

## Four Stalking Resources

by Joan Zorza, Esq.

### **Stalking the Stalker: Fighting Back With High-tech Gadgets and Low-tech Know-how**

Diane Glass, 85 pages, 2006

### **Stop the Stalker: A Guide for Targets**

Betsy Ramsey, 62 pages, 2000

### **Stalking: A Handbook for Victims**

Emily Spence-Diehl, 72 pages, 1999

### **How to Stop a Stalker**

Detective Mike Proctor, 292 pages, 2003

The first three of these books are very short and written for victims of stalking. Spence Diehl's book was reviewed previously, 5 DVR 52 (2000), so it will be discussed in less depth here, although, like all of the other books, it remains a highly useful aid. Each of the four books warn that stalkers are all encouraged by the slightest indication of friendliness from their targets, and will regard any communication as encouragement, making it important not to give the stalker anything that he will interpret as encouragement. The authors each discuss how victims should disengage from the stalker, including by changing their patterns to make it harder for the stalker to know where to find the victim. All of the authors note that police are far more responsive when victims have protection orders—in large part because it is much easier to file a criminal case based on the stalker having violated a protective order. Each of these authors also suggests keeping a stalking log or diary, with Ramsey's book actually including a diary that can be photocopied and used by any victim. Spence-Diehl's book provides an example of a diary entry, and Glass tells what to put in a stalking log.

### **Diane Glass's Book**

Diane Glass's book is the most recent of these books, and the only one that discusses some of the newer technologies being used by stalkers. It is mostly extremely helpful but occasionally offers "solutions" or advice that may be unhelpful and even dangerous regarding weapons. Most of the time, Glass provides readers with lots of insights and useful information

about how to stop stalkers, particularly those using the Internet, a major focus of her book. But Glass tells readers on the very first page that she carries a stun gun in her car and keeps it near her bed, implying that it will always keep her safe. "You may not be able to control what someone else does, but you can control what you do. With a little technical know-how and good instincts, you can stop a stalker in his tracks. You're only a 'victim' if you act like one."

**Warning Regarding Weapons.** On page 36, she talks about who should get a gun; this is the only instance in which she warns that any weapons that you carry may be used against you by your stalker, a realization that came to her because her ex-boyfriend stalker is a martial arts expert. She then discusses her thought process about getting a gun, appropriately noting that only those who know they will use it should carry one, or again it will be more likely to be used against you. (She is firm that only martial arts experts should carry knives, as they are far more likely to be seized and used against you by your stalker.)

Glass does not note that it might even be illegal for you to possess some of these weapons (which would give your stalker another tool to use against you, making your credibility and worthiness lower with criminal justice officials). Nor does she note that the self-defense laws vary considerably among the states, although increasingly most states have expanded laws permitting victims to use self-defense in their homes.

**Dealing With Low-Tech Stalking.** Like the other authors, Glass gives really helpful advice on low-tech stalking, warning that you should expect your stalker to do all kinds of intrusive acts, whether leaving you notes or presents, following you, snooping on you (e.g., rummaging through your trash, peeking through your windows, monitoring your mail, or talking to your co-workers), vandalizing your property, befriending and turning your friends against you (or even into spies against you), threatening you and your loved ones and sometimes even harming you or them (or your pets). She offers many suggestions for how to deal with

these and many other threats. Like the other authors she urges her readers to trust their instincts, and to always be careful, again providing many helpful suggestions.

Glass walks the reader through various low-tech security suggestions, always giving likely prices. A few suggestions, particularly those involving telephone security (e.g., the number you call for call tracing), are given as if universal in all states, although they may not work in your state. Glass discusses whistles (cheap, but sadly they are ignored by most people and have been found not to stop sexual assaults), changing locks, using a paper shredder, doorstop alarms, and telephone options, as well as many high-tech options, such as motion detectors, alarms, equipment with cameras, and other security systems. Like the other authors, she highly recommends getting a dog, "one of the most reliable (and sweetest) alarm systems around."

**Technology Enabling Stalkers.** Glass warns that technology has enabled stalkers to keep ahead of the law, and ahead of their victims, making stalking both easier and far more insidious. The technologies that she describes, like e-mail, AOL instant messenger, Internet Relay Chat rooms and GPS (Global Positioning Systems, a technology she barely mentions), are not all that new, but they largely post-date the older books' minimal treatment of them. In any event, the state laws in effect when the older books were written seldom provided adequate protection against these technologies. Glass notes that cyberstalking can also be used by non-stalkers as well to ruin your credit or reputation, and offers many tips to protect yourself against either type of abuser—foremost, do not reveal who you are and destroy data that identifies you (whether by assuming a new e-mail address, destroying your utility and credit card bills, or not leaving outgoing mail to be picked up in your mailbox). She devotes a whole chapter to stopping the stalker's high-tech stalking gear.

Glass devotes another chapter on going to court. Most of the advice is excellent, but she makes some very unfair general-

*See RESOURCES, next page*

*RESOURCES, from page 8*

izations (e.g., that most "government workers . . . tend to work against you") and some overly optimistic statements ("[p]rotective orders are rarely refused" so you don't need a lawyer, adding that "domestic violence centers will help you fill out the paperwork and get you a lawyer for free if you don't have one"). She ends her book with a chapter on who you should avoid to reduce your chance of being stalked and some resources that stalking victims should have.

**Betsy Ramsey's Book**

While Glass, a journalist, pragmatically organizes her book as a quick list of things to consider and do, Ramsey, a victim advocate, focuses her book more globally, starting with the dynamics of stalking, why stalkers do it, how it will affect you, what to do and not to do to protect yourself and stay safe, and the resources that exist. While there is no index (an omission in all of the books written for victims), Ramsey's extremely detailed table of contents is so well organized that it operates much as an index, making it the easiest of the books in which to find specific information. The Incident Log, at the very end begs to be copied and used.

**Sophisticated Understanding of Systems.** As a victim advocate Ramsey has years of experience dealing with stalkers and hence can write with real insight about stalker behavior. Her book provides the most sophisticated treatment of how systems operate and respond, undoubtedly the result of having worked with many systems both as a domestic violence advocate and victim advocate, and having asked for input and feedback on her book from many, including a judge, district attorney, police officer and sheriff.

Working with a whole community, she begins her book acknowledging and thanking the many individuals who shared their expertises with her and who work with her in helping to protect and support the targets of stalking in her community: victim advocates, social workers, law enforcement, fire/rescue personnel, prosecutors and the lawyers who help victims, her entire program (staff, board, volunteers, interns), and to the many family and friends who provide support and retreat from crisis.

**Care of and Respect for Victims.** Ramsey also knows the terrible toll that stalk-

ing can take on its targets, including the fear of going crazy. Whatever the situation, she is there to provide as much help to get victims through their crisis. The biggest gap in the book (that otherwise provides a wealth of information) concerns Internet stalking and the newer technologies that were not widely in use by stalkers when she wrote her book. Her care of and respect for stalking victims is clear in her dedication of the book: "This handbook is dedicated to the targets of stalkers. Your strength and courage inspires me."

**Emily Spence-Diehl's Book**

Spence-Diehl, an academic social worker, attempts to give readers options, not direction, but recognizes that knowledge is power, and without knowing one's options, one cannot take them. She too understands that it takes a whole team to keep a victim safe: "[p]olice officers, counselors, victim advocates, prosecutors, friends, co-workers and family," but then reminds the reader, "*you are the team leader (emphasis in original).*"

Having interviewed many stalking victims she picks up on all the issues they encounter, including some that were not likely covered under the staking laws when she wrote the book. Unlike Ramsey, she has some brief advice on computer safety. Much of her practical advice is put in checklists that are in the appendices, one on building a case for prosecution and one on how to be safe. As a social worker she is helpful in explaining all the types stalker manipulations. Like Ramsey, she worries less about typing stalkers as delusional or obsessive or narcissistic, realizing that these are traits common to most if not all stalkers.

**Detective Mike Proctor's Book**

Detective Mike Proctor has written a highly practical and insightful book on stalking. He is a retired homicide detective who returned to the Westminster Police Department in Orange County (near Disneyland) in California to handle stalking and predator sex offender cases. He brought all of his street-smarts and thoroughness from his prior work to his new endeavor, and he shares what he was able to do so that almost every case ended with guilty pleas or verdicts. A real hands on person, he offers incredibly detailed help to his victims, including how to secure windows and doors, what hardware to buy depending on your bud-

get, and what internet security measures should be taken. He also tells others in law enforcement how they could and should be handling stalking cases. Proctor is an eager teacher, and in investigating stalking cases that span other jurisdictions, he contacts police in those jurisdictions to share his knowledge of the case and what skills he can offer them. He recognizes that cases may best be handled in more than one jurisdiction, such as the jurisdiction of another victim of the stalker, and he readily shares some of his successes and frustrations in doing so.

**Virtually All Are Serial Stalkers.** Proctor knows his stalkers well. He describes 100 stalkers that he and his partner have investigated. Through their work they have uncovered many previously unrecognized patterns that are common in stalkers. First, by investigating where the stalkers have lived in the past, Proctor has learned that all but two of them (98%) have stalked other people before. One of the two with no stalking history was only 17 years old, so presumably was at the beginning of his career. Not only did he discover prior stalked victims, but through long-term surveillance of his stalkers he learned that many go on to stalk others afterwards. Another pattern he uncovered, related to the serial stalking, was that many stalkers have what he calls a genesis victim, a primary victim to whom they return repeatedly, though they may have other victims in the interim. The stalkers feel somehow bound for life to these people.

Proctor also discovered that stalking is cyclical in nature, based on the calendar or significant anniversaries for the parties. In addition, he discovered that often the parties started dating only as a desperate measure by the victim well after the stalking commenced (calling into question the simplicity of the labels used for stalking types in this country and the assumption that intimate partner, acquaintance and stranger stalking are quite different). He notes that there are many classification schemes in existence with no agreement on which one should be used, though he prefers domestic violence, acquaintance and stranger stalking as his categories. Because domestic violence stalkers are the most dangerous, the terms are somewhat helpful in assessing risk to the victim.

See *RESOURCES, next page*

*RESOURCES, from page 9*

**Sexual Assault and Stalking.** Proctor is one of the few American stalking experts, especially in California, who sees the connection between stalkers and sexual predators, and considers sexual predators to be another type of stalkers. While sexual predators are explicitly covered by stalking statutes in parts of Australia, none of the statutes in this country treat them as stalkers for two reasons. First, lawmakers treat the stalking as only incidental to learning the habits of the victim so as to be able to sexually assault and possibly kill them, crimes that most assume are one time events. In addition, since many sexual predators stalk secretly so that the victim is not aware of being watched, the fear element necessary in some statutes is not met, making it impossible to successfully prosecute sexual predators for stalking. Proctor has noticed how often the lines are blurred, with many stalkers sexually assaulting victims and also returning to their prior victims over time.

He also finds that many stalkers molest children or commit incest, either as transference or as retaliation. While stalkers often target their victim's children even when they have no relationship, they are far more likely to do so with their own children. Proctor is critical of the family courts (and often with prosecutors and other police departments) for failing to protect these children. Indeed, he notes that visitation access often starts or at least fuels the stalking behavior.

**Intimate Stalkers the Most Dangerous.** Like others in this field, he believes that intimate stalkers (who stalk people with whom they have had an intimate relationship) are violent most often. He also has found that most of the domestic violence stalkers, the largest category of stalkers, are sadists. Indeed, he and his partner have learned that almost all of their stalkers have some type of anti-social behavior, most often a personality disorder, and that most express no remorse toward their victims. A significant group of stalkers have other mental illnesses. Many male stalkers self-medicate with drugs, particularly with alcohol, methamphetamines, cocaine and marijuana, and also with steroids used for bodybuilding. They have also found that almost all youthful stalkers stalk their dating partners.

**Stalker Tools.** Proctor describes not only the different types of stalkers and what motivates them, but also the tools

they use. Again, his thoroughness leads to some of the best descriptions in the literature. He starts by observing that "stalkers are very good at what they do." Their tools include vandalism, surveillance (done by every one of his stalkers), repetitive if not constant communication, trophy collection (most often with panties and other undergarments and often in connection with burglary performed in a manner to let the victim know the stalker was there), and frequent harassment tactics (e.g., small claims actions, suits for defamation, fraud schemes, telephone and pager harassment, disruption of utility service, harassment of family members and significant others, death threats, threats to pets, extortion generated by libel and/or slander, custody actions, and using cameras to embarrass their victims). Similarly, he is aware how dangerous the Internet and e-mail can be to stalking victims, particularly to child victims. He also warns that while not all threats are carried out, some violence is perpetrated without any prior warning. And new technology lurks that only gives stalkers more tools. One new tool being used by pedophiles are Web cameras.

Proctor tells readers that since "the key to prosecuting a stalker is to document, document, document, and then document some more," he and his partner "find out everything we can about our stalkers," which is to say, they talk them. Stalking diaries are key, as are disposable cameras. He tells victims how to work with law enforcement and prosecutors. In addition he shows them how to gather their own evidence when police can or will not do so (including whether to put the evidence in paper vs. plastic bags — use plastic only for something that is fragile such as blood, semen or feces).

As an example to other law enforcement officers, Proctor also describes how he and his partner work. His average stalking file ends up "well over one hundred pages in length, and it represents many hours of investigative work." His practice is to keep the file until the stalker dies or becomes totally incapacitated to the point of not being able to stalk. Being a homicide detective, he anticipates worst case scenarios, making sure he will be able to identify the victim if later killed, gathering or documenting fingerprints, photographs, scars, marks, tattoos, and even where to find dental records at the time he open a case.

**Victim Needs Are Great.** Although vic-

tims are devastated by what they go through and often need counseling and peer support groups, Proctor notes that few domestic violence programs have much specialization in stalking. Yet he provides much advice as to what victims can do to reduce their exposure to stalking and also how to respond. He is a big believer in safety planning and explains to readers in great detail ways they can better secure their home and their workplace.

**Weaknesses.** The legal remedy section will be invaluable to those in California. While Proctor knows that courts and stalking laws differ among the states, he seems less aware of how procedures differ among the states and even among counties. Thus, some of the suggestions may not be accurate in the reader's jurisdiction.

While the references are all good, this is one of the weaker sections of the book. It could have been considerably longer and more detailed, and the index missed many of the key concepts that readers might want to know.

These few problems aside, this is a really excellent book that DVR wholeheartedly recommends. This book will help any program or law enforcement program better understand what they can do to stop stalkers and help victims.

### Obtaining the Books

Each of these books has much to offer stalking victims and those working with them. *Stalking the Stalker* by Diane Glass is available for \$11.95 from iUniverse, 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln, NB 68512 or [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com), or call 1-800-Authors. *Stop the Stalker* by Betsy Ramsey is available for \$10 (less in bulk) from Betsy Ramsey Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 9, Jonesboro, GA 30237, 678-575-0522, or [www.betsyramsey.com/order.htm](http://www.betsyramsey.com/order.htm). Ramsey has recently updated her book and plans a more in-depth one for professionals. *Stalking: A Handbook for Victims* by Emily Spence-Diehl was available for \$6.95 from Learning Publications, Inc., 5351 Gulf Drive, P.O. Box 1338, Holmes Beach, FL 34218-1338, but may now only be available from bookstores like [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com). It was on the website of the National Center for Victims of Crime, and hopefully will be returned. *How to Stop a Stalker* by Mike Proctor (which originally cost \$21) is no longer available from the publisher, but is available on-line from either [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) or [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com). ■