

Power-based personal violence: stalking, sexual abuse and rape culture

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Stalking was made a criminal offence on 25 November 2012. It is a devastating crime and very distressing for victims who are often forced to modify their lives. It is a complex offence that affects one in five women and one in 10 men during their lives. Women are more likely to be victims of multiple incidents of abuse. Generally this includes family violence, sexual abuse and stalking. In terms of offending behaviour, stalkers are more akin to sex offenders. This paper argues that current media discourses are training society to accept sexual violence and stalking as 'normal' by way of disseminating messages which glorify aggressive attitudes. These messages serve to normalise dangerous and unhealthy behaviours and are creating and reinforcing a rape culture.