



Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Section – 20??

I25 Stalking By Proxy

Kaushal K. Sharma, MD, PO Box 6275, Huntington Beach, CA 92646; and Risa Beth Grand, MD, University of Southern California, Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Science, PO Box 86125, Los Angeles, CA 90086-0125*

The goal of this presentation is to assist forensic practitioners in new and emerging phenomenon.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by enhancing knowledge database of forensic practitioners.

Fifteen years ago, in 1993, at the meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, Dr. Zona and Sharma presented the emerging issue of stalking and obsessional subjects. In those days, stalking was usually done in a more personal fashion by stalker either writing letters to the victim or appearing at the victim's door. With increasing popularity of other means of communications like SMS, TXT, IM, and e-mail, method of stalking has also changed. In this paper, Dr. Grand and Dr. Sharma present issue of internet and text messaging based stalking. In a 2000 paper, Dr. Jaffe and Dr. Sharma explored the issue of Cybersex. Last year, Dr. Grand and Dr. Sharma pursued this issue further in our paper dealing with consent in Cybersex. Here, Dr. Sharma and Dr. Grand discuss a rather interesting case study of such stalking by proxy. This is akin to a not so uncommon movie theme of "good guy vs. bad guy" theme existing in the same person or twin brothers or what used to be called multiple personality disorder.

In the field of medicine, certain conditions are presented to a clinician in a disguised manner. The presumed patient, even if suffering from ill health is not the only person who is in need of intervention. This is referred to as "Induced Disease by Proxy." Probably the best known of these is *Munchausen's by Proxy Syndrome*. Sometimes it is also referred to as *Polle Syndrome*, a name attributed from the daughter of Baron Munchausen's who supposedly died from such pathology.

This paper deals with a relationship disorder. The stalker, from all outward behavior is like any other typical stalker. However he has access to information not commonly available to a stalker. For example frequent change of phone numbers does not deter him from finding out the new phone number, sometimes within a few days. He is also able to locate new address with ease. The perpetrator is stalking an unsuspected victim with increasingly aggressive threats. However the perpetrator, in his real life is pretending to hide his pathology and projects this pathology to the assumed stalker. The victim who knows the perpetrator as a friend does not realize that this so called friend is stalking her with a false identity. This leads to interesting and dangerous consequences for the victim when the stalker by proxy, invites other people at random, to start stalking the same victim. Finally when caught, the presumed friend and stalker are found to be one and the same. When evaluated the stalker's psychosexual pathology and relationship issues become apparent.

Dr. Sharma and Dr. Grand focus on such uncommon stalking behavior and using case example outline pathology of the suspect, the victim and their multi-dimensional relationship.

Stalking, Cybersex, Dangerousness