

A Case Study on Legal Evidence of Tech-Facilitated Abuse in Wisconsin

Sophie Stephenson, Naman Gupta, Kyle Huang, David Youssef, Rose Ceccio, Rahul Chatterjee, UW Madison

Akhil Polamarasetty, University College London

Kayleigh Cowan, Disability Rights Wisconsin

Maximilian Zinkus, Johns Hopkins University



1 in 3
women

experience intimate partner abuse in their lifetime [1]

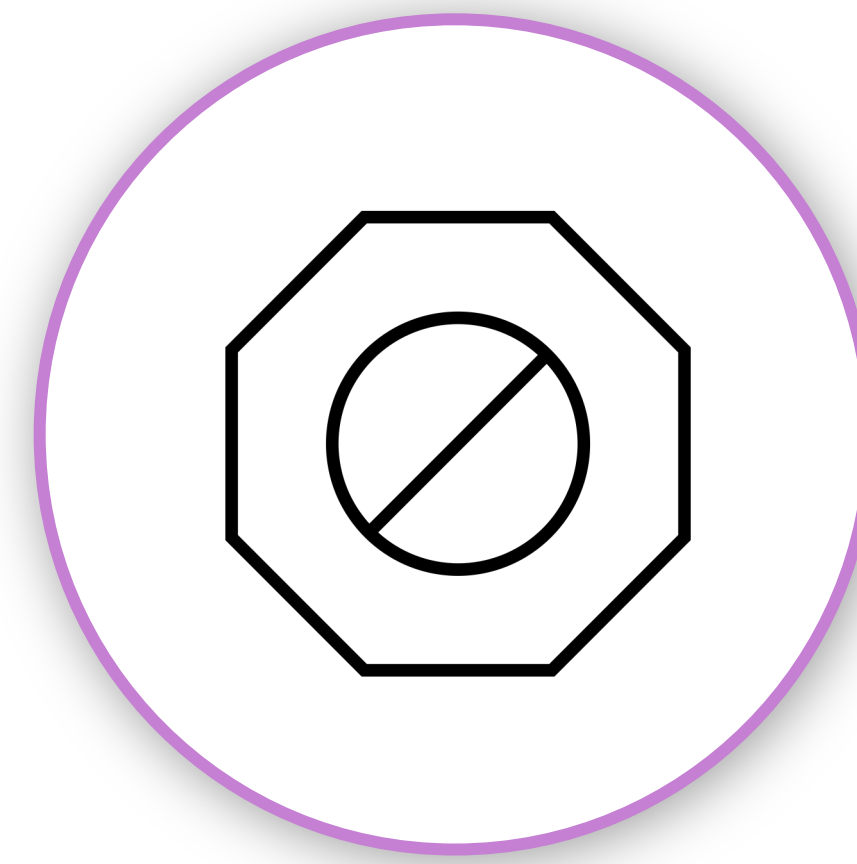
[1] National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), 2022.

63%

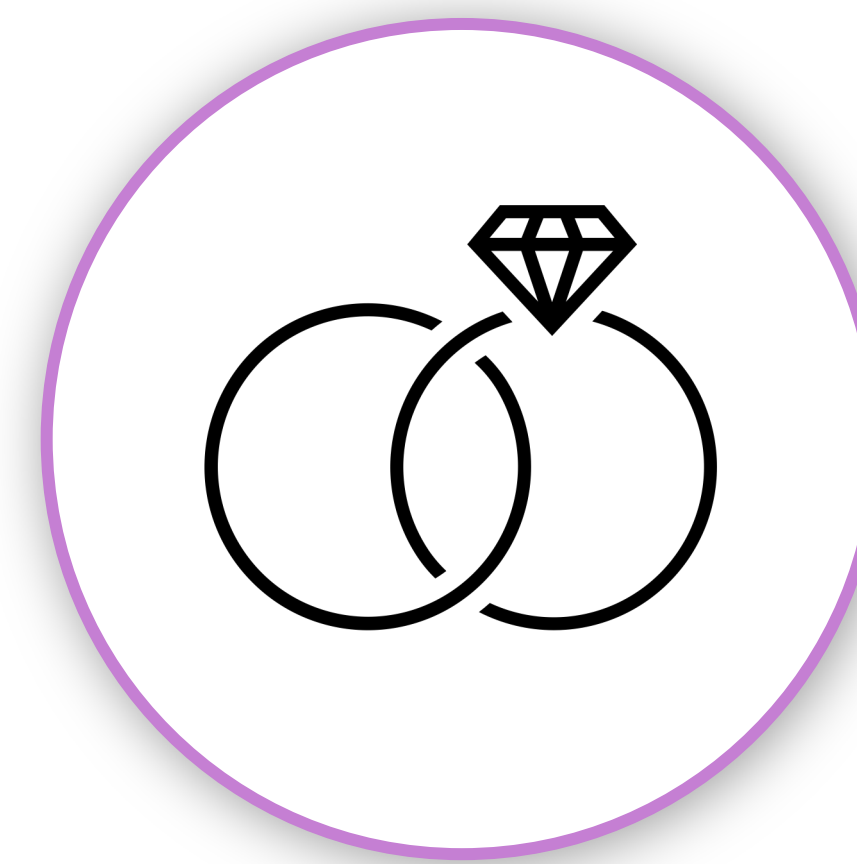
of survivors experience surveillance or harassment involving **technology** [2]

[2] Messing et al., *J Fam Viol* 35, 693–704 (2020).

Survivors of technology-facilitated abuse seek legal recourse



Restraining orders
for physical & digital protection



Divorce
for safer child custody & placement



Criminal charges
for actions like stalking & distributing NCII

How do survivors collect & present **evidence of technology-facilitated abuse** for use in legal proceedings?



A qualitative case study with 19 Wisconsin legal professionals



Roles

- Attorneys & law clinicians
- Legal advocates
- Police officer
- Judge
- Sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE)
- Program leadership

Legal expertise

- Restraining orders
- Criminal law
- Family law (divorce)
- Immigration
- Civil matters

Abuse contexts

- Intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Sexual assault
- Human trafficking
- ...



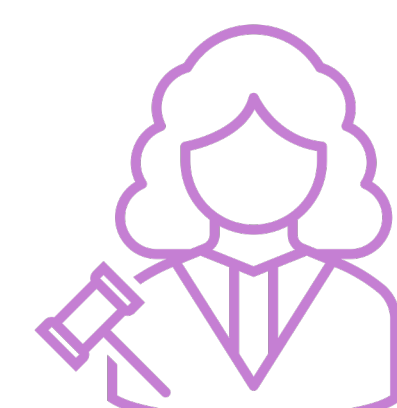
Preliminary findings



Evidence is often **printed photos** or **testimony** showing **harassment**



Evidence of technology-facilitated abuse can be **difficult to collect**



Usefulness of evidence depends heavily on a **judge's interpretation**



Laws are ill-defined when it comes to technology-facilitated abuse

