = 10$)
Former partner of the current intimate	11% ($n = 3$)
Profession-related stalking (eg., witness, suspect)	21% ($n = 6$)
Stranger	14% ($n = 4$)
Work colleague	11% ($n = 3$)
Acquaintance	3.5% ($n = 1$)
Boss	3.5% ($n = 1$)

Table 3

Summary of attitudes, reactions and outcomes depending on informing private, professional and legal networks (multiple answers possible)

Items	Percentage ($N = 28$)
Informed private network	79% ($n = 22$)
Positive reactions from private network	
- Understanding	57% ($n = 13$)
- Advices	45% ($n = 10$)
Negative reactions from private network	23% ($n = 5$)
Failed to inform private network:	21% ($n = 6$)
– Being a "police officer"	66% ($n = 4$)
– Afraid of recriminations	33% ($n = 2$)
– Can handle it alone	33% ($n = 2$)
Informed professional network	50% ($n = 14$)
Positive reactions from professional network	
- Understanding	36% ($n = 5$)
- Advices	64% ($n = 9$)
Negative reactions from professional network	21% ($n = 3$)
– Wished more support from their superiors	21% ($n = 3$)
Failed to inform professional network	50% ($n = 14$)
– Can handle the stalking alone	64% ($n = 9$)
– Being a "police officer"	29% ($n = 4$)
– No one would believe me	7% ($n = 1$)
Informed legal justice system	11% ($n = 3$)
Failed to inform justice system:	89% ($n = 25$)
– Can handle the stalking alone	36% ($n = 9$)
– Afraid of the consequences	28% ($n = 7$)
– Being a "police officer"	20% ($n = 5$)
– Stopped stalker with other means	16% ($n = 4$)
– Official report will not be successful	12% ($n = 3$)