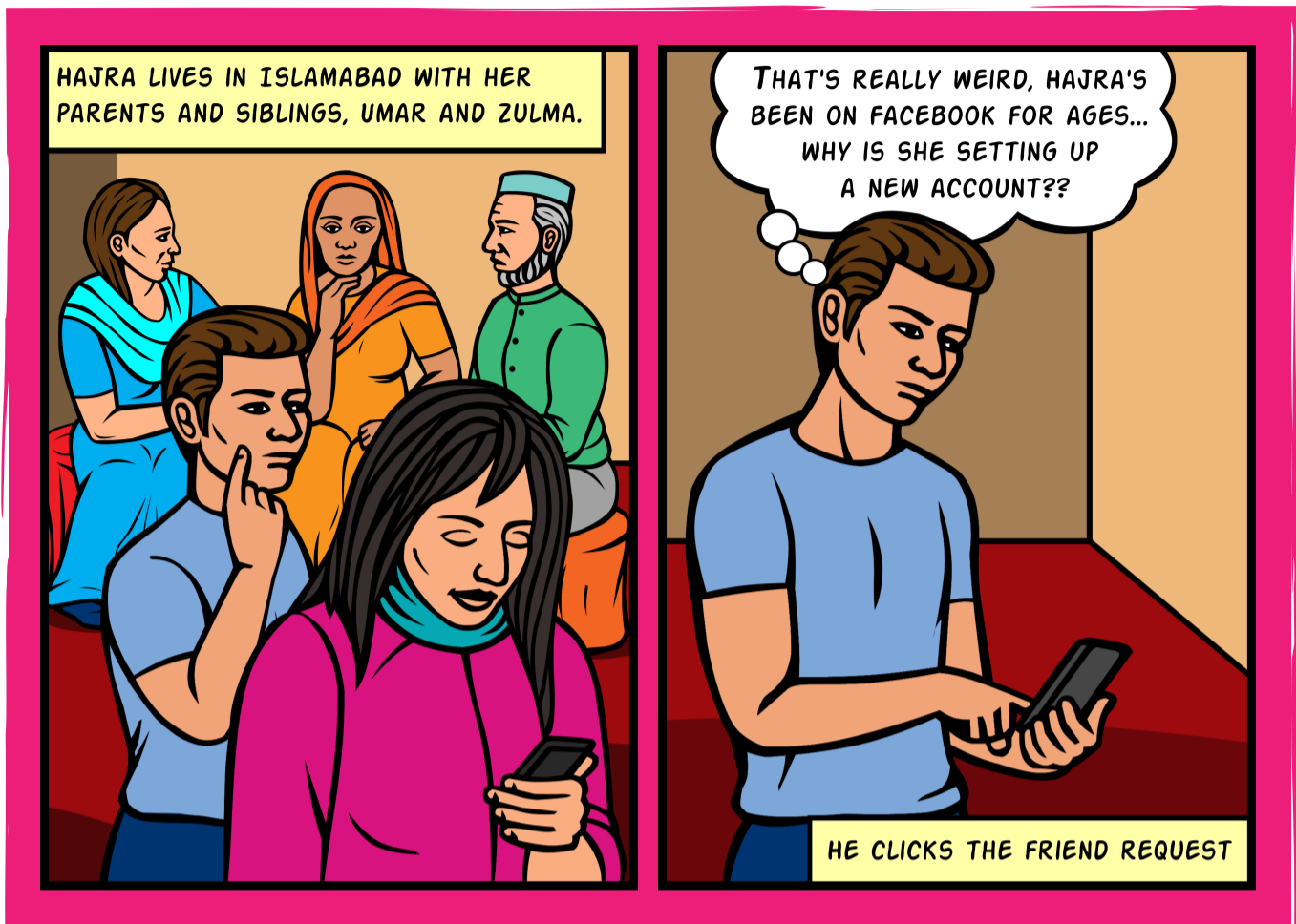


# CYBERSTALKING



1 2 3 4

**CYBERSTALKING IS A TECHNOLOGICALLY-BASED ATTACK ON A PERSON FOR REASONS OF ANGER, REVENGE OR CONTROL.**



A Working to Halt Online Abuse report covering 2000-2013 reveals that half of the respondents were cyberstalked by someone they had some sort of relationship with, while the other half had never had any relationship with the perpetrator. Of the former, the most common connection was an ex (39.5%), followed by an online acquaintance (16.25%) and a friend (12.5%).

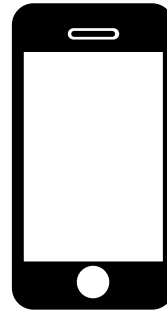
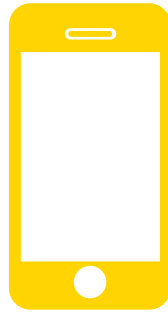
Women are much more likely than men to experience stalking, especially by an intimate partner. Most of those stalked by an intimate partner also face physical assault from that person.

Cyberstalking includes but is not limited to:

- harassment, humiliation and embarrassment of the person targeted
- harassing family, friends and employers to isolate the person
- tactics to make the target fearful
- taking on the identity of the other person
- monitoring (e.g., using Facebook notifications to find out where the person is going, using spy ware, activating GPS)

Cyberstalking can be difficult to address due to:

- stalker anonymity
- law enforcement assumption that a stalker located far away will not travel to follow up on threats
- the stalker encouraging online buddies to participate in the harassment, increasing the person's distress



## MOBILE PHONE

### CONNECTIONS

Wifi hotspots and bluetooth connections can reveal your location and make it easier for people to hack your phone.

#### i. SMS/Calls

If a stalker can obtain your mobile number, they may harass you through SMS messages and phone calls. They may use it in combination with GPS to reveal that they know your location. Stalkers can also use spyware to intercept your messages and calls.

### GPS

GPS may tell you what coffee shops are nearby, but it can also let others know where you are. The fortunately defunct Girls Around Me app was a perfect storm of GPS info and unscrupulous developers.

#### i. Photos

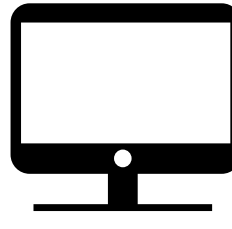
Photos have information embedded in their properties that include when and where you took them. It can also be possible to decipher the location based on what's in the image.

### PASSWORDS

If your phone is not password protected, anyone who gets their hands on it can access your information. Password hacking is common, and the more a stalker knows about you, the more likely they are to guess your passwords. Plus, the most common passwords are easy to guess, such as "password," "123456" and "letmein."

### APPLICATIONS

Malicious apps may contain spyware. The more capabilities your smart phone has, like GPS, the more those extras can be used to spy on you.



## LAPTOP

### CONNECTIONS

Wifi hotspots and bluetooth connections can reveal your location and make it easier for people to hack your device.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

It's very easy to glean information about where you live, the places you visit regularly and the people you care about from posts and pictures. Your friends might also unintentionally reveal information about you.

### ONLINE CHATTING

Stalking from online acquaintances can happen in chatrooms. Also, if you use the option to "automatically remember your password," anyone using your computer can log in to your messenger services.

### BLOGS

Stalkers like to hang out in comment spaces and post threats and insults. This is especially common when the stalker is someone unknown to you.

### EMAIL

Email addresses are often attached to real names and profiles, and stalkers may use these to contact you directly. Again, spyware can be used to access your private email.

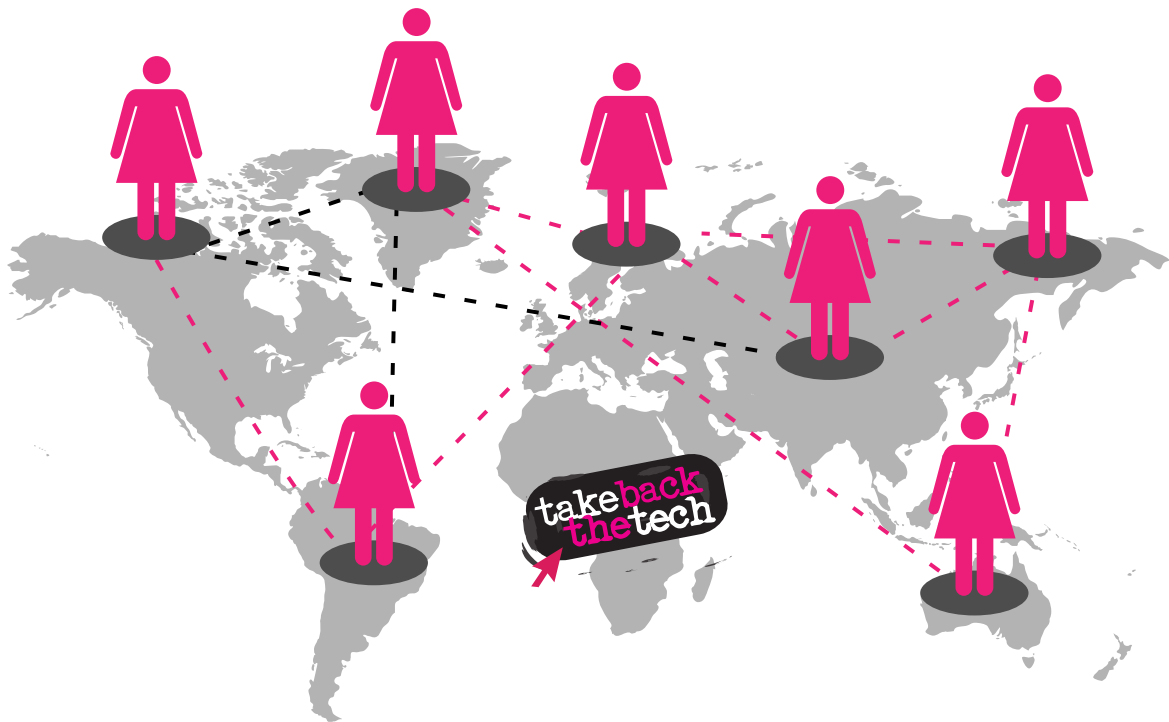
### WEB CAMS

Stalkers use spy ware to access webcams and film people without their knowledge or consent.

### PASSWORDS

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## RELATED RIGHTS



### YOUR RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

**ARTICLE 19, UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS:** “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.”

Cyberstalking is often used to silence women and girls. Whether bloggers, gamers, tweeps or general users, women are often intimidated into leaving online spaces and closing their computers. But women have the same rights as men to access those spaces and be heard on any issue.

You have the right to express yourself freely online and off, which makes cyberstalking a free speech issue.

### YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND FREEDOM FROM DEFAMATION

**ARTICLE 12, UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS:** “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.”

People who stalk women online take advantage of the anonymity the internet can give them. Some of the same people who violate women’s privacy online do so while fiercely maintaining their own right to privacy.

An APC study looking at recent legislation in South Africa, New Zealand and Canada reflects the need for internet intermediaries and others to play a role in preventing and rectifying online violence. The legislation recognises that the internet makes it easy for stalkers to be anonymous and holds internet service providers accountable to reveal information about the identity of the harasser, cease providing service to the harasser and/or remove harmful content.

In Europe, there is also a Right to be Forgotten, which can be used to demand that search engines remove links with personal information because it is irrelevant. Interestingly, the burden of proof is now on the search engine to prove that the data cannot be deleted because it is still relevant. The law applies to all companies, including those outside the EU, which serve European citizens.

### YOUR RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

**UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:** “States should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination. States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women... [This includes] any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:** “Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to promote and protect the right for everyone, particularly women, to live free from violence in both the public and the private sphere.”

Recent domestic legislation specifically tackling online violence against women recognises:

- the need to provide practical redress to targets of harassment
- the responsibility of websites and internet providers in cyber-harassment cases
- the need for public education

In South Africa, New Zealand, California and Nova Scotia, for instance, all new legislation recognises that harm caused by online harassment includes emotional distress even when there is no actual physical harm.