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Factors That Contribute to Lone-Wolf Terrorist Attacks in the United States

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Walden University

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Kevin Robert Klatte

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2026

Abstract

Factors That Contribute to Lone-Wolf Terrorist Attacks in the United States

by

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MBA, University of Cincinnati, 2018

MA, University of Cincinnati, 2012

BS, University of Cincinnati, 2010

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

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Abstract

Within the United States, current strategies aimed to prevent terrorism focus on terrorist organizations and international terrorism. The predominant literature on lone-wolf terrorism has focused mainly on quantitative data, and the qualitative studies that have been conducted do not uncover all factors that led to the individual committing the attack. Lone-wolf terrorism, while less frequent than international terrorism, has a significantly higher number of victims per attack and is extremely difficult to predict and prevent. The existing qualitative literature has heavily focused on the mental state, emotional status, and cognitive ability of the offender. This study explored why an individual becomes a lone-wolf terrorist. The theoretical lens is Agnew's general strain theory of terrorism. This thematic case study analyzed four lone wolves and provided a rich context of what motivated their decision to commit an attack. The analysis uncovered six prominent themes. The analysis showed that the lone wolves embraced an ideologically motivated strain or grievance and had a history of using violence as a coping mechanism. The offenders felt inferior to the initiator of their strain or grievance and had a diminished ability to consider outcomes. Additionally, they had been trained to use weapons and felt their victims were complicit in the harm the offender internalized. This insight could have implications for positive social change in relation to policy recommendations to enhance national security and positively impact, not only the community at large, but also the potential lone wolf terrorist, by intervening before an attack occurs.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Lone-wolf terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but still relatively little is known about why an individual chooses to commit a mass violence attack within the United States. The current field of research has focused primarily on quantitative methods, which fails to uncover how the offender defined their own reality (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). The current stance on the qualitative aspects is more general in nature and focus heavily on the offender's mental state, which has provided conflicting arguments (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019). Because of the significant rise in lone-wolf terrorist attacks, and the lethality of these events, there was a need to fill the gap in the current literature to understand what factors contribute to an individual becoming a lone-wolf terrorist. Addressing this gap helped enhance positive social change by increasing national security within the United States, as well as potentially diverting these individuals from committing crimes that would result in their detention or death because of their attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019; Yob & Brewer, n.d.).

Background

The subject of lone-wolf terrorism has a vast array of research and borrows from theories geared toward Criminal Justice that attempt to explain general offending (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020). Because of changing definitions and a failure to form a

consensus, active shooter literature can provide insight into why lone-wolf terrorism occurs (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Silva, 2020; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). The news media and the Internet have been linked to the increase in the amount of lone-wolf terrorist events, but the correlation and underlying themes have not been completely ironed out (Dahmen, 2014; Zeman et al., 2017). While mental illness has been linked to these offenders, it is not a definitive predictor (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). The extant research explores concepts that describe the lone-wolf terrorist, as well as their potential motivations with the use of a quantitative frame, and only explores qualitative factors in a cursory manner (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Dahmen, 2014; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Silva, 2020; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014; Zeman et al., 2017).

With the increasing acceptance of qualitative research methods becoming more mainstream, these methods have been employed to explore the motivations of lone-wolf terrorists, but this has only offered a general framework and did not take an in-depth examination of the motivations that specifically contribute to individuals becoming lone-wolf terrorists within the geographic bounds of the United States (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Sheptoski, 2016). Additionally, while lone-wolf terrorists do not account for all mass shooting and active shooter events, they do account for those fueled by racist, political and religious ideologies, hence, understanding what factors contribute to lone-wolf terrorism, helps to curtail the significant increase in these events within the past

decade (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2016; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019).

The importance of incorporating qualitative methods into examining what factors contribute to a lone-wolf terrorist attack cannot be understated because while quantitative methods can describe the offender or the attack, it does not provide an in-depth understanding of how the individual defines the event (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Sheptoski, 2016). This leads to a significant gap in which the current literature does not explicitly examine underlying motivations and drivers of lone-wolf within the United States (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Sheptoski, 2016). This gap has significance because the motivations have become an important factor in attempting to minimize and prevent individuals from becoming radicalized and implementing a violent attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2021; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Sheptoski, 2016).

Problem Statement

Lone wolf terrorist attacks have significantly increased in magnitude within the last decade (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019). The Global Terrorism Index reported that lone-wolf terrorist attacks had accounted for about 5% of the total terrorist attacks and had risen to 70% of total terrorism in the years of 2014–2018 (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2019). As Capellan and Anisin (2018) argue, lone-wolf terrorism increases the threat to local communities and national security. While researchers have attempted to understand why individuals become radicalized and undertake violence to

alleviate their strains, the current research is conflicting in reporting how an individual determines that violence is a justifiable strategy to cope and the factors that coalesce to perpetuate the attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Marlatt, 2019; Misiak et al., 2019). Because the factors that lead to a violent attack are not fully understood, and many lone-wolf terrorists are not directly seen as a threat to law enforcement prior to an attack, the task of preventing further harm is a nearly impossible endeavor (Agnew, 2018; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). This is made even more difficult because of conflicting definitions of what constitutes lone-wolf terrorism and separating those individuals who fit the traditional definition, rather than employing mass violence for fame-seeking activities (Agnew, 2010; Dahmen, 2018; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016; Kim et al., 2021; Silva, 2020; Zeman et al., 2017).

The prevention of lone-wolf terrorist attacks will inevitably lead to enhanced national security and increased public safety (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). While this goal is significant and will benefit a large majority of society, the study is able to help those individuals who would have otherwise become lone-wolf terrorists, had their attack been carried out. This is because determining what factors led to an attack can signal potential policy changes to enhance those avenues and provide a more comprehensive picture of the behaviors and warning signs that the individual exhibited (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). This provides a prosocial means for the individual to address their grievance or seek assistance is reducing their strains and keep them out of the criminal justice system, or

ultimately becoming a victim of their own attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019).

The extant research on lone-wolf terrorism relies heavily on descriptive factors of the offenders and targets but fails to understand how the offender defines the incident (Bright et al., 2020; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021; Misiak et al., 2019). By using qualitative methods to examine what factors led to an individual becoming a lone-wolf terrorist, many benefits have been achieved. This study has helped to determine what behaviors, actions and associations are present prior to and during the attack being carried out. The study is able to aid in current prevention measures being enhanced that will increase national security (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). Additionally, strategies can be developed which will address the needs of the lone-wolf prior to an attack, allowing government agencies to intervene proactively and deescalate the individual's cognitions before planning and carrying out an attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Misiak et al., 2019).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify what factors led to a lone-wolf terrorist attack within the United States. A constructivist approach was employed because this paradigm states that reality is subjective and truth is defined by the individual by their experiences and perceptions (Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Within the context of the current study, the lone-wolf terrorist was defined as an individual who commits, or attempts to commit, a violent act to further

their ideological goals, where the intended target is within the geographical borders of the United States (Agnew, 2010; FBI, 2016). The ideological motivation can be racial, religious, social, environment or political in nature, as expressed by the FBI (2016) but may also be influenced by personal grievances and strains (Agnew, 2010). While these individuals may share similar ideological goals, the lone-wolf terrorist does not maintain a formal affiliation or link to a terrorist organization (FBI, 2016). The data collection and analysis will be a thematic content analysis of media reports that are publicly available. These reports were sourced from The New York Times and CNN. Additionally, the Unabomber Manifesto was sourced from The Washington Post's website because this offered a version that was not redacted. Currently, the extant literature stresses the correlation between the offender having some form of mental illness, but also contends that this link is not strong enough to be considered a definitive predictor (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020).

The range of lone-wolf terrorism attacks is as diverse as the motivations that have driven offenders to commit the incident (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2021). By utilizing qualitative methods this study examined the factors that have motivated the offender, as well as explain how the individual has defined their experience (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Gill et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020).

Research Question

RQ: Why do individuals become a lone-wolf terrorist?

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The academic community has applied many criminological theories when attempting to study terrorism (Agnew, 2010; Kim et al., 2021; Marlatt, 2019). One of the predominant theories, the general strain theory of terrorism, has been widely accepted as a way of explaining why international terrorism occurs (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Marlatt, 2019). This theory was chosen as the foundation of the conceptual framework, and the underlying theoretical framework, because of the close association between strain and the risk of an attack occurring, if traditional means fail to alleviate the strain (Agnew, 2010). The general strain theory of terrorism was formed from Agnew's original general strain theory of crime (1992), which explained that as an individual experienced strains, if these strains became more significant, and there were no pro-social means to divert the individuals' efforts, negative behavior and criminality would occur (Agnew, 1992). The general strain theory also contends that the negative behavior will occur if there is an absence of positive stimuli, which in the case of a lone-wolf terrorist would be the ability to decrease their strain or alleviate their grievance (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Marlatt, 2019; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva, 2020; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Spaaii & Hamm, 2014).

Additionally, by identifying what factors contributed to the attack occurring and enhancing the probability of these mechanisms addressing the strains or providing an avenue for the individual to be heard, then lone-wolf terrorist attacks may be prevented, as this will yield a positive stimuli to the offender (Agnew, 1992; Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Marlatt, 2019; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva, 2020;

Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). Because of the wide range of impacts that strains and grievances play upon an individual's emotions and cognitions, this theory not only complements the presence of mental illness, but also accounts for why mentally stable individuals may be persuaded to commit an attack (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019).

While other theoretical frameworks were observed, such as rational choice and routine activities theory, they did not fit the current examination of lone-wolf terrorism with extensive rigor (Agnew, 2010; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). Rational choice theory does not fit with most lone-wolves because they are able to critically think about their plan, prepare, train, and seek others with similar view (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). Additionally, routine activities theory fails to meet the criteria when the targets and presence of capable guardians are examined (Agnew, 2010; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). When examining targets, in which a vast majority maintain a heavy Federal or local law enforcement presence, as well as a subset of events occurring on military targets, the standard factors for routine activities theory to be applicable, do not coalesce (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021).

Nature of the Study

Because there is a significant gap in the qualitative literature exploring the phenomenon of lone-wolf terrorism, this study explored what factors are present within cases and across cases that help to explain why an individual decides to become a lone-

wolf terrorist (Agnew, 2016; Capellan, 20115; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022). This study examined four lone-wolf terrorists within the United States to examine what factors are similar across cases, what differences exist between cases and if there are extraneous factors that seem to perpetuate the violent attack but are unique for that specific case. To ensure a comprehensive examination, the four lone-wolf terrorists were from the time span of 1978 until 2016 (Barry et al., 20216; CNN, 2001; History.com Editors, 2010; History.com Editors, 2018; Lavandra & Perez, 2013; Perez et al., 2016; Sheptoski, 2016). Because this study focused on lone-wolf terrorism and some of the terms are unique to the field in the applicability and precise definition, it is imperative to set the stage for the terminology used within this study.

Definitions

Within the context of the current study, the term lone-wolf terrorist refers to an individual who perpetrates a mass violence attack with the intention of furthering an ideological goal (FBI, 2016). Within this study, the concept of ideological goal encompasses those factors set by the FBI, consisting of political, racial, religious, social, and environmental goals (FBI, 2016). Additionally, the definition in this study is expanded to include personal factors, which is in line with Agnew's (2010) general strain theory of terrorism. An additional caveat to the definition of a lone-wolf terrorist is that this may be a single perpetrator or a few individuals, but they do not have a formal affiliation with a terrorist organization (Agnew, 2010; FBI, 2016). The term target is identified as a geographic location, a physical building, or people that the lone-wolf

terrorist has identified and has made the conscious decision to carry out an attack upon (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016).

Imperative to the theoretical framework is the use of the terms strain and grievance (Agnew, 2010). The term strain refers to an individual's desire to achieve a goal and factors intervening to prevent one from achieving that goal (Agnew, 2010). The term grievance has a broader definition, and is identified by an action that the individual, or collective group feels is unjust or unfair (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). A caveat to both terms is that the strain or grievance may be real or only perceived (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018).

Assumptions

Within the context of this study, it is assumed that media reports were unbiased and report facts about an attack or perpetrator, that were acquired legitimately, and employing triangulation of sources will enhance this assumption (Dahman, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, it was assumed that self-reported data yielded more depth in justification and self-acceptance of an attack but was biased in the fact that self-reported data omitted negative connotations (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Lastly, it was assumed that recruiting participants that were the individual who perpetrated the attack would be difficult, if not impossible, for this reason, document analysis was chosen as the primary data collection method (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to lone-wolf terrorist attacks that had occurred within the geographic boundaries of the United States. While lone-wolf terrorism is a

World-wide phenomenon, within the context of the current study, only offenders who committed a lone-wolf terrorist attack within the United States were included in the sample of possible participants. The timeline of lone-wolf terrorist attacks ranged from 1978 until 2016. This time span was chosen because it encompassed the four most significant lone-wolf terrorist attacks and allowed for examining the changing cultural perspectives, which may have had an influence on the individual's determination to attack, or how the individual had interpreted the cues from their environment (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2021; Langman, 2020). The formal definition presented by the FBI was the justification to include or exclude other attacks that may have been termed lone-wolf terrorism (FBI, 2016). This meant that to be included, the individual may have been influenced by a terrorist organization's message but was not directly involved with that organization in terms of material assistance or direct influence by the organization's leadership (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016). With the delimitations set in advance by the researcher, a study is constrained by limitations inherent in the design and the sample population (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, transferability is difficult to implement with the rather small population size (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, because the current study is using the United States as the geographic bounds, this may impede transferability due to cultural differences, ethical and moral considerations, and values that may differ in other locales (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Limitations

Qualitative research is centered upon defining, explaining, exploring or describing a phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin 2012). Within this study, as well as qualitative research focusing upon lone-wolf terrorism more generally, encompasses a central limitation in that the lone-wolf is often a victim of their own attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019). To decrease the limitations of this qualitative case study, two of the lone wolves that are examined had lived past their attack and were able to convey their motivations and cognitions after the fact (History.com Editors, 2010, 2018; Sheptoski, 2016).

Additionally, because this study incorporated a case study design based upon using historical and secondary data, there is a limitation of how the data are interpreted (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because the researcher is the central research tool, the data are subjective, rather than objective (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin). To minimize this limitation, reflective writing was utilized, as well as triangulation of data sources and the use of multiple researchers to ensure consistency and clarity (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Another limitation within the current study is the transferability to other geographic locations and generalizability to other sample populations. While this study aimed to explore factors that contribute to lone-wolf terrorism, because this study utilizes a case study design, the applicability to other individuals and countries cannot be assumed (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, grievances and strains may differ based upon the cultural and religious beliefs, allowing a particular

factor to inflict anger and perceived harm in one locale, but may be meaningless in another (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021). To minimize this limitation, the study set forth that the applicability of the design is to those lone wolves within the United States. Additionally, the case study analysis examined four lone-wolf terrorists over a time span ranging approximately half a century, to accommodate for the ever-evolving cultural belief system within the United States (Agnew, 2010; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Lastly, the lone-wolf terrorists were based in different geographic areas within the United States, which allows for a more comprehensive picture of how the smaller local community affected the individual (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Significance

The current field of scholarly research based upon understanding lone-wolf terrorism and why this phenomenon occurs is lacking in many aspects (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022). This study aimed to address the gap in the current literature surrounding the underlying motivation and factors that intersect to compel an individual to commit a lone-wolf terrorist attack (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021). While there have been a few such studies that explored motivations, there remains a gap in how the individual defined their own experience and how the individual envisioned the impact of their attack on society at large (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019).

Additionally, because an in-depth exploratory examination of how the lone wolf interprets their actions, as well as, what factors contribute to the decision to attack, a firmer understanding was achieved. This aids in determining more effective strategies to prevent lone-wolf terrorist attacks from occurring in the future (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022). Scholars agree that specific factors and influences occur to allow an individual to become radicalized and join a larger terrorist organization, helping to further the underlying message of that organization, but little remains known of why lone-wolf terrorism occurs and how to prevent the unaffiliated individual from embodying a radicalized message (Agnew, 2010; Bright et al., 2020; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020). This study aimed to not only advance scholarly knowledge, but enhance positive social change for the individual, and the larger national community.

Lone-wolf terrorism is a serious threat to national security in the United States (Capellan & Anisin, 2018). By understanding the experiences that lone-wolf terrorists had gone through that influenced them to commit a mass violence attack, efforts can be made that may prevent future attacks, in turn, making communities around the nation safer (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). Additionally, by learning how current strategies have failed to address the grievances and strains faced by lone-wolf terrorists, program and policy adjustments can be made to address the deficits (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). This will not only provide positive social change for the national community, but also at the individual level for those who are

trying to alleviate the strains and grievances they face (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Yob & Brewer, n.d.).

Summary

While there has been research conducted on the phenomenon of lone-wolf terrorism, much of what has been conducted is quantitative in nature, and there still exists a major gap in the understanding what factors coalesce to persuade the individual to commit a mass violence attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019). Because of the significant threat posed to national security, the lethality of the potential attack, as well as the ability to help steer the individual away from committing an attack, this qualitative inquiry will help further the academic field in understanding how the lone-wolf defines their own situation (Agnew, 2010; Clemmow et al., 2022; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021).

Because of the inability to interview lone-wolf terrorists, either because they were a victim of their own attack, or the difficulty to obtain permission to access them as a protected population, this study focused on using a case study approach to answer the primary research question (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). After laying out the basic framework of the current study, it is imperative to convey what has been understood from the current literature surrounding lone-wolf terrorism (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2021). The next chapter covers the literature review that has informed this study. Because there

is a significant gap in qualitative literature on the topic, both qualitative and quantitative studies were identified and examined, as well as studies from the field of mass shootings, as this has previously been identified as a closely related field (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Much like the traditional terrorist organization and terrorism abroad, in the post-September 11 era, lone-wolf terrorism has not only become a more significant threat within the United States, but it has also become a central topic within the academic community (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Marlatt, 2019; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). Lone-wolf terrorism has always been a threat, but in the past, had been more focused on targets that were selected due to political or government affiliation (Agnew, 2010; FBI, 2016; Sheptoski, 2016). As the definition becomes more inclusive of the lone-wolf terrorist's motivations, and the academic community begins to apply more novel methods to study the offender and circumstances of these types of attacks, a more clear picture begins to emerge of who the lone-wolf terrorist is and why they chose to commit a mass violence attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019). The current study aimed to explore what factors combine to pursue an individual to commit a lone-wolf terrorist attack, and the proceeding literature review provided the building blocks of the inquiry.

The current review will begin by explaining the search strategy used to locate peer-reviewed sources and related information. The application of the Theoretical Framework will be explained. Then the review will explore articles pre-2019, and then will focus on more recent literature. Complementing this area, the review will then synthesize the literature and make connections to establish how the literature is informing

the choice of methods for the current study and fill the gap in the academic literature.

This chapter will conclude with a case study section outlining the diversity of lone-wolf terrorists, followed by the end of chapter summary.

Literature Search Strategy

Because the research in the area of lone-wolf terrorism is not as extensive as other areas, peer-reviewed sources that focus on mass-shootings and active shooters were also reviewed, as the main difference between the lone-wolf terrorist and mass shooter lies within their internal motivation and target selection (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). Through the search for scholarly literature, the Walden University Library and ProQuest and Thoreau databases were searched. Key terms included lone-wolf, lone-actor, terrorism, terrorist, qualitative and case-study. These terms were expanded when the search returned a low number of entries. The search was revised to include mass shooting, mass violence and active shooter. Google Scholar was also consulted but yielded similar results to the above databases and the Walden University Library. The searches were conducted using single key terms and using AND as well as OR, to elicit a more fruitful search. The various search terms will be listed in Appendix A. Additionally, during the search, the results were limited based upon the time published. The search limited results to a 5-year span, starting from 2018 to 2023, then was enlarged to 10 years, 2013–2023. Articles that fell outside of this time range were largely excluded to ensure that the study was based upon current scholarly works.

Theoretical Foundation

The FBI classifies lone-wolf terrorism as a form of domestic terrorism, stemming from political, racial, religious, social, and environmental ideologies (FBI, 2016). Agnew (2010) explained that while these ideological goals are intertwined in the motivation for an attack, the offender internalizes one or more of these goals as grievances or strains, and that becomes the motivating factor. Within the current definition, the idea of a personal grievance or strain is what allows the goals of an attack to be all encompassing and justifiable in the mind of the offender (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018).

In attempting to determine what behaviors and factors predispose, and ultimately lead an individual to become radicalized and commit an attack, mental illness had emerged and has been at the forefront of the literature (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). What has stood out is the fact that these same authors suggest that mental illness does not have significant predictor value, and the correlation is moderate, at best (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). These offenders act alone and do not have a formal group affiliation (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016). Additionally, the grievances or strains that the offender internalizes may be real or perceived, thus making detection and prevention more difficult for law enforcement (Agnew, 2010). The additional challenge of researching this topic is the fact that the offender tends to be a victim of their own attack, making it difficult to determine the factors that led up to the event (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Langman, 2020). Because

of this, the extant literature in the field of lone-wolf terrorism is lacking, and peer-reviewed studies on mass-shootings can help to fill the void (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014).

Literature Review of Key Variable and Concepts

In the pre-September 11 era, lone-wolf terrorism was a less frequent occurrence and the tactics employed were largely focused on governmental targets, or to repair harm that was seen because of political factors (Capellan, 2015; Misiak et al., 2019; Sheptoski, 2016; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). Dahmen (2018), as well as Zeman and colleagues (2017) contend that one reason for the rise in the number of attacks is related to the increased visibility in the news media, as well as the use of the Internet in conveying messages that radicalize individuals. These changing trends may also relate to the broader choice of targets and the perception of harm caused to the lone-wolf offender (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019).

While the fields of mass shooters and lone-wolf terrorists share similarities, it must be noted that the underlying motivations, factors that led to an attack and the applicability of quantitative methods when studying lone-wolf terrorism are not necessarily generalizable (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This lies in the fact that a truly generalizable samples cannot be selected because of the relatively small population (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, the same can be said about which criminological theory has been incorporated by previous researchers to understand why the lone-wolf terrorist became radicalized and how the individual

determined that a mass violence attack was the proper course of action (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019).

Application of Criminological Theories

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the theoretical framework chosen for the basis of this study was Agnew's (2010) general strain theory of terrorism. When considering factors of why an individual becomes radicalized and motivated to commit a mass violence attack, Agnew contends that an individual must internalize a real, or perceived strain or grievance, and that this must be felt for a prolonged period (Agnew, 2010). While this theory complements the underlying motivation and rationalization of the lone-wolf terrorist's actions, as mentioned previously, it is imperative to understand how other criminological theories have been critiqued to explain how an individual becomes radicalized and motivated to harm innocent civilians (Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). Because of the similarity to lone-wolf terrorism, theories designed to fit mass shootings have also informed this study (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Silva-Greene-Colozzi, 2021).

Routine activities theory, while significant in terms of applicability in the empirical literature for explaining criminality, is now being explored as an explanation for why some locations are more prone to mass shooting attacks, as well as why an individual may be more motivated to carry out an attack (Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). Routine activities theory establishes that if three factors are present, a motivated offender, a suitable target and the lack of a capable guardian, then a crime will occur (Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). In examining this theory, the motivated offender becomes

radicalized because of conflicting messages, sometimes only internalized by the perpetrator themselves (Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). The lone-wolf can gain support from others with similar views or strains by communicating on discussion boards, viewing media portrayals that lend credence to the perceived harms, as well as having a lack of support for traditional coping mechanisms to alleviate the strains without resorting to violence (Agnew, 2010; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021).

Where routine activities theory is at odds with past lone-wolf terrorist attacks, but is more in line with mass shootings, is the idea of a suitable target (Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). In many instances, the lone-wolf terrorist chooses a target based upon their perceived grievance or strain (Agnew, 2010). The lone wolf tends to not contemplate the feasibility of a target, and if the target is protected, this factor only determines methods to include in the attack that will overcome security measures (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). This tends to bypass the perception that the terrorist will deem a target as suitable, as well as the ability of a capable guardian being able to deter the lone-wolf (Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021). Additionally, because of the ability of the lone wolf to contemplate attack methods, weigh the risks and determine methods to overcome prevention measures, the amount of preparation and organization provides evidence that the preexisting literature may be misleading in the effect that mental illness plays in the determination of an individual to commit a lone-wolf terrorist attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Misiak et al., 2019; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2021).

Motivating Factors

While the use of criminological theories explains why some individuals choose to commit a mass violence attack, the niche of lone-wolf terrorism, as compared to a mass shooting differs not only in terms of the target and victims, but also the factors that have been linked to the offender who perpetuates the event (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Kim et al., 2021). As explained by previous literature, as well as the formal definition from the FBI (2016), a lone-wolf terrorist is motivated by their ideology, which tends to circulate around religious beliefs, but may also include political, racial, environment, and even personal factors (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020).

The offender tends to seek out individuals with similar dispositions, that not only can provide support for the individual to commit an attack but can assist in forming and articulating the plan (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2020). These individuals also provide positive reinforcement that the attack will legitimize their strain or grievance and that the offender will be seen in a positive light by others with similar views (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2020). While these individuals have consistently been defined as being separate from a formal terrorist organization, it has been found that the organization may indirectly influence the attack and provide support for the event (Hoffman, 2022).

While the lone wolf does not maintain a formal affiliation, the grievance or stain that is experienced allows the individual to feel that they are being personally attacked

(Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021). As time progresses and the perceived harm continues without being alleviated, the intense emotions that the offender exhibits become even more prominent (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2020; Langman, 2020). After a period, which can vary from individual to individual, the emotional response becomes so significant that they act out their rage in the form of a violent attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2020; Langman, 2020).

Current Trends

Not only have the methods employed by lone-wolf terrorists changed in the past decade, the factors that coalesce to motivate the offender have also evolved (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019; Sheptoski, 2016). The lone-wolf terrorist's message is now able to reach a much broader audience, as well, the offender can interact with others with similar views (Dahmen, 2018; Zeman et al., 2017). Where this is extremely problematic, is the fact that what we have learned about the offender's radicalization and attempts to prevent individual's from becoming lone wolves have become obsolete, and have a minimal effect (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020).

When reviewing current literature, it is evident that personality factors, or deficits, as well as the corresponding radicalization is only a small portion of factors that contribute to an individual becoming a lone wolf (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al.,

2022; Katon et al., 2021). To discover what other factors contribute to the lone-wolf's motivation and uncovering the current threat posed by these individual's is to examine the data by utilizing new and novel methods and examining the data through a different lens (Agnew, 2010; Gill et al., 2022).

Evolving Radicalization

The most notable lone-wolf terrorists, such as Ted Kaczynski, and Timothy McVey were radicalized by their distrust and anger with government agencies and agendas (Sheptoski, 2016). The lone-wolf terrorist internalized their pain, frustration, and distrust, and although they may have made attempts to alleviate their strain or grievance through traditional means, the offender does not feel like their voice has been heard (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2015; Sheptoski, 2016). The increased presence of the news media through social media, consistent news broadcast channels and other online media allowing for a steady stream of hardships and oppression around the globe allow for an outlet that the lone-wolf terrorist can focus on, find support for their ideas and frustrations, and anonymous supporters to carry out an attack (Dahmen, 2018; Zeman et al., 2017). This can help explain a portion of the increased amount of attacks, because lone-wolves who may not have perpetuated an attack in the past, now have acquaintances that are easy for the lone-wolf to communicate with, share similar views and can provide the lone-wolf with acknowledgement that their attack will be seen as a proper response (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Dehman, 2017; Ganor, 2021; Langman, 2020; Zeman et al., 2017).

While the underlying premise of lone-wolf terrorism is the fact that the offender has no formal group affiliation, as well as the fact that the attack is carried out by the sole perpetrator, recent research is finding that the lone-wolf is influenced and even obtains support from their social networks (Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2022). This includes obtaining material and tactical support, training, and assistance in preparing their attack (Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020).

Personality Factors

When lone-wolf terrorism emerged as a significant threat, researchers began to explore what made these individuals different from the traditional terrorists who were radicalized by a common ideology and embraced the group mentality (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). As mentioned previously, the presence of mental-illness was present in a subset of lone-wolves, but this concept was not a definitive predictor (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). Posłuszna (2020) contends that mental illness may be present and may exacerbate the motivations of lone wolves. This is because the lone wolf is not subject to limitations and rules from the large group, as is the case within terrorist organizations (Posłuszna, 2020). The overall breadth and depth of a lone-wolf terrorist attack is partially motivated by how the individual internalizes the actual or perceived harm, as well as the interplay between internal and external factors that the lone-wolf perceives as producing the strain (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Posłuszna, 2020).

While the current research is lacking in terms of qualitative methods of inquiry, behavioral factors have begun to be included in the explanation of why an individual becomes a lone-wolf terrorist, as well as the tactics employed for the attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019; Pośluszna, 2020). Pośluszna (2020) explains that the severity of an attack can be linked to the compassion that an offender feels for their victims. Additionally, the offender's ability to cope with their stressors and the amount of resentment seen for their grievance or strain can contribute to the attack being more severe (Pośluszna, 2020).

What is evident from previous research is that the individual lacks the ability to cope with external stressors, and this leads to the formation of strong emotional reactions (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019). Additionally, the individual internalizes these strong emotions and seeks out individuals with similar views to find acceptance (Bright et al., 2020; Hoffman, 2020). This can allow the formal terrorist organization to perpetuate their message and forge an offender's desire to commit an attack to alleviate their strains (Agnew, 2020; Bright et al., 2020; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022 Hoffman, 2020).

Changing Tactics

The most notable lone-wolf terrorist attacks of the pre-September 11 era utilized bombs as the weapon of choice, and were carried out with a preselected target, often a government facility (Sheptoski, 2016). These attacks were sophisticated and took a much longer span of time for planning (Sheptoski, 2016). The lone-wolf terrorist of today still

uses explosives, but the weapon most often used is a firearm (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Sheptoski, 2016). Additionally, the targets are more sporadic and are chosen to have the greatest number of victims (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Sheptoski, 2016). The lone-wolf terrorist sees these individuals, not as innocent civilians, but rather, as perpetrators of the lone-wolf terrorists' strains, whether directly or indirectly (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Langman, 2020; Silva & Greene-Colozzi, 2020; Sheptoski, 2016).

Where today's lone-wolf terrorists differ from those of the past is in terms of their radicalization, their underlying threat, and their persistence in preparation (Allay et al., 2022; Liem et al., 2018). Previous research has shown that lone wolves who have not had prior military experience tend to have less preparation and training prior to conducting their attack (Allay et al., 2022; Liem et al., 2018).

Differing Research Methods, Data Sources and Definitional Constraints

Gill and colleagues (2022) had proposed that a major flaw in the previous research concerning lone wolf terrorism is the fact that most studies only examine open-source data that is publicly available. What hinders previous studies, is the lack of explaining the motivating factors, premeditating factors, and other circumstances surrounding events leading up to an attack, as well as factors of the actual attack (Gill et al., 2022). When examining behaviors and the prior history of 49 lone-wolf offenders through closed-source data, they were able to provide a much more vivid picture, which will be explained below (Gill et al., 2022). The authors also contend that most research

conducted presents descriptive information, and lacks the rigor needed to better advance the field of research on lone-wolf terrorists (Gill et al., 2022).

What contributes to the difficulty in defining the factors that contribute to lone-wolf terrorism and what motivates the offender, is the fact that definitions have evolved with the current environment and political framework (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016; Gill et al., 2022). The ideology that motivates an offender has become more inclusive and now contains an aspect of personal strains or grievances (Agnew, 2010; Gill et al., 2022). Additionally, the aspect of mental-illness now has a more inclusive section of personality factors, that were either not as prominent in the past, such as with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or that were not considered as part of the framework, as is the case with antisocial tendencies, antisocial networks, and the lack of being able to reason under extreme stress (Agnew, 2010; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2018). Current trends are even affected by the current political nature. This can lead to true lone wolves of being treated as mass shooters or mass murderers to thwart extremist ideologies from progressing and the offender becoming a martyr (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Kim et al., 2021).

Factors That Lead to an Attack

What the current research has shown, is that first and foremost, the offender's personality characteristics plays an integral role in an attack being carried out, as well as the severity of the attack (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Połuszna, 2020). The lone wolf may minimize their attack if there is compassion for the potential victims and if traditional coping mechanisms are present to alleviate their actual

or perceived grievances or strains (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Posłuszna, 2020).

With the examination of closed-source data, many new factors that surround a lone-wolf terrorist attack are becoming evident (Gill et al., 2022). In their study, Gill and colleagues were able to discern that the most lone-wolf terrorists do exhibit warning signs in terms of seeking help from friends and family to voice their grievance, but the individual may not necessarily disclose the intent to harm others (Gill et al., 2022). Additionally, most lone-wolves seek acceptance of their real or perceived harm from others who have similar views, seek guidance from others on their plan of attack and even assistance in training or obtaining materials to carry out an attack, which may be through personal interactions, or increasingly through the use of social media and chat rooms over the Internet (Dahman, 2018; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020).

Hoffman (2020) contended that most lone-wolf terrorists do not wholly act alone. The lone-wolf's network has awareness of the individual's intent, ideological beliefs, and premeditation (Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020). These networks, informal as they may be, can influence the individual's decision, as well as provide support for and legitimize the ability of the individual to act on their intentions (Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020).

What is unique about more recent trends and analysis is that the lone-wolf terrorist is more likely to have previous interactions with law enforcement, as compared to lone-actors in the pre-September 11 era (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Gill et al., 2022; Liem et al., 2018). These individuals still embrace the same ideological strains and grievances, but there is a personal aspect

intertwined, adding to the difficulty for traditional mechanisms to diffuse the strain and prevent a violent incident (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Liem et al., 2018).

Additionally, where the background of the individual had a significant impact on the path of radicalization and determination of carrying out an attack, the choice of weaponry and amount of preparation tended to increase significantly and becomes more of a threat when the individual has had prior military experience (Allay et al., 2022; Liem et al., 2018).

Where the line begins to blur is when personal grievances or strains enter the mix on what fuels a lone-wolf terrorist to formulate a plan and carry out an attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021). The underlying motivation for personal grievances runs on a parallel with the standard ideological motivation, but the personal grievance or strain may implement a much more brazen attack and employ less of a planning phase (Bright et al., 2020; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Katon et al., 2021). This leads to less time for law enforcement to intervene, as well as less time for the offender to voice their frustrations and provide warning signs to their social network (Bright et al., 2020; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Katon et al., 2021).

Choice of Targets and Methods

While the lone-wolf ultimately chooses their target based upon their real or perceived grievance, this target may have personal, political, or ideological significance to the individual or the network that influenced the lone-wolf's motivation to act (Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020). Previous research has shown that the offender tends to choose targets in which their victims, or incidental casualties are individuals who are not known to the individual (Liem et al., 2018). Additionally, because the motivations of lone

wolves are ideologically motivated, the targets tend to be political, governmental, religious, or environmental in nature (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020). This leads the lone wolf to choose a target that will inflict the most casualties or instill fear in the most amount of people possible to project their message to the largest audience possible (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020).

Allay and colleagues (2022), expressed that lone actors who had previous military experience tended to choose targets that were more related to political strains or grievances and these attacks tended to be more deadly. Liem and authors (2018) contend that while there are similarities between lone-wolves and homicide offenders, the lone-wolf tends to have more premeditation, a longer time span of planning, and are driven less by pure rage. This leads to the lone wolf utilizing firearms and explosives more often, as compared to homicide offenders (Liem et al., 2018).

Current Threat

In the current state, the concept of the lone-wolf has evolved to include, not only the single offender constructing and carrying out an attack, but a method employed by a terrorist organization to decentralize the command and control structure in order to separate the organization from the attacker and enhance the difficulty of law enforcement of being able to track and prevent current and future attacks (Bright et al., 2020; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2020). Because terrorism is ideologically motivated, and fueled by the underlying grievances and strains, the lone wolf tends to feel more oppressed when a

larger terrorist organization embracing similar views is targeted or apprehended (Hoffman, 2020).

Current research has shown that with the prevalence of social media and the Internet, the traditional terrorist organization is more often seeking to employ lone wolves as their primary method of attack (Bright et al., 2020; Dahmen, 2018; Hoffman, 2020). The Internet provides an avenue to feed the lone-wolves grievances by allowing those with similar views to provide empathy to the lone-wolf and provide acceptance in terms of support for and guidance on how to conduct and implement an attack (Bright et al., 2020; Hoffman, 2020).

While the definition of lone-wolf terrorism has evolved to be more inclusive, so has the term mental-illness, which lends to the inclusion of more personality deficits and recently identified mental handicaps that may persuade an individual to become radicalized (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Capellan 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; FBI, 2016; Hoffman, 2020; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019). While this is beneficial from a medical and treatment standpoint, this may contribute to those individuals feeling alienated and further their desire to seek others with a similar diagnosis and perpetuate the collaboration of illicit ideas among those with extreme ideologies (Agnew, 2010; Bright et al., 2020; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021).

When examining the current literature, it is clear that a more comprehensive set of motivating factors and underlying tendencies that contribute to the attack must be formed (Agnew, 2010; Bright et al., 2020; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow

et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021). While the research has evolved to keep pace with current trends, the pathways to radicalization and the grievance or strains faced by the offender have also evolved (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020, Katon et al., 2021). With politics set aside from the current examination, the main theme that has persisted, is the fact that lone wolves have no formal instruction and leadership from the traditional organization (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017; Capellan, 2015; Gill et al., 2021; Hoffman, 2020; Langman, 2020).

Definitional Nature of the Incident

The backbone of qualitative inquiry stresses that reality has different meanings to different individuals (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In attempting to find similarities between lone wolves utilizing quantitative methods, the extant research has been unable to form a consensus (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 5051; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020; Langman et al., 2020). What has become clear is that each offender has had similarities, but specific nuances have been exposed in terms of motivations, tactics and radicalization pathways (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020; Katon et al., 2021).

While this study did not aim to form a conclusive and cohesive definition of lone-wolf terrorism, it is important to understand how the definition has changed to become more inclusive in general, and tailored to the specific incident, depending on the political climate, as well as external factors outside of the offender themselves (Agnew, 2010;

Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; FBI, 2016; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Hoffman, 2020; Katon et al., 2021).

An important and unmistakable factor that is present within all the research is the fact that lone wolves have strong emotional responses based upon their stain or grievance, this lends to the fact that the offender sees themselves as personally connected (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021). As Hoffman (2020) explained, the offender tends to seek out others for acceptance and legitimization of their own or shared grievances, and given the length of time for training, amount of like-minded individuals the lone-wolf interacts with, in addition to the resources at the offender's disposal, this can have a significant impact on the severity of the terrorist incident and the impact in terms of casualties and fatalities (Agnew, 2010; Bright et al., 2020; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Langman et al., 2020).

Diverse Nature of the Lone-Wolf

As discussed above, the current field of research concentrated on lone-wolf terrorism is limited and mainly encompasses quantitative methods of inquiry (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Sheptoski, 2016). When looking at four of the most well-known and devastating lone-wolf terrorist attacks that have occurred within the United States, the diverse radicalization patterns, methods of attack and choice of targets highlights the fact that qualitative methods alone, cannot uncover the underlying themes that lie within the

behaviors of the offender and how the offender defines their reality of the situation (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Liem et al., 2018; Lindekilde et al., 2019).

Two of the most infamous lone-wolf terrorists, Timothy McVeigh and Theodore Kaczynski, have had their attacks and motivations widely examined and scrutinized (Sheptoski, 2016). Two others, Omar Mateen, the Pulse Night Club Shooter, as well as Arron Alexis, the Washington Navy Yard Shooter, are two others that have occurred more recently, but have not been as widely depicted as lone-wolf terrorist attacks based upon political factors and their radicalization pathways (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Liem et al., 2018). The other fact that highlighted the need for a more thorough exploration of the offenders is the fact that while lone-wolf terrorism research has heavily emphasized the presences of mental illness within the individual, and the lack of rational choice, or even a lack of intellectual ability, the following depictions of the means and methods, as well as their personal histories emphasizes the fact that the majority of previous research does not adequately represent the facts of the individual (Sheptoski, 2016)

Theodore Kaczynski

Ted Kaczynski, otherwise known as the Unibomber, conducted a bombing campaign that spanned 17 years (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023; Sheptoski, 2016). Kaczynski excelled in his academics and would later attend Harvard University at an age of 16 (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023). He then attended the University of

Michigan and obtained a graduate degree in mathematics (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023). After his graduate studies he became a professor and would increasingly become antisocial and isolated from society (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023; Sheptoski, 2016). Kaczynski increasingly became frustrated with industrialization, technological growth, and believed that these advances would hinder individual freedoms (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023; Sheptoski, 2016). Over the 17 years that the bombing campaign occurred, Kaczynski had killed 3 individuals and injured 23 others through the commission of 14 separate attacks (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2023). Overall, Kaczynski was seen as a genius and did not overtly have a diagnosis of being mentally ill prior to his apprehension (History.com Editors, 2018; Ray, 2016; Sheptoski, 2016).

Timothy McVeigh

In 1995, McVeigh initiated the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). McVeigh was said to have a love of computers and guns, and as he grew older, focused more on his fascination with firearms (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). McVeigh had joined the Army and excelled in his training and was approached to become Special Forces, but deployment to the Gulf War would curtail that option (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). When McVeigh returned, he would be seen as a “War Hero,” but ultimately would not be capable to pursue the invitation to the Special Forces, and would ultimately leave the military (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). McVeigh traveled the United States and embraced groups with radical ideologies (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). McVeigh and his counterparts would devise a plan to

attack the government, that was fueled by the events at Ruby Ridge and Waco, Texas, in which they believed the government was deliberately attacking and killing civilians for expressing their rights (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001). Leading up to the attack, McVeigh's counterparts would help forge the plan, but ultimately would not take part in the commission of the bombing (History.com, 2010; CNN, 2001).

Omar Mateen

In 2016, Omar Mateen committed one of the deadliest lone-wolf terrorist attacks in United States history (Barry et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2016). During this attack, Mateen committed a mass shooting killing 49 individuals and injuring 53 (Barry et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2016). During the investigation, law enforcement found that Mateen had interacted with online boards associated with ISIS, but the organization did not overtly claim responsibility (Perez et al., 2016). In reviewing Mateen's history, he exhibited signs of anger management, escalating violence and evolving radicalization (Barry et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2016). Mateen did have a history of violence and interactions with law enforcement (Barry et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2016). Mateen had even been under investigation on two occasions prior to his attack, for potential ties to terrorism, but the investigations did not yield any significant findings (Barry et al., 2016).

Aaron Alexis

In 2013, Aaron Alexis opened fire at a Washington D.C. Navy yard and had killed 12 service members (Lavandera & Perez, 2013). Alexis was reported that he had begun to seek treatment for possible psychological disorders and had suffered from PTSD present from his previous deployment (Lavandera & Perez, 2013). Those who knew the offender,

as well as police reports, explained that Alexis did have prior interaction with law enforcement relating to minor infractions, and that he had a history of violence that had seemed to be escalating (Lavandera & Perez, 2013). Some of the previous interactions did involve firearms in a way that signaled the threat of serious physical harm (Lavandera & Perez, 2013). Alexis did have frustration with the Naval contractor he was working for, due to monetary disagreements, and leading up to the attack, was subject to disorderly conduct infractions (Lavandera & Perez, 2013). He did not overtly subscribe to a radical ideology that seemingly perpetuated the attack (Lavandera & Perez, 2013).

Summary and Conclusions

Highlighting the four cases above, along with reviewing the previous research on lone-wolf terrorism emphasizes the need for novel methods and an extended look at the motivations and factors that encompassed the perpetrator prior to the event (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 20018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Misiak et al., 2019). As explained previously, much of the research has focused on mental-illness and a lack of complex cognitive functioning as being predictors of lone-wolf terrorism (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019). What becomes clear when examining the literature and the highlights of these perpetrators, is that the current methods and current data sets alone, do not adequately describe, a complete and comprehensive picture of the underlying factors that drove the individual to commit a mass violence attack and how the offender defined the event (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Baele, 2017; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019).

Where quantitative methods have fallen short on the predictive nature of traits lies ultimately in the small number of offenders who encompass the population (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While there are statistical tools that can be employed to help alleviate the small number of participants, this can decrease the significance of the results and allow for errors (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2020). Qualitative methods can alleviate this shortcoming because the methods are not bound to specific sample sizes, and even one participant can provide significant data, as long as the collection strategies are rigorous, to enhance breadth and depth (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Current research has tended to focus on descriptive indicators of lone-wolf terrorists (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). While this has been beneficial in understanding who the lone wolf is, the predictive value of this research is moderate at best, and even contradictory (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Baele, 2017; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019). Where previous research has highlighted the lone wolf as mentally ill and unable to think critically, these claims fall short when reading about Ted Kaczynski and Timothy McVeigh (Agnew, 2010; CNN, 2001; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; History.com Editors, 2010; History.com Editors, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019; Sheptoski, 2016). Where the current study addresses this gap is by examining how the lone wolf defined their reality and what factors contributed to the event unfolding (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Langman et al., 2020). Next, Chapter 3 will begin by explaining the research design and methods used to address the gap within the existing literature.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Introduction

The current research that examines lone-wolf terrorism is primarily based upon quantitative methods that do not adequately describe what factors coalesce to motivate an individual to commit a mass violence attack in response to their ideological beliefs (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). These ideological beliefs may be real or perceived values but revolve around political, racial, religious, social, and personal factors that evoke strong emotions (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; FBI, 2016).

Additionally, there is not a consensus, nor a clear picture of how the offender defined their own situation and what they had hoped would occur because of their attack (Baele, 2017; Capellan, 2015; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022). As described above, the lone-wolf terrorist is defined as an individual who commits an act of mass violence to inflict physical harm, or the fear of physical harm, in pursuit of an ideologically motivated goal (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Misiak et al., 2019). The range of motivating factors span from seeking revenge upon a perceived grievance, hatred for a particular group of people, deficits in mental processes and the lack of advanced cognitive skills (Baele, 2017; Capellan, 2015; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019; Sheptoski, 2016). This study did not specify an exact realm of factors to explore, which will allow for any emergent trends among and across the lone wolves to emerge and allow for unknown and unique concepts to have credence in the resulting

examination. The purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to examine what factors led the lone-wolf terrorist to become radicalized and identify how the lone-wolf terrorist defined their experience. Ultimately, the ability to gain access to the sample population and the sensitivity of the topic directly influenced the research design that was chosen (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While the underlying design did not facilitate direct contact with participants, the ethical considerations were paramount (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, because this study was formed around qualitative methods, the researcher played an integral role in the progression of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin, & Rubin, 2012; Sage Publications, 2018).

To begin this chapter, the rationale for the case study design will be explained, followed by an explanation of the role of the research. The chosen methodology, as well as the data collection and analysis procedures will be discussed. The concepts of trustworthiness within the current study will be explored, followed by ethical considerations, before summarizing and concluding the chapter.

Research Design and Rationale

The research design chosen for this study was a qualitative case study approach. This approach was chosen because a case study approach allows for an in-depth examination of the primary research question of, “why do individuals become a lone-wolf terrorist?” This framework allows for an in-depth examination of a single, or multiple cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Additionally, the analysis of documents and artifacts allowed me to examine past experiences of the individual participants (see Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015;

Ravitch & Carl, 2021). As stated previously, because lone-wolf terrorists are often killed during their attack, the use of historical documents and secondary data is critical in the evaluation and examination of what factors led to the radicalization of the individual and ultimately the determination to carry out a mass violence attack (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Data collection efforts centered upon reviewing media reports that reported characteristics, behaviors and the background of the four lone-wolf terrorists. Additionally, the Unabomber Manifesto was included because it was deemed that because this was a personal expression of the beliefs that Theodore Kaczynski held, it would offer valuable insight.

The use of interviews to obtain more in-depth information from the investigating officers was contemplated, but ultimately, it was determined that the vast amount of information that could be garnered would be available using less intrusive means and much would be publicly available in media reports (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Additionally, the use of closed-source data was examined, but because of time constraints and the availability of these documents, it was determined that the amount of time needed for request, obtaining permission to use these data, and obtaining the case files, would have outweighed the benefits (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gill et al., 2022; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

Role of the Researcher

What is unique to qualitative research is the role of the researcher (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the current study, my role is that of an observer because the incident has already occurred, and I am unable to play a role in the event

(Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Unlike quantitative research, where the researcher is to remain objective, within qualitative research, the data are subjective and can be influenced by the predispositions and biases of the researcher, thus making the data more subjective (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because of this, it is imperative that the researcher acknowledges any potential biases, the rationale for wanting to pursue their study, and build protocols into the study to help alleviate any biases, to allow the data collection and analysis to be transparent and deliberate (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the current study, these protocols included reflective writing, which is can be reviewed in Appendix D. Additionally, the use of a second researcher, the Dissertation Chair, was implemented to ensure that the analysis and interpretation of the data maintained the research standards of Walden University, and the academic community (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Because the study employed a case study design focused on examining artifacts, there was no power relationships that need to be addressed. Additionally, potential biases were minimized to preconceived notions about the individual's motivation for committing an attack. To alleviate this threat, reflexive writing was employed prior to data interpretation to ensure that the coded data are leading to the results of the study and based solely off of collected data (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Methodology

To approach a rigorous examination of the factors that motivated a lone-wolf terrorist to commit an attack, various types of research methods were considered (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because lone-wolf terrorists are unable to be

interviewed about their motivation and determination, a thematic content analysis of historical data was chosen as the most appropriate method (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Open-source data were seen as the most easily accessible information because of the vast amount of news media reports and the media coverage of the incidents (Dahmen, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Participant Selection Logic

A sample of four lone-wolf terrorists that had carried out an attack was examined. The four lone wolves were chosen because of the severity of their attack and the fact that the four individuals committed an attack in different timeframes, spanning the 20th and 21st centuries. These lone wolves were examined by searching online search engines and searching the major media outlets to determine what documentation existed on the perpetrator of the attacks. These articles and media reports were compiled into a database to allow for evaluation and coding to determine what patterns existed between each offender, and how these offenders differed in their motivations, target selection, use of weapons, mental state, and determination of how much harm to inflict from the attack.

As stated previously, the range of factors that directly influenced the attack were not set in a specific list to allow for emergent trends. Additionally, within the case study methodology, data saturation was able to be achieved with only one participant, as long as enough depth and breadth is achieved, and no further themes emerge (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because the current study aimed, not only to determine what drove one lone-wolf, but to determine similarities and differences among lone-wolf

terrorists, the accompanying news reports will continue to be searched until reported data are repeated among multiple sources (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). With the chosen amount of fifteen articles per participant, this concept was achieved, and reports began to wane with new information.

Instrumentation

Because the methodology is based upon a content analysis, secondary data were the primary data source (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The data came from news media reports that were published in print, or electronically, from The New York Times and CNN and are publicly available. Additionally, the Unabomber Manifesto, published from The Washington Post was acquired. The documents were examined to discover motivations, factors contributing to the attack, predispositions, as well as other strategies employed to curb the anger and dissent prior to the attack (Agnew, 2010; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al, 2021). Utilizing two media outlets assisted in triangulation and ensuring that a comprehensive picture of the offender is achieved (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

Each document was reviewed and organized into separate files to ease the data analysis phase. News articles will be separated into categories that discuss the motivation, the mental or medical history of the offender, the offender's ideological beliefs, if the offender had prior training and if the training may have impacted the commission of the attack, target selection, behaviors of the offender, if assistance from others was sought, and finally, behavioral factors that impacted the event. Within these categories of articles, pre-attack characteristics, including behavioral, social, ideological, personal, and familial factors will be examined to discover if attempts were made to alleviate the strain or

grievance without resorting to mass violence (Agnew, 2010). As well as what factors contributed to pursuing the lone-wolf terrorist attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Gill et al., 2022). Once 15 articles for each offender were obtained, the data analysis phase began.

Data Analysis

During the data analysis, three phases were implemented (Saldaña, 2016). The first phase will utilize a-priori coding, generating codes that were derived from a review of previous literature based upon international terrorism and international lone wolf terrorism research (Saldaña, 2016). Additionally, Agnew's general strain theory of terrorism assisted in generating codes that were used during this phase (Saldaña, 2016). The codes that were generated were applied to the media reports that were collected about the cases under examination. The list of a-priori codes was generated prior to evaluating the current sties media reports to ensure that these codes were derived from prior literature and not influence by the data set (Saldaña, 2016). Additionally, open coding was used to identify important concepts, excerpts, statements, and the like that were not consistent with the list of a priori codes (Saldaña, 2016).

Once the data had been coded, the coded data will be reexamined to determine how the codes fit into specific categories (Saldaña, 2016). Once categories were assigned to the individual cases, thematic analysis was utilized used for inter-case and across case analysis (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Saldaña, 2016). This process allowed for examination of how lone-wolves similar and different in the factors that lead to a lone-wolf terrorist

attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Ganor, 2021; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Saldaña, 2016).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Breadth and depth within a qualitative study is only a portion of enhancing rigor (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Qualitative studies must establish trustworthiness, much like validity and reliability within quantitative studies (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Trustworthiness is established by exhibiting that the results are credible, dependable, transferable and maintain confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While there are limitations to each respective aspect of trustworthiness, as will be mentioned in the context of this specific study, steps can be taken, and processes thoroughly documented to ensure that the methods employed are justifiable and defensible (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Credibility

While all the aspects of trustworthiness are important, credibility has a more prominent role (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Credibility not only has to deal with the findings being accurate and free from bias, but also that the methods employed are aligned to elicit the proper information and that the researcher is credible (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher being credible means that the processes of data collection, analysis and dissemination are well documented, free from bias, the researcher is continually immersing themselves in the data and is open to any revelation that the data may present (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Credibility will be achieved by utilizing triangulation of multiple data sources or analytic

tools, constant observation, member checking, and negative case analysis (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Within this study, member checks were utilized by the chair and second committee member examining the data and ensuring the processes and analysis employed are proper (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Additionally, credibility was enhanced by reflexive writing throughout the data collection and analysis phases (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher also enhanced credibility from reviewing the data sources multiple times to determine if the same codes fit the data in a similar pattern, or if after reflection, a variant may fit more appropriately (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Saldaña, 2016). The process was documented, emphasizing interpretation of the data and modification to previously coded passages (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This not only added to the credibility of the study but also aid in the dependability of the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Dependability

Dependability represents the ability for another person to replicate the study and gain similar results if the same methods are employed (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). In order to achieve dependability, the primary tool utilized is to generate an audit trail that documents the exact processes used during data collection, analysis, as well as how the data was interpreted by the researcher (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Additionally, reflexive writing can enhance dependability by allowing other researchers to trace the processes that were implemented in each phase of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

The reflexive writing used in this study was an integral tool to show how connections were made between specific excerpts within a news report (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, reflexive writing was used to show how biases were uncovered and acknowledged prior to disseminating the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This tool was also used to record spurious thoughts that may have an impact on data analysis and interpretation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This aided in transparency to the reader and promote a rigorous study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Although dependability can be maintained throughout any study, transferability may be more difficult to obtain (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Transferability

The third aspect of trustworthiness is the concept of transferability (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). This essentially relates to the ability for a researcher to take the methods employed from a particular study, implement them in a different geographic location, with a similar sample population and achieve a similar outcome (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). For the current study, transferability is a limitation because the study is exploratory in nature (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Additionally, because the current study is utilizing a case study design, the sample was purposely selected, limiting the ability to generalize to the larger population of lone-wolf terrorists (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Lastly, because the overall population of lone-wolf terrorists is small, this presented an additional dimension limiting the transferability (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). While transferability is lacking,

confirmability is the fourth aspect of trustworthiness and is an essential factor in any qualitative study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Confirmability

Confirmability deals with the ability for the data to drive the results and findings of the data analysis phase (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This essentially means that the researcher has remained neutral during the data analysis, and that the predisposition and assumptions that the researcher may have had prior to the study had no influence on the outcome (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A first step in establishing confirmability is for the researcher to bracket their biases and assumptions prior to the start of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, reflexive writing and maintaining an audit trail are essential to enhancing confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While these aspects combine to ensure trustworthiness of the data, a staple in any study, qualitative or quantitative, is ensuring ethical considerations are met (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations are a staple of conducting proper research (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Before any data for the current study was collected, the proposal was submitted to the committee chair and second member. Once the committee approved the proposal, it was submitted to the Institutional Review Board to ensure all ethical considerations were acknowledged and met within the framework of the study (see Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

This study followed the IRB application process and obtained IRB approval before proceeding with data collection and analysis, even though the design does not call for participant recruitment and has no direct contact with the individuals mentioned within the study. Within the context of this study, the process was streamlined because all data that was obtained is open-source data. The approval process provided guidance on protecting any human subjects, minimizing any potential harm, ensuring the study meets the guidelines for containing an aspect of social change, and obtaining approval from partner organizations (Walden University, n.d.b). After the initial application was received, support from the IRB was provided, and no revisions were needed (Walden University, n.d.a). Supporting documents that were requested were sent and reviewed by the IRB, then the formal approval was granted (Walden University, n.d.a). After approval was received, then data collection begun. While the IRB is tasked with ensuring ethical standards are met, the research will make effort during the study to ensure all ethical considerations are met.

Because the data collection process and analysis will be conducted without direct contact with participants, there are unique ethical procedures were followed (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because the data are publicly available, they may be used but not reproduced without seeking express permission from the author or producer (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, effort were made to ensure that the historical artifacts are from trustworthy sources, the reports are free from bias, and the data state facts, and not the opinions of the author (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This was accomplished by obtaining media reports from notable media

outlets. Additionally, data triangulation, whenever possible, will be used to ensure that what is reported on the incident and individual is accurate (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While the study is ongoing, data were stored in a password protected drive so that only authorized individuals have access to it. Once the study concludes, the respective files will be deleted and only the data written in the study will remain.

An additional consideration that was present because the data are generally not coming directly from the words of the offender, it to take care in reporting the data in an unbiased manner (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This aspect meant that the researcher must acknowledge their potential predispositions and assumptions and bracket those aspects (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, because much of the news reports may enhance aspects of the story to solicit ratings, effort was taken to extract only factual data from the reports by using triangulation of sources (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). To assist in this phase, utilizing a second researcher to ensure they can garner the same results was implemented (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This was accomplished by the Chair and Second Committee Member reviewing the data collection and analysis to determine if they obtain similar results (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Summary

When forming a proper study, whether qualitative or quantitative, it is imperative that the researcher ensures the overall design and methods are aligned (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The design must be driven by the research question, problem and purpose that were established in the first

chapter (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the case of the current study, a qualitative case study design was utilized because the overall purpose is to examine why individuals become lone-wolf terrorist. Because the research question aimed to examine a protected population, as well as the ability to interview lone-wolf terrorists not being feasible, document analysis will be used (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Ethical considerations were brought to the forefront of the study prior to data collection, as well as being continuously applied throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation phases (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A-priori codes were derived from previous literature on the subject and applied using chunking (Saldaña, 2016). Open coding was also used to aid in coding the data (Saldaña, 2016). Additionally, trustworthiness of the data was upheld by ensuring that the study employs credibility, transparency and dependability of the methods and interpretation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This process was aided by utilizing reflective writing, audit trails and multiple researchers reviewing the data and results (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Transferability was difficult in the current study because of the small population to sample from, as well as the study being exploratory in nature, thus, it is considered a limitation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

What makes the use of qualitative methods in research unique is the subjectivity or the research and the researcher being the primary tool in data analysis and interpretation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because of this, I employed bracketing to avoid potential bias and implement reflexive writing through the entire

process to aid in the above factors of trustworthiness of the data and ethical considerations of the participants. Because ethics are a staple of academic research, the current study went through multiple reviewers before being submitted to the Institutional Review Board final approval to conduct the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

While each segment of the process is designed to ensure the study is conducted with best practices in mind, the Institutional Review Board has the primary aim of ensuring every aspect of the study is ethical in nature (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Only after the current study was approved by all parties mentioned above the data collection and analysis phases began. The results of the data analysis will be covered in the preceding chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This study undertook an exploratory approach to explore various qualitative aspects of why an individual makes the ultimate determination to become a lone wolf terrorist. Because of the increase in lone wolf terrorist attacks, the overarching goal of the study was to increase local and national security by determining what factors lead to a lone-wolf terrorist attack (Capellan & Anisin, 2018). At the outset of the current study, research surrounding lone-wolf terrorism had been conducted, but was lacking in qualitative factors (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan n& Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021; Marlatt, 2019; Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). The major consensus among academics is that the offenders are ideologically motivated and maintain a form of mental illness (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan n& Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). However, these conclusions are not definitive predictors (Agnew, 2010). Because of this discrepancy, this study set out to answer the research question of “why do individuals become lone-wolf terrorist?”

To answer this research question, a thematic content analysis was undertaken. News articles were selected from publicly available sources and then examined to determine how offenders were similar and how they differed. This chapter will explain the data collection and analysis components of the study. Then, evidence of trustworthiness will be discussed, followed by the results of the study. Additionally, a discussion on each lone wolf will be provided. After the results are discussed, the chapter will then be summarized before proceeding to chapter five.

Data Collection

During the formation of the research design, it was determined that media reports that were publicly available would be utilized that reported on the event, motivation or characteristics of four lone-wolf terrorists. The search was limited to using The New York Times and CNN's online database because these are two well-known media outlets and were actively reporting news stories over the time span covered within the study. Because of the inherent limitation of the news articles reporting what the journalist and editor felt was relevant, it was determined to select fifteen news articles to begin the study, with the potential for adding more if it seemed new themes kept emerging.

When searching for the news articles, the search function on each respective website was used. The search on both pages did not yield results efficiently and that were out of the time span of the original reporting of the incidents. At that point, Google was used utilizing the search terms of "The New York Time," or "CNN.com," and the offender's name. While it was attempted to use additional terms, such as motivation, ideology, background and various other combinations, the search did not yield additional or different results.

News articles were selected based the title, saved into a specific file folder representing each offender and numbered to keep track of how many reports were obtained on each offender. Each report was briefly read to ensure that the article was relevant and contained information related to the offender and what led to the attack. During the search the article that the New York Times had posted of the "Unabomber Manifesto," kept appearing and it became clear that this may offer valuable insight into

what motivated Theodore Kuczenski to become the Unabomber. After permission was requested from the dissertation chair and granted. After reviewing the published article from the New York Times, it was found that the article was redacted. Permission was requested to include the version of the Unabomber Manifesto that from the Washington Post, which published the full-length essay. Permission was granted to include that version.

During the data collection phase, the original concept was to obtain any type of news report that related to the lone-wolf attack and spoke of the perpetrator to gain an understanding of what factors led to the incident occurring. This framework was to include video and written reports. While reviewing the reports for the depth or reporting, it was found that the first two video excerpts contained broken links. While attempts were made to find an alternative avenue to review these data, it was decided to abandon the use of video reports and use written reports for the entire data set. This decision was made, not only to assist in managing time efficiently, but also to ensure that at any point in the future, the original news report could be reviewed by a third party, without risk of the content being unavailable.

While the process of reviewing articles for content and relevance began during the data collections phase, the overwhelming bulk of the data analysis commenced once all the entire data set was obtained, organized and the articles were saved into a similar format so that all articles were able to be coded in the exact same manner.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with establishing a coding matrix. This file was created in a Microsoft Excel format, with a separate sheet for each of the lone-wolf terrorists. Additionally, because the Unabomber Manifesto was being treated as a unique entity, a fifth sheet was created. This allowed for the inclusion of the Unabomber Manifesto, and because it was not written by a third party, it would not inadvertently influence the results of the coding and interpretation of media reports.

Within each tab, columns were created to allow for recording the article number, line number, an excerpt and the assigned code for that item. This assisted in transparency of the data interpretation so that the code could be easily traced back to the article and provide context on why a particular code was assigned. Because the study used A Priori and Open coding, there were numerous elements. The A Priori codes were derived from previous literature, prior to collecting and analyzing data and consisted of 20 codes. Open coding was employed to allow significant phrases and paragraphs to be assigned a code that was based solely on the entry. For instance, with the A Priori code of “diagnosis of mental illness,” this code was only utilized once when reviewing articles related to Aaron Alexis. With open coding, for the same offender, the open code of “presence of mental illness,” was used 40 times. The open code provided more context to the entries that were related to mental illness but lacked a formal diagnosis. While it is important to understand the meaning of each code and the link between codes, categories and themes, this section will focus on the A Priori codes, categories and themes. All the respective codes, A Priori codes and open codes, along with categories, themes, the respective

excerpts and article information is presented in Appendix C for clarity and transparency.

Below, the A priori codes will be explained in more detail.

A Priori Codes

The code of “Ability to Alleviate” was defined as a mechanism that could have diverted the individual from committing a violent attack. The code, “Antisocial peer group” signified the presence of peer groups or associates that influenced the individual to seek malicious ways of coping. Next, the code of “communication that influenced terrorism” signified events where the individual had prior contact with a terrorist group or people within a terrorist group, that directly influenced the commission of the lone-wolf attack by assisting in training, procurement or messaging to influence the attack to occur.

Complex cognitive ability in planning and complex cognitive ability in problem solving were developed to signify entries that were related to the individual’s ability to carefully construct an attack and the ability to think through difficult tasks in their daily life, respectively. Based upon the significance in prior literature, the code of “diagnosis of mental illness” was included to identify an excerpt that related to the individual having a prior diagnosis of mental illness.

The code of “Escalation” referred to a point in which the individual had an opportunity to desist from committing the attack but decided to continue with their intent. An example of the use of this code was presented in an article about Timothy McVeigh. In the article, it was reported that McVeigh began to hand out propaganda related to his ideological beliefs (Thomas, 1997b). Additionally, this code was applied when reviewing Omar Matten. In an entry, it was reported that Mateen ‘s use of violent and racist

comments evoked concerns and was reported by coworkers (Apuzzo & Lichtblau, 2016).

The codes of “grievance” and “strain” were included to signify the real or perceived harm that the individual had felt. This would ultimately be the harm that fueled their extremist ideological beliefs and convinced the individual that committing the attack would be beneficial. Religious, racial and political ideology were created to identify excerpts that influenced their beliefs system and radicalization pathways. The code of “radicalization” was defined as the message or means that radicalized the individual. This could be cultural beliefs, their peer group, cultural norms, or writings that the individual internalized. Two codes that emerged from prior literature were the codes of “prior criminal history” and “prior military or law enforcement training.” The code of “prior criminal history” was developed to signify any prior interaction with law enforcement. The code of “prior military or law enforcement training” was designed to identify opportunities in which the individual had been taught how to use firearms or explosives.

The final A Priori code that was developed was “power relationship.” This code identified excerpts in which the individual felt that their grievance or strain came from a person, group or organization that maintained more control and influence. This code emerged during the review of Aaron Alexis when it was reported that he believed the government was using weapons to annoy and harm him (Botelho & Sterling, 2013). Additionally, it appeared in another report that described Alexis’ feelings toward the government and how he was being treated unfairly, even though he was a Veteran (McLaughlin, 2013). In the review of the Unabomber Manifesto, the code was prevalent.

There were many entries in which Kaczynski felt that large organizations and the government were limiting free choice and that slowly individuals were losing power over the direction of their life.

Categories

The categories were developed by examining the codes and determining how similar codes fit together, as well as what codes were explicitly different and required a specific category. During this process, some of the A Priori codes needed to be redesigned because they were defined more like a category, namely the codes surrounding “complex cognitive ability.”

The category of complex cognitive ability was defined as the offender being able to think rationally, problem solve and understand the consequences of their actions. The A priori codes that were in this category contained complex cognitive ability in planning and complex cognitive ability in problem solving. This category was applied to open codes that symbolized the thought process of the offender. For Kaczynski, the open codes that were placed in this category included an entry that was coded with premeditation, rational choice and evolving. The analysis of reports on McVeigh provided codes of certainty, self-preservation and driven. These codes were also sorted into the category of complex cognitive ability.

The second category, deviant behavior, represented entries that were applied an A priori code of prior criminal history, history of violence, antisocial peer group and distance from known associates. The category was defined as the individual exhibiting prior antisocial behavior from a Criminal Justice standpoint. While all four offenders

indicated traits or behaviors that were considered deviant behavior, there were significant differences in the amount and severity. For instance, Omar Mateen and Aaron Alexis had many entries that were directed toward violent actions, remarks and actions. Theodore Kaczynski, on the other hand, did exhibit violence to cope, but most entries revolved around not having a prosocial peer network to cope.

The third category, difference in power, was defined as the individual or the group they sympathized with, having less power, whether physical or theoretical in nature. This category emerged when examining the Unabomber Manifesto and seeing the prevalence of entries that Theodore Kaczynski had written about how large organizations were limiting free choice of individuals. Additionally, the fourth category represented the presence of an extremist ideology. This facet is ultimately what drove the individual to violence. This led to the lack of traditional coping mechanisms. This included entries that represented a lack of prosocial peer network, a legitimate channel to voice their concerns, or divert their rage. With Aaron Alexis, while there were proper channels, such as Law Enforcement and seeking medical assistance, those who could have intervened did not probe further and missed the opportunity to intervene. Additionally, the category of intervention identified entries that symbolized an opportunity that the offender could have been stopped or the strain or grievance they had felt could have been addressed.

The category of mental illness was exhibited among all four offenders, as well as the category of personal separation. Mental illness referred to codes that represented actual or perceived mental illness, or mental defects that could have contributed to the offender's ability to rationally consider their actions or relieve their anger and frustration.

Personal separation referred to the concept that the individuals had chosen targets that were not known to the offender and that their loved ones would not have frequented.

An additional category received prior training was defined as the individual obtaining prior training in the military or law enforcement. While Kaczynski had not received prior training, the other three offenders had, and it seemed that their training influenced what type of weapon to use for their attack. The category of presence of grievance or strain was included because this was ultimately the drive that fueled the offender's rage.

Themes

To develop the list of themes, all the categories were set aside, and were examined to see how categories were similar. During this time, as themes were framed, names of categories were slightly revised, to ensure clarity between the names of themes and categories, to allow for each respective phrase to not be repetitive. Additionally, at the outset, a theme of "Other," was implemented for pertinent data that was not included in a prevalent theme. These themes were eventually reexamined and under further analysis, these singular themes fit together. This process was documented in the reflective journal writing and was reviewed by the Dissertation Chair to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.

At the conclusion of the data analysis phase, six themes emerged. The six themes included that the offender had an ideologically motivated strain or grievance, the offender used violence to cope, they maintained a diminished ability to consider outcomes, the

offender felt inferior, they were trained to use weapons against people, and the offender saw victims as complicit.

These themes appeared in varying degrees among the four offenders. For instance, Theodore Kaczynski did not receive formal training to use weapons against people, but he had taught himself how to build explosives with the intent of harming individuals. Likewise, the theme of feeling inferior was much more prevalent in the news reports related to Kaczynski and in the Unabomber Manifesto. Like the theme that lone wolves are trained to use weapons against people is the theme of victims are complicit. In the analysis of Timothy McVeigh, he had said he wanted to kill victims trying to escape his attack, and it was also explained that he knew children would be present. He had seen the victims as collateral damage, with his intended target being the Federal government. Similar, in the attack by Arron Alexis, he indiscriminately shot service members because he felt the government was attempting to track and harm him. Omar Mateen and Theodore Kaczynski differed from their counterparts on this theme. In these attacks, the victims were targeted because the offender saw the victims as part of their target group and having a part in the offender's grievance or strain.

The theme of using violence to cope was present among all offenders. This theme emerged from events in their past as young adults, and even children. This included events such as Arron Alexis using firearms to express his displeasure during past arguments, Omar Mateen abusing his wife and threatening, as well as intimidating co-workers and patrons of the locations he was hired as security for. The themes of diminished ability to consider outcomes were also present for all of the offenders. This

theme represented factors related to mental illness, but also that the offender was overwhelmed with anger and saw no other option for alleviating their grievance or strain. Lastly, the theme of ideologically motivated grievance or strain was present among all four offenders. The underlying motivations of each offender maintained an extremist ideological belief in which the motivation was an antitechnological, political, religious and personal grievance or strain.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Because qualitative data analysis is subjective, it was imperative to take steps to ensure the data collection and analysis maintains trustworthiness (Ravitch & Carl, 2020; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Evidence of trustworthiness began by establishing a rigorous design and maintaining the process throughout the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2020; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Trustworthiness was established by maintaining the credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability of the study.

Credibility

During data collection, The New York Times and the CNN online databases were used to procure articles. This use of multiple data sources aided in eliminating bias from the respective news outlets and allowed for observing if reported data were significantly different among sources (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). After the initial review, each article was reread a second time and then codes were applied to phrases and statements that were significant. Each entry was then entered into an Excel spreadsheet called a “coding matrix”. During every day that data analysis was completed, reflexive writing was used to document the process and provide transparency.

Additionally, the use of member checks was implemented by providing weekly updates of the data analysis, providing the raw data and coded data to the Dissertation Chair and receiving feedback on the concepts, emergent trends and interpretation. This process also led to enhancing the dependability of the study.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the concept that a researcher could undertake the same study using the same data and methodology and would derive similar results (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Dependability was enhanced by providing the Dissertation Chair the raw data, coding scheme, thematic analysis and results of the analysis. This feedback provided constructive feedback to foster the writing process for the paper and ensured that the processes implemented provided a rigorous analysis. Additionally, an audit trail was implemented by using reflexive writing during the data collection and analysis so an outside researcher could replicate the study. Within this study, credibility and dependability were able to be achieved by extensive use of reflexive writing and utilizing a second member, because of the exploratory nature of the study and the small population, transferability was seen as a limitation.

Transferability

As denoted in Chapter 3, transferability is a limitation to this study because the scope was defined as offenders who committed a lone wolf terrorist attack within the United States. Additionally, because the offenders were purposely selected, the generalizability of the study is another limiting factor (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Lastly, because lone-wolf terrorist population is relatively minute, this also

presented another limitation to the transferability (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). While transferability was a limitation of the research design, confirmability, the fourth aspect of trustworthiness, was able to be achieved by allowing the data to discern the results of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

Confirmability

At the outset of the data analysis and during every stage of coding, categorizing and thematic analysis, I began by setting aside any thoughts of what would drive the individual to commit a violent act, any predispositions about their behavior and environment and bracketed previous assumptions. This was done by reviewing the articles by asking “what stand out for this passage?” Additionally, reflexive writing was used after each session to ensure that pertinent thoughts were captured and to allow for an audit trail to be formed. The process of reflexive writing continued beyond the review of the news articles, and encompassed the formation of categories and discern emergent themes from the coded data to answer the underlying research question of “why do individuals become lone-wolf terrorists?”

Results

This experimental thematic content analysis took a unique approach at examining, not only what was similar among lone-wolf terrorists, in terms of what factors contributed to an attack occurring, but also how these offenders differed. While at the outset, themes were strongly driven by previous literature in the field, such as the presence of mental illness, the attacks being ideologically motivated and the presence of a strain or grievance (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan n& Anisin, 2018; Misiak et

al., 2019) these ideals were set aside to let the current data set “speak for itself.” The analysis undertook a holistic approach to answer the research question of “why do individuals become lone-wolf terrorists?”

Through the study, Theodore Kaczynski, Timothy McVeigh, Omar Mateen and Aaron Aleix were examined by reviewing news articles related to their attack. Through the coding process, six prominent themes emerged. These themes consisted of ideologically motivated strain or grievance, violence to cope, diminished ability to consider outcomes, feelings inferior, trained to use weapons against people, and victims are complicit. These themes will be discussed in more detail below, and the respective conceptual definitions can be found in Appendix B.

Like previous literature, all the offenders maintained extremist ideological beliefs, which ultimately led to the decision to commit an attack (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). The offenders differed on their chosen ideology. Theodore Kaczynski maintained primarily an antitechnology extremist ideology that grew to include environmentalist beliefs and a hatred for large organizations. Timothy McVeigh held extremist political ideological beliefs in which he felt the government was infringing upon the rights of citizens. Omar Mateen and Aaron Alexis beliefs were not as explicit. Mateen did maintain radical religious beliefs and claimed association to other radical Islamic groups that expressed such beliefs. Alexis had the least extremist beliefs, but in this study was listed as political because he believed the government was attempting to harm or kill him. While these beliefs ultimately precipitated their hatred and fear, this

teamed with a perceived difference in power made the choice to commit an attack more definitive.

What was evident from the review was that the offender felt that they were inferior, or had a decreased amount of power, as compared to the initiator of their strain or grievance. This contributed to not only the determination of committing an attack, but the choice of what weapon to use to carry out the incident. Additionally, this perceived power difference also impacted the offender's choice of target and weapon. When examining the bombings committed by Kaczynski and McVeigh, they held beliefs that were against the government, large organizations and technological advancement. Because their strain or grievance came from a target that was more dispersed, a bombing could not only inflict the most harm but instill fear and spread their message across a larger audience.

When considering the attacks from Mateen and Alexis, their ideological beliefs made their intended targets feel "closer" to them. With Mateen, his extremist ideology stemmed from religious beliefs, leading him to see the harm as coming from single individuals. Likewise, while Alexis believed the government was ultimately at fault for his perceived harm, he saw the perpetrators as individuals who were carrying out orders. This led to the concept of using firearms which allowed a more intimate attack and the ability for the offender to interact with their victims, while actively initiating the harm.

While all four offenders were similar in the fact that they maintained extremist ideological beliefs, they all exhibited signs of mental illness or distress, even though they had not been formally diagnosed. This factor is consistent with the extant literature over

terrorism more generally (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et. al.,2019). Kaczynski exhibited signs of mental illness including signs of low self-esteem, low emotional intelligence, narcissism, as reported by the media reports. Additionally, this point was evident in his own writings in which he attributed harming individuals with his explosives as a failure and continued to evolve until the attacks were fatal.

Alexis exhibited the most significant signs of mental illness, and he had even sought help for his symptoms. During the months leading up to the attack, it was reported that Alexis had called the police on more than one occasion reporting that the government had sent people to keep him awake at night, that he could hear the voices of these individuals within the walls of his hotel rooms, and he believed that those stalking him were using microwaves to harm him. Additionally, on multiple occasions, Alexis had gone to the VA hospital for medication to help him sleep, but it appears the cause of his insomnia was never fully investigated to discern that it was caused from him hearing voices.

In addition to their extremist beliefs and exhibiting various forms of mental illness, there was a deep-seated rage related to their views. With each offender, they began to express negative emotions in terms of verbal and physical cues. McVeigh expressed his views by soliciting others by handing out pamphlets related to his beliefs. Mateen provided expressions in terms of intimidating others, being verbally abusive in various situations, and making violent threats to those he did not agree with. Alexis and Kaczynski exhibited their disdain in more abstract avenues and statements. Alexis sought

help by explaining who he believed was attempting to harm him, and he verbally expressed his anger about the issues with compensation from the government contractor he worked for. Kaczynski had shown an introverted personality and had made statements to others about his thoughts. As time progressed, he would eventually move into a secluded environment, become more radicalized from the material he was reading, and would express thoughts to his brother and friends.

Another fact that emerged was that all the offenders had sought acceptance of their views from family and friends. When this avenue failed, the offenders began to search for an antisocial peer group. This varied in terms of seeking acceptance, obtaining training or assistance in crafting and carrying out the attack, or widening their belief system to include more extremist ideological tenants. As they immersed themselves in this group of associates, their rage grew even more severe, eventually evolving into the precursor to the attack.

The offenders did differ in terms of their formal training. News stories highlighted the fact that McVeigh and Alexis had received training in the military. During their service, McVeigh enlisted in the Army and pursued Special Forces. It was reported that McVeigh ended up forfeiting this pursuit, which contributed to his disdain for the government (CNN, 2001). Alexis received training from the Navy and was a Navy reservist. He ultimately was discharged due to his behavior, which exhibited signs of mental distress. Which will be discussed later in this chapter. While Mateen had not received formal training in the military, he did aspire to be a law enforcement officer. He secured employment and training as a corrections officer and was employed as a security

officer. Due to his behavior, disregard for following policies and exhibiting violent expressions towards co-workers, he was discharged from his position as a corrections officer.

Ultimately, there was a consistent theme across the lone wolves in which they saw the victims as complicit. With Kaczynski, his seemingly random targets represented progression of science and society. McVeigh, while he saw the government as his target, he believed that the victims, including children, were collateral damage. Mateen's extremist ideology allowed him to view his victims as having a choice and ultimately choosing to live a lifestyle that was not in line with his religious beliefs. With Alexis, because he had believed the government had sent people to harm him, he saw attacking soldiers as potentially alleviating this threat. A more in-depth analysis of each offender will provide more detail on how these themes fit with each specific lone wolf.

Theodore Kaczynski

Theodore Kaczynski was reported to not be social as a youth. Rather, he spent his time and effort on his studies and excelled in academics (McFadden, 1996). Through his high school journey, he held very strong opinions, and this would further distance himself from his peers (McFadden, 1996). Ted would go on to attend Harvard at 16 years old and then obtain a position as a professor (Brooke & Barboza, 1996). Ted's academic endeavors, as well as his ability to plan out and craft the attacks provided evidence to his complex cognitive ability, as denoted by every article that reported on his attacks, as well as his previous life events. Ted felt that it was necessary to not only harm, but kill others, to gain attention to his ideological beliefs and ultimately other-throw industrial society

(Glaberson, 1998). Throughout his seclusion and reign of terror, Ted's extremist ideological beliefs would grow to include not only, antitechnology themes, but also environmentalist, antigovernment and anti-organizational connotations (Johnston, 1998; Glaberson, 1999). After his campaign begun, Ted went to great lengths to avoid detection, targeting those who he felt directly or indirectly influenced his grievances (Albeck-Ripka & Betts, 2023; Johnston, 1998). Ted felt that his victims were complicit in the harm caused to society, the environment, and ultimately the stance of society, as mentioned in his manifesto (Albeck-Ripka & Betts, 2023; The New York Times, 1998). He had no remorse for the harm caused and even went as far to write in his journals that he was upset with himself when his bombs did not kill the intended victim (The New York Times, 1998). The lack of compassion, drive to continue his campaign and fatally injure his victims shows that he believed that victims were complicit.

The theme of Kaczynski feeling inferior was present through his manifesto, and his actions leading up to his attacks (Kaczynski, 1995). The tipping point for Kaczynski was when he wanted to have an essay published, but was not taken seriously by his peers, and his efforts were overlooked (Kaczynski, 1995; McFadden, 1996). This would contribute to him leaving his faculty position and moving into seclusion. During this time, he would read material that focused on extremist ideological beliefs, that would broaden his hatred for technological advancement, large organizations and contribute to him feeling that in order to implement change, he must turn to drastic measures, namely, that in order for people to want to read his paper, he must kill people to garner interest (Kaczynski, 1995). These concepts led to Kaczynski matching the themes of using

violence to cope, and the thought that victims were complicit. During the reporting of his trial, the presence of mental illness and mental disorders was present (Glaberson, 1998a). Kaczynski was more afraid of being labeled as mentally disturbed, and his message not being portrayed as he wished, because of this, he declined being formally diagnosed by a psychologist (Albeck-ripka & Betts, 2023; Glaberson, 1998a; Glaberson, 1998b). The theme that Kaczynski differed from the other lone wolves was that he was trained to use weapons against people. Kaczynski had no formal training and learned how to make explosives by research and by trial and error (Johnston, 1998a; The New York Times, 1998).

Timothy McVeigh

As reported by numerous articles in the data set, McVeigh was an Army veteran (CNN, 2001; CNN, n.d.; Kifner, 1995). He had a previous fascination with firearms and would gain significant experience while in the military (CNN, 2001; Kifner, 1995; Thomas, 1997e). Within his role, he excelled, and would pursue Special Forces, but failed (CNN, 2001). Ultimately, he left the military and thus began his disdain for the government, feeling that the government had “turned their back on him” (CNN, 2001; Thomas 1997c; Thomas, 1997e). He associated with friends that served in the military with him, and they shared a similar disdain for the government (CNN, n.d.; Kifner, 1995). McVeigh’s ideological beliefs would stem from the conception that the government was attempting to take away the right to bear arms (CNN, 1997). As his beliefs grew stronger, he began to review literature and associate them with others with these same beliefs. McVeigh became very vocal on his views and would pass out

pamphlets about the antigovernment sentiments. Shortly before the Oklahoma City Bombing, McVeigh witnesses the siege at Ruby Ridge, which only strengthened his views. The event that ultimately set McVeigh on his destructive path was the raid on the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas (Thomas, 1997b). McVeigh saw the government as the enemy, and the individuals who worked in the building were seen as complicit because they worked for the government. This was evident because McVeigh had said he wanted to be parked near the building and shoot anyone trying to escape (CNN 2001).

These concepts emphasized the themes that were identified in the current study. McVeigh maintained an ideologically motivated grievance against the government from what he believed as an overreach to take away Second Amendment protection. He saw victims as complicit; thus, he wanted to harm those who attempted to flee the attack. He had been trained to use weapons against people while in the military. Additionally, McVeigh felt that he was inferior to the government, and that he must act out to voice his concerns and gain support for the antigovernment sentiment. McVeigh had committed other crimes to prepare for his attack and ultimately, left unabated, escalated his behavior to use violence to cope with his grievance. Lastly, when considering the theme of distanced ability to consider outcomes, McVeigh differed from the other offenders. While he did maintain a level of complex cognitive ability, there were few entries that led to a presence of mental illness. The conclusion was made that McVeigh was so consumed by rage that led his planning and crafting of the attack and left him without a clear vision of what the consequences of the bombing would be.

Omar Mateen

Omar Mateen had a history of disobeying authority and acting out (The New York Times, 1996). He would often use abusive language and actions toward others, even his loved ones (Blinder et al., 2016; The New York Times, 2016). Mateen aspired to become a law enforcement officer, but while training as a corrections officer, his outbursts, discussion of violent acts with his cohorts, and disobeying orders led to his being discharged from his position (The New York Times, 2016). Mateen would obtain a position as a security guard, where he would continue to use abusive language and gestures when he was stressed out (The New York Times, 2016). These situations exhibit the themes of diminished ability to consider outcomes and that he felt inferior to others. Because of his training as a security guard and corrections officer, he had been trained to use force against people (Barry et al., 2016; The New York Times, 2016).

When examining the excerpts related to Mateen, he portrayed an escalation of violence and antisocial behavior throughout his life (Apuzzo & Lichtblau, 2016). Where Omar Matten differed from the other lone wolves was not only the fact that his extremist ideology was based upon religious beliefs, but also that he had reportedly frequented the club he targeted (Mazzetti et al., 2016). Additionally, he was conflicted in the radical groups he reportedly claimed allegiance to (Daly & Blinder, 2017; Mazzetti et al., 2016). Because of his inner conflict with his identity and cultural norms, it seems that Mateen felt that victims were complicit because of violating what he believed to be proper religious customs (Ellis et al., 2016; Healy, 2016; Perez et al., 2016; Stapleton & Ellis, 2016). Mateen's background emphasizes the theme that he was driven by an

ideologically motivated strain or grievance and throughout his life course, he had used violence as a coping mechanism in situations with known acquaintances and strangers (Alvarez et al., 2016; Apuzzo & Lichtblau, 2016; Barry et al., 2016; Healy, 2016; Then New York Times, 2016; Perez et al., 2016).

Aaron Alexis

Aaron Alexis differed from the other lone-wolf terrorists examined during the study. In most of the news reports describing his background and past experiences, he coped with stressful situations by utilizing firearms and had prior interactions with law enforcement (Bentz, 2013; Botelbo et al., 2013; Botelho & Sterling, 2013; CNN, 2013; Cooper, 2014; Fernandez, 2013; Kovaleski, 2013; McLaughlin, 2013). Like McVeigh, Alexis had received training in the military but was discharged due to disciplinary action (Castillo & Carter, 2013). Alexis did end up becoming a Navy reservist and then obtained a position as a military contractor, which gave him access to the naval base he would carry out his attack on (Castillo & Carter, 2013). These facets of Alexis are what represented the themes of training to use weapons against people and that he represented an escalating threat. In terms of Alexis' strain, what was not perfectly clear if it contributed to the attack was the fact that he was not receiving all his pay from the military contractor he worked for (Goode et al., 2013; Lavandra et al., 2013; Payne, 2013). While this aspect would definitively contribute to his overall strain, it was not determined if it added to his ideological motivation against the government as a target.

Alexis had sought help from the VA hospital, reportedly seeking help for an inability to sleep, which was brought on by his concept that government agents were

following him and attempting to harm him (Botelbo & Sterling, 2013; CNN, 2013; McLaughlin, 2013). Additionally, Alexis sought assistance by reporting these occurrences to the police, but when no perpetrators were found, the police discharged the complaint (Kovaleski, 2013). While these interactions led to the theme of a presence of mental illness and his strain, it also shows a missed intervention in which the police or medical personnel may have been able to prevent further escalation and avert the attack (Kovaleski, 2013). These aspects led to the inclusion of the themes of diminished ability to consider outcomes, using violence to cope and that victims are complicit.

Concepts from his feeling that the government was out to harm him and his strain led to the theme of feeling inferior. Additionally, seeking assistance from law enforcement for his complaint and seeking help from the VA, but never obtaining proper treatment led to the theme of feeling inferior Botelho & Sterling, 2013; CNN, 2013; Fernandez, 2013; Payne, 2013).

Summary

In this study, a thematic content analysis was completed to determine was factors contributed to an individual committing a lone-wolf terrorist attack. Four offenders, Theodore Kaczynski, Timothy McVeigh, Omar Mateen and Arron Alexis were examined. This was completed by obtaining 15 news articles that reported about the offenders and their respective attacks. These articles were saved and formatted for review and coding of the data. The coding matrix used two coding schemes. This included a priori coding, in which codes were derived from previous literature and open coding to allow for the data to not be constrained in the interpretation. Once the data were coded,

these codes were reviewed to create more abstract categories. Once the categories were obtained, this process was repeated to define themes from the list of categories.

During the study, reflective writing was used to enhance trustworthiness and allow for the reader to see how the data were analyzed and interpreted. Additionally, a second researcher was used to ensure the process met Walden University standard and the data interpretation was similar across reviewers. Lastly, the results were reviewed, providing an overall analysis and interpretation. In the next chapter, the interpretation limitations of the study, implications and recommendations will be discussed.

In this chapter, the data collection process was described, followed by the procedures used during the data analysis phase. Once the methodology of the study was explained, the steps to address trustworthiness were covered. Once these sections were covered, the results of the study were examined. In the final chapter, the interpretation of the findings will be discussed, followed by the limitations of the current study. Then recommendations, as well as implications will be considered, before concluding the paper.

What emerged from the data is that an individual is driven by a real or perceived grievance or strain that is ideologically motivated. These individuals often have formal training in using weapons against people. They have a history of using violence to cope and exhibit a diminished ability to consider the outcome of their actions. This, teamed with the offender feeling inferior, and feeling that victims are complicit coalesce and lead the offender to believe that a mass violence attack is the only way to alleviate their strain or grievance. Next, Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the findings, the limitations of

the study, and recommendations for public policy, future research and social change implications.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

When forming the basis of this study, it was mentioned that the phenomenon of lone-wolf terrorism remained a significant threat to national security and public safety. While the occurrence of lone-wolf terrorist attacks remains relatively uncommon, as of the writing of this section, there were numerous lone-wolf attacks that occurred from late 2024 to the first half of 2025 (Meko, 2024; Visser, 2025). These attacks have mirrored the findings of the current study and emphasize the need to develop and integrate policies aimed at preventing individuals from becoming radicalized and carrying out such attacks.

Within this study, similarities existed between the four lone-wolf terrorists under examination. These individuals were driven by extremist ideological beliefs and maintained a grievance or strain, whether real or perceived. Additionally, they had previous training using weapons against people, they had a history of using violence to cope with stress and felt that victims were complicit. Lastly, the lone wolves felt inferior to the initiator of their grievance or strain and were unable to fully consider the outcome from their actions. In this chapter, greater detail will be provided in how the study's findings can be used to assist in enhancing public policy and provide positive social change.

Within this thematic content analysis, four lone-wolf terrorists were examined to determine what factors led to their choice to commit a mass violence attack and answer the research question of "why do individuals become lone-wolf terrorists?". This chapter will begin by providing a discussion of how the data was interpreted. Once the findings

are discussed, the limitations of the study will be covered. Next, recommendations for the use of the data and what implications are present. Lastly, the chapter will be summarized before concluding.

Interpretation of the Findings

This exploratory study provided a basis of what factors influence and individual to become a lone wolf terrorist. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the theoretical framework, Agnew's General Theory of Terrorism was based on concepts that fuel international terrorist groups (Agnew, 2010). The academic field that concentrated on lone wolf terrorism, and mass shootings, overwhelmingly explain that mental illness is a factor correlated with terrorism, but is not a predictive factor (Agnew, 2010, Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019). While mental ailments were observed with the four offenders, none had received a formal diagnosis prior to their attack. Additionally, the review provided evidence that lone wolf terrorists are influenced by numerous factors.

The data provided evidence that one single factor does not convince an individual to commit a lone-wolf terrorist attack. Rather, many factors coalesce, and the individual builds up rage about their strain or grievance over a prolonged period. All the offenders examined held strong extremist ideological beliefs. These beliefs made the offender feel that they were personally under attack.

Similar to the empirical literature, the reviewed data revealed that all four lone-wolves did exhibit some form of mental-illness, which impacted how they interpreted cues and extraneous factors (Agnew, 2010; Allay et al., 2022; Baele, 2017; Clemmow et

al., 2022; Gill et al., 2022; Misiak et al., 2019). The individuals' personal experience and interpretation of their circumstances had an influence on the method of attack, anticipated lethality, intended target and choice to become a victim their attack. In the case of Aaron Alexis, his mental deficits prevented rational thought and the ability to seek out proper support from medical professionals. Additionally, Kaczynski felt that his life had been negatively impacted by societal advancement and the impact of large organizations. He disassociated himself with the choices he had made and deferred blame on others outside of his control.

During the analysis it became clear that each offender felt inferior to the initiator of their grievance or strain. This contributed to the individual's decision on which type of weapon to deploy and their choice of target. This was clear when examining Theodore Kaczynski and Timothy McVeigh, who arguably had committed the most harmful attacks within the context of this study. This was evident when Kaczynski had written in his Manifesto that to garner attention for his paper, he must kill individuals (Kaczynski, 1995). Additionally, McVeigh only escalated to physical harm after he believed the government's actions at Ruby Ridge and Waco were aimed to take away the Second Amendment rights of citizen's (Thomas, 1997b; Thomas, 1997c).

While the offenders had exhibited some form of mental illness, they all also did exhibit complex cognitive ability. This factor represented multiple forms. All the offenders exhibited the ability to carefully plan and prepare for their attack. Theodore Kaczynski stood out because his complex cognitive ability transcended being able to craft and deploy a bombing campaign that lasted for decades but also allowed his identity to

remain unknown and was also considered to be a genius. The concept of complex cognitive ability provides the impetus to discern that all offenders were able to use rational choice in their mental processing and had the ability to understand the consequences of their actions. The mixture of the offender's rage, presence of mental deficits and complex cognitive ability led to the concept of a diminished ability to consider outcomes. Because the offender's felt like they had exhausted all other options to alleviate their strain or grievance, significant violence was the only option they felt they were left with.

Additionally, the offenders examine had shown a history of using violence to cope with various stressors. Kaczynski had used vandalism to destroy property of those in his community that disturbed him. Mateen was said to have a history of verbally and physically abusing his loved ones and using verbal threats to intimidate co-workers and individuals he interacted with as security officer. Additionally, Alexis, notably had the most serious history, in which he used firearms to intimidate individuals who he was angry with. McVeigh exhibited the least amount of violence in his life, prior to the attack, but had used brandishing a firearm as intimidation. Because of this use of violence in the past, the offender's felt like violence would potentially alleviate the harm they felt.

What stands out is that three of the four individuals examined have received law enforcement or military training. This leads to the belief that because of their training, they were more capable of seeing their victims as complicit and willing to use violence against them. The only individual not to receive formal training was Theodore

Kaczynski. While he did not say his actions were reprehensible, he saw killing as necessary in order to gain attention for his essay.

Taken together, this study has shown that an individual does not become a lone-wolf terrorist because of one singular factor. Rather, they believe they have significant harm placed upon them from a group or entity that they see as more powerful. As this harm is internalized, they embrace a radical ideology that bolsters and solidifies their beliefs and opens their peer network to like-minded individuals. Because they associate with others that embrace the same perspective, the harm is interpreted as more significant and they feel they must act, not only to protect themselves, but to help their associates. Because they have used violence successfully in the past to reduce stress in other situations, they interpret a positive outcome from implementing violent actions against their target.

Limitations of the Study

While every step was taken to ensure the study was conducted in a rigorous manner and embraced as much breadth and depth as possible, every study contains limitations (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Within the current study, the geographic area limited the replaceability. Additionally, the ideological beliefs of offenders vary from region to region due to cultural beliefs and norms. What this means is that if a replication is undertaken in a geographic region that had difference cultural norms, the offenders may experience differing strains or grievances that are not present within the United States. For example, Timothy McVeigh felt that the government was

infringing on citizens' Second Amendment rights. This grievance would be isolated to the United States because the right to bear arms is unique to the United States.

Further the current study only included individuals who committed a lone-wolf terrorist attack within the geographic boundaries of the United States. The time frame under consideration ranged from the late 1970s until 2016. This timeframe can be considered a limitation because even in one specific geographic region, cultural norms shift over time. Additionally, the study only included a sample of the most prominent four lone-wolf terrorist attacks. While it has been stated that even a sample of one individual, in the context of a qualitative case study, may be sufficient, it is worth noting that the results may differ if more individuals and timeframes are under consideration (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Additionally, the current study only utilizes open-source data. The results may be significantly different when examining closed source data, such as police reports, medical records and the like (Gill et al., 2022). Because this study strictly sought news reports, it was subject to information that the news media felt was worth publishing. While obtaining media reports from multiple sources was employed to minimize the risk of bias, there remains the potential for information to be presented to law enforcement or the medical profession regarding the offender's background and prior diagnosis and to not be disclosed in public broadcast. Taking the findings from the study and considering the limitations into account provides an impetus for providing recommendations on policy enhancements and social change implications.

Recommendations

Policy Recommendations

While writing this study, the need for an expanded understanding of what contributes to lone-wolf terrorism became even more clear. While lone-wolf terrorism has been a seemingly scarce phenomenon within the United States, in December of 2024 and January of 2025, the United States had experienced a lone-wolf terrorist attack. While the attack is still under investigation, on the outset, the attack against the United Healthcare CEO seemingly held similar concepts to the factors that contributed to other lone-wolf terrorist attacks (Meko, 2024). This attack was driven by a perceived grievance, the lone-wolf terrorist felt the insurance company was in a much more powerful position, the lone-wolf felt that the CEO was complicit, and the lone-wolf had shown a complex cognitive ability in the preparation, planning and attempt to evade capture (Meko, 2024). Additionally, during the first few months of 2025, there were other lone-wolf terrorist attacks that were fueled by extremist ideologies. The increase in lone-wolf attacks stresses the importance of examining this field and implementing changes to enhance public safety and national security.

Because many lone wolves become radicalized online and seek assistance in forming their attack, whether financially, methodologically or in planning, surviving this realm is key (Hoffman, 2020; Zeman et al., 2017). Artificial intelligence can scan and evaluate data more efficiently than a human investigator. This tool should be used to scan social media, chat rooms that are known to the government for radicalization, and breakdown who represents a significant threat to acting out. Once a potential threat is

detected, then law enforcement is notified to begin investigating this individual, their potential target and provide an active deterrence. While this may present issues related to the First Amendment, Congress should collaborate with the Supreme Court to ensure safeguards are in place to provide citizens with sufficient protections and only those who pose a credible threat are investigated.

Additionally, because lone wolves are often radicalized online greater scrutiny needs to be taken in examining their communications (Hoffman, 2020; Zeman et al., 2017; Visser, 2025). Legislation should be created to hold the individuals who influenced the lone-wolf accountable. This will need to allow law enforcement to track communications back to the websites and chat rooms the individual was radicalized within. Once these data are obtained, then law enforcement can determine if the originators are within the boundaries of the United States. If they are within, the financial pathways, extremist messaging and coercion should be examined to determine the web of who influenced the lone-wolf, and those individuals should be held accountable and charged as complicit in the attack. Radicalization from those outside of the United States presents different challenges.

Because international terrorist organizations are changing their tactics and seeking lone actors to radicalize online, cooperative agreements between the United States and foreign countries that host international terrorist organizations, need to be created to curb the threat (Hoffman, 2020). While defining and drafting foreign policy is outside of the scope of this paper, the social change implications are a factor that can persuade other countries to cooperate in reducing violence. Minimizing and mitigating the threat of lone-

wolf terrorist attacks improves national security and the safety of the public at large (Agnew, 2010; Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018). By using intelligence to determine the radicalization pathways of those lone wolves who have been influenced from terrorists outside of the United States, this information can be shared with the host country to potentially hold the individuals accountable and stop the radicalization in other geographic areas. The host countries would be inclined to assist because the radical messaging creates a significant threat in the host country due to citizens adopting the message and acting out in violent ways, and because it eliminates the potential for retaliatory efforts from outside of the host country that would be aimed at capturing or harming the terrorist organization. The concept of foreign policy provides an opportunity for future research.

An additional recommendation would be to create an open forum for citizens to communicate with their elected officials, without the significant hurdles. While this may be cumbersome for Senators and Representatives, this would provide outlets for these potential lone wolves to voice their concerns and allow for public education on current government actions and strategies. This type of forum could be accomplished by holding town hall style meetings, whether in-person or virtual. Additionally, if concerns are brought up that the elected official is unable to address due to knowledge or because it is with an agency out of that official's control, a follow-up meeting should be arranged. While this approach will not alleviate every radical ideological threat, it will assist in reducing the concept that the lone wolf is inferior to those in government.

Future Research

Because this study was exploratory in nature, there are many avenues that can be pursued to enhance the field of lone-wolf terrorism research. Future research should be undertaken to determine if the same factors have continued to influence offenders to commit a lone wolf attack. Additionally, the geographic scope should be broadened to determine if culture plays a significant role, outside of the boundaries of the United States. Another way to determine of cultural norms influence the decision would be to examine a different time range and isolating how cultural influences had adjusted within the boundaries of the United States.

Additionally, future research should consider interviewing lone-wolf terrorists that have been incarcerated after an attack to understand what influenced their decision. This may be a difficult task because these offenders would be considered a protected population, but the results may significantly advance the understanding of motivation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Implications

The findings from this study provide evidence that changes are needed at the policy and procedural processes level. When examining the lone-wolf terrorists within this study within the context of the theoretical framework, all of the offenders do exhibit some form of mental-illness or mental distress (Agnew, 2010). Taken as a whole, there is an interplay between factors, that when present, and not alleviated, the offender only becomes more enraged and driven by their strain or grievance. The factors observed and

themes that were derived from the news reports examined in this study only capture 0...a small snapshot of each offender's background.

While each offender had a different level of contact with law enforcement, threats may have been detected if more probing questions and investigation were undertaken. In the context of Arron Alexis, law enforcement had prior calls for violent actions by Alexis and had received complaints about the threat that Alexis felt was present by the government. Placing him on a 72-hour psych hold and having medical professionals interview him, may have been able to uncover the significant threat before it escalated to a mass shooting.

It has been stated that in the current digital and social media age, the media has an impact on delivering the lone-wolf's message to the public (Dahman, 2018). Because of the short time frame, from an attack, to displaying the media report, as well as providing the offender's motivation, the media provides an efficient avenue to attract support for the offender's cause, as well as instilling fear in the greater population (Dahman,2018).

Social Change Implications

Understanding what factors contribute to a lone actor becoming radicalized provides an opportunity to intervene before the attack is implemented and harms citizens in the United Staes. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Global Terrorism Index reported that lone-wolf terrorist attacks accounted for 70% of the terrorist attacks between 2014-2018 (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2019). In the current state, individuals who are identified as threats to committing a terrorist attack are alerted to the FBI for further investigation. Because of the relative anonymity of lone wolves, these potential offenders

often “fall off of the radar.” Determining what communication channels were used for radicalization assists in policing these pathways and identifying individuals who are sympathetic to the messaging. With the recommended policy changes and findings from this study, these individuals can be identified and intercepted prior to deploying an attack. This helps the individual who were becoming radicalized, by diverting them from, at minimum, committing an attack and ultimately being taken into custody and being incarcerated. The more prevalent outcome is to assist the individual from becoming a victim of their own attack and losing their life.

As reported in previous literature, many international terrorist organizations are seeking individuals who can be influenced by their radical messaging (Hoffman, 2020). This is one of the factors that contributed to the rise in lone-wolf terrorist attacks (Hoffman, 2020; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019). While the policy recommendations may be controversial because of the impact on free speech and expression, the reduction in potentially fatal incidents will significantly increase public safety and national security. This is because those who become victims are generally unaware of the threat and are involved simply because they were “in the wrong place, at the wrong time.”

The process of creating an open forum for voicing concerns has significant social change implications, in addition to enhancing public safety and National security. This forum would allow elected officials to interact with their constituents and understand the concerns the community holds. This forum would also allow the community to feel that they are more “connected” with the government and strengthen community bonds.

Additionally, this process would enable citizens to feel that they have participation in protecting their community. This would provide a positive stance for those who may have information about a close associate, to come forward to law enforcement and provide information. While this would not eliminate every lone-wolf threat, diverting even one individual from committing an attack would be of significant benefit due to the harm avoided.

The recommendations also provide positive social change for the potential lone wolf who voices their strain or grievance to medical professionals. By enabling law enforcement and the medical profession to discern what factors contribute to a lone-wolf attack, they will be able to ask the right questions and determine that the individuals behavior is consistent in terms of escalating and when their rage, mixed with their mental distress, is not diverted, they may decide that acting out is their only option. By providing proper medical and community support, the individual will be able to learn ways to cope with their strain or grievance and gain assistance in managing their mental condition. The most significant positive social change implication on the individual level, for the potential offender, is the prospect that they will not be harmed or potentially killed by carrying out a lone wolf terrorist attack. At minimum, this individual, will not become a violent offender that will be apprehended and incarcerated after the event.

Conclusion

While lone-wolf terrorist attacks are seen as a rare occurrence, the threat is increasing. This study set out to examine what factors contribute to an individual choosing to commit a lone-wolf terrorist attack. Through the analysis, six themes

emerged. This included that the offender had an ideologically motivated strain or grievance, they used violence to cope, the offender exhibited a diminished ability to consider outcomes, they felt inferior, the offender had received training to use weapons and felt that victims were complicit.

This study provided evidence that a lone wolf attack does not occur because of one single factor, but rather a combination of factors. The severity of the attack was largely dependent on the prior training of the individual and how the offender interpreted the power of the initiator of their pain. While these individuals remained largely undetected until their attack occurred, all the offenders exhibited warning signs and statements to their associates. By identifying the factors that had led to a lone wolf terrorist attack, policy changes can be made to allow law enforcement to intervene prior to an attack and potentially divert the threat.

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Appendix A: Search Terms and Databases

The Walden University Library, ProQuest and Thoreau were the primary databases and the library searched for scholarly literature. Google Scholar was consulted, but results obtained with the search terms did not yield more fruitful results. When limiting search results within each of the databases and the Walden Library, the years of publication was restricted to the preceding 5 years. When the results were reviewed, the search was expanded to the previous 10 years to allow for an adequate amount of literature to review. Additionally, the results were limited to peer-reviewed sources. When searching for lone-wolf terrorism related articles, the results were minimal, compared to other fields, so the search was expanded to include active shooter and mass shooter related articles to inform the inquiry. The below list of search terms were used within each of the databases, as well as within the Walden University Library.

Search Terms

Walden University Library

The following search terms were used: lone-wolf terrorism; lone wolf terrorism; lone wolf AND terrorism; lone actor AND terrorism; lone-actor terrorism; lone-wolf AND terrorist; lone-wolf terrorist; lone wolf AND terrorist; lone-wolf AND United States; lone-wolf AND attack; mass shooting; active shooter; search results were limited to peer reviewed sources, and the span of time since published was originally limited to 5 years, then expanded to 10 years.

ProQuest

Within the ProQuest database, the following search terms were used: Lone-wolf terrorist; lone-wolf terrorism; Lone-actor terrorism; lone-actor terrorist; lone-wolf terrorist; lone-actor AND terrorist; lone-wolf AND terrorist; lone-wolf OR terrorist AND domestic ; lone-wolf AND United States; lone actor OR domestic AND United States; mass shooting and lone actor; lone wolf AND active shooter; solo AND terrorist; Please note, results were limited to peer reviewed sources and limited to 5 years since publication. The time span was enlarged to include up to 10 years to increase the amount of related literature.

Thoreau

When searching Thoreau the same search terms that were implemented in ProQuest were used to allow for symmetry. To reiterate, the following search terms were used: Lone-wolf terrorist; lone-wolf terrorism; Lone-actor terrorism; lone-actor terrorist; lone-wolf terrorist; lone-actor AND terrorist; lone-wolf AND terrorist; lone-wolf OR terrorist AND domestic ; lone-wolf AND United States; lone actor OR domestic AND United States; mass shooting and lone actor; lone wolf AND active shooter; solo AND terrorist; As with the previous searches, results were limited to peer reviewed sources and limited to 5 years since publication. The time span was enlarged to include up to 10 years to increase the amount of related literature.

Appendix B: Code, Category, and Theme Definitions

List of Apriori Codes and the Respective Definitions

1. Ability to alleviate – presence of a mechanism that the lone-wolf could have used to divert from violence (Agnew, 2010).
2. Antisocial peer group – represents peer groups or associates that may have influenced the offender to seek malicious ways of coping (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017).
3. Communication that influenced terrorism – The lone-wolf had prior interaction from a terrorist group or individuals within a group, that assisted with training, procurement and/or influencing the attack (Agnew, 2010; Bright et al., 2020; Hoffman, 2020).
4. Complex cognitive ability in planning: Exhibiting the ability to plan and craft the attack (Altay et al., 2022; Baele, 2017; Bright et al., 2020; Langman, 2020).
5. Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning: Symbolizing the ability the offender had in learning or exhibiting the ability to use rational thought, related to aspects other than planning and carrying out the attack (Altay et al., 2022; Baele, 2017; Bright et al., 2020; Langman, 2020).
6. Diagnosis of mental illness – The lone-wolf had a prior diagnosis of mental illness (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017; Ganor, 2021; Langman, 2020; Misiak et al., 2019).

7. Distance from known associates – This code refers to the lone-wolf targeting places or people outside of those known to the offender (Capellan, 2015; Capellan & Anisin, 2018; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Hoffman, 2022).
8. Escalation – represents a point in time before committing the attack, that the offender had a chance to change trajectory or cease action, but continued to escalate their intent (Agnew, 2010; Baele, 2017; Hoffman, 2020).
10. Grievance – Real or perceived grievance based upon ideological beliefs and/or real or perceived group affiliations (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021).
11. History of violence – represents the offender’s exposure to violence as a way to alleviate their grievance or strain (Agnew, 2010).
12. Lack of traditional coping mechanisms – The lone-wolf sought traditional coping mechanisms to alleviate the strain or grievance before resorting to violence (Agnew, 2010; Clemmow et al., 2022; Ganor, 2021; Katon et al., 2021; Langman, 2020; Liem et al., 2018).
13. Political ideology – represents actions or statements made by the offender that link the attack to political factors, such as political party, power assignment(s) toward lower class groups, and the like (Agnew, 2010; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016).
14. Power relationship – influence of the grievance or strain coming from a more powerful group or entity (Agnew, 2010).
15. Prior criminal history – the lone-wolf had prior interaction with law enforcement (Agnew, 2010).

16. Prior military or law enforcement training – Refers to the lone-wolf's prior training on use of firearms or explosives (Katon et al., 2021).
17. Racial ideology – represents statements or actions made by the individual that links an attack to being motivated by racial factors, may also lead to the attack being a hate crime (Agnew, 2010; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016).
18. Radicalization – message or means that radicalized the individual (Agnew, 2010; Hoffman, 2020).
19. Religious ideology – represents statements or actions related to the individual's religious ideologies (Agnew, 2010; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016).
20. Strain – Real or perceived strain based upon ideological beliefs (Agnew, 2010; Ganor, 2021).

List of Categories with Definitions

1. Complex cognitive ability – the offender exhibits the ability to think critically, problem solve, and can think rationally, understanding the consequences of their actions. This also includes the ability to perform well academically, as well as the ability to plan out their attack in detail and apply those tasks successfully.
2. Deviant behavior: Prior anti-social behavior from a Criminal Justice standpoint. This may be a prior arrest, history of violence or other behaviors not in line with cultural norms.
3. Difference in power: the actor feels that they, or the group they sympathize with, have less power, in both terms of physical or theoretical power.

4. Extremist Ideology: represents the underlying beliefs, radicalization pathways, or ideals that the offender held, that predisposed or motivated them to commit an attack. These may be political, racial, religious, social, or personal ideologies.
5. Intervention: Had opportunities to voice their concerns and not proceed with the attack.
6. Lack of traditional coping mechanisms: the offender did not see any viable opportunities to alleviate their strain or grievance.
7. Mental illness: had signs or symptoms of mental illness, whether diagnosed by a medical professional, family member or close associate.
8. Personal separation: the target or targets selected were people who were not known to the offender, or places where they believed their associates would not frequent.
9. Presence of strain or grievance: Symbolizing a real or perceived strain or grievance that influenced the offender's decision to commit an attack.
10. Received prior training: Prior training in law enforcement or in the military.

List of Themes with Definitions

1. Ideologically motivated strain or grievance: Having a strain or grievance with extremist ideology leads to an attack – must eliminate the threat
2. Violence to cope: Exhibiting deviant behavior over the life course without intervention will allow the behavior to escalate and believe violence is a viable option.

3. Diminished ability to consider outcomes: Complex cognitive ability mixed with mental illness will alter the coping mechanisms the offender believes are available to them, even when a potential intervention is present
4. Feels inferior: The difference in power between the offender and their target plays a significant role. The more severe the offender's strain or grievance paired with a significantly more powerful target will result in a more violent attack.
5. Trained to use weapons against people: There is a theme that lone wolves have prior training using firearms or explosives, which may explain the ease to use those weapons to alleviate their ideologically motivated strain or grievance.
6. Victims are complicit: The lone wolf does not know their victims. They see the victims as complicit in the lone wolf's grievance or strain.

Appendix C: Coding Table

Coding Matrices

As mentioned in Chapter 4 within the Data and Analysis section, codes were entered into an Excel spreadsheet with the corresponding article number and line number. Additionally, a note section was created to denote what triggered the specific code for the researcher. Once this information was collected, the codes were reviewed to determine what categories emerged among all the lone-wolf terrorists. Then, the categories were reviewed to determine what themes existed. Within the study, there were four lone-wolf terrorists under examination. This included Aaron Alexis, Theodore Kaczynski, Omar Mateen and Timothy McVeigh. To allow for more in-depth examination, the Unabomber Manifesto was examined and treated as a separate entity. This was completed to allow the additional information to not over concentrate the data that represented Theodore Kaczynski. After the conclusion of data collection and analysis, the data was reformatted to create a more concise table of each offender. The below tables are listed in alphabetical order by last name, when applicable.

Table C-1

Coding Matrix for Aaron Alexis

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
DIMINISHED ABILITY TO CONSIDER OUTCOMES	Intervention	ability to alleviate	investigating a harassment complaint at a Marriott hotel encountered Alexis	13	84
		communication during the attack	Alexis had “multiple contacts” with officers from several agencies during the shooting spree	13	55
		difficulty managing emotions	become easily frustrated over small things and could hold a grudge	5	100
		Government assistance	Alexis was “having problems sleeping” and was “hearing voices.” He was growing increasingly troubled and in recent months had exhibited signs of mental problems and, the source said, he tried to get help at a VA facility in Rhode Island	5	50
		inability to cope with stress	Mr. Alexis got into an argument with a family that he thought was mocking him.	10	38
		Intervention	Alexis was “having problems sleeping” and was “hearing voices.” He was growing increasingly troubled and in recent months had exhibited signs of mental problems and, the source said, he tried to get help at a VA facility in Rhode Island	5	50
		Intervention	hearing voices or having trouble sleeping	12	61
		Intervention	the VA Medical Center in Providence gave him medicine to help him sleep. A few days later, he went to a VA medical center in Washington to request a refill	4	77
		Intervention	a police sergeant alerted authorities at Naval Station Newport to Alexis “hearing voices.”	3	20
		Intervention	Alexis contacted two Veterans Affairs hospitals around the capital	3	36
	Intervention	Alexis received treatment on August 23 when he visited the	1	18	

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			emergency room at the VA Medical Center		
		Intervention	He reportedly said he did not.	1	25
		Intervention	decided to keep him on the job and did not require him to seek treatment	10	4
		Intervention	the Experts did not attempt to get Mr. Alexis to seek mental health care, a finding that the Experts has not disputed.	10	57
		Intervention	Mr. Alexis did visit a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Providence, R.I., on Aug. 23, the veterans department said, but he did not mention hearing voices and complained only of having trouble sleeping	10	59
		Intervention	he twice went to Veterans Affairs hospitals last month seeking treatment for insomnia — he was never committed and so was legally able in Virginia to buy the weapon	8	57
		Intervention	contacted the Newport naval base police and faxed a copy of Mr. Alexis's wild statements.	8	123
		Intervention	complaining of insomnia but did not say that he was hearing voices	8	127
		Intervention	said to the medical personnel in Washington that he was still having trouble sleeping and the doctors prescribed him more Trazodone	8	137
		Intervention	they knew Mr. Alexis was complaining about voices, they believed he was saying that the hotel was too noisy	9	15
		Intervention	bizarre behavior was noted by others, including hotel employees, guards at a Virginia airport and the police in Newport	9	19
		Intervention	Visiting an emergency room at a veterans' medical center in August, he said only that he was having trouble sleeping	9	51
		Intervention	Alexis had recently made contact with two	11	12

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			Veterans Administration hospitals for apparent psychological issues		
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	civilian contractor about a payment issue	15	85
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	hinted at a residual anger	12	42
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	history of angry outbursts over the last decade	14	25
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	He thought a woman was laughing at him and became angry. "He started getting a little belligerent, and started using profanity, and going off	4	71
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	he fired several shots into the tires of a car during an altercation over	13	103
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	had outbursts of rage, some extreme; he told the police in Seattle in 2004 that he shot out the tires of a construction worker's car in an anger-fueled "blackout	9	39
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	"Why is she laughing at me?"	9	77
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	"You could see there was something very wrong with him," she said, adding that she felt he could easily become violent	9	89
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Alexis seemed "frustrated with life."	11	129
	Mental Illness	diagnosis of mental illness	Alexis had recently made contact with two Veterans Administration hospitals for apparent psychological issues	5	28
		presence of mental illness	His father told Seattle police in 2004 that his son was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder after taking part in 9/11 rescue efforts	5	44
		presence of mental illness	basically snapped	5	49
		presence of mental illness	According to that report, which is related to an investigation into a harassment complaint at a Marriott hotel in Newport, Alexis said he first heard the people "talking to him through a wall" at a Residence Inn in Middletown, Rhode Island, where he'd been staying.	5	57

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		presence of mental illness	anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder	5	142
		presence of mental illness	delusional belief that he was being controlled or influenced by extremely low frequency electromagnetic waves	2	1
		presence of mental illness	My ELF weapon" – in the sawed-off Remington 870 shotgun he brought into the military facility's Building #197 on the morning of September 16	2	6
		presence of mental illness	"End to the torment!" "Not what y'all say!" And "Better off this way!"	2	35
		presence of mental illness	"voices" emanating from the walls of hotels he'd been staying at.	2	41
		presence of mental illness	his son had anger management issues related to PTSD	12	20
		presence of mental illness	hearing voices or having trouble sleeping	12	61
		presence of mental illness	had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body	12	68
		presence of mental illness	sent "vibrations through the ceiling, penetrating his body so he cannot fall asleep,"	12	73
		presence of mental illness	saying that the government had been attacking his brain for the past three months	14	2
		presence of mental illness	"Ultra-low frequency attack is what I've been subject to for the last three months,"	14	10
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis told the police in Newport, R.I., that he had been hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine."	14	36
		presence of mental illness	"my elf weapon," "end to the torment," "not what ya'll say" and "better off this way" were etched into the side of the shotgun	14	48
		presence of mental illness	unexplained etchings on a shotgun	4	1
		presence of mental illness	They read: "Better off this way" and "My elf weapon."	4	38
		presence of mental illness	was hearing voices and was convinced that	4	67

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			someone was using a “microwave machine” to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake		
		presence of mental illness	may have contacted Veterans Affairs hospitals for possible treatment of psychological issues	13	19
		presence of mental illness	His father told Seattle police after a 2004 arrest that Alexis was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder related to that experience.	13	64
		presence of mental illness	He was hearing voices and having problems sleeping	13	79
		presence of mental illness	Alexis “basically snapped	13	82
		presence of mental illness	including a history of trouble in the Navy and psychological issues	3	3
		presence of mental illness	Alexis told police he believed an individual he’d gotten into a verbal spat with had sent three “people to follow him and keep him awake by talking to him and sending vibrations into his body,”	3	8
		presence of mental illness	told authorities the unseen individuals continued speaking to him through walls and the floor, and that they used “some sort of microwave machine” to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake	3	15
		presence of mental illness	Alexis made unexplained etchings into the shotgun used in the attack	1	11
		presence of mental illness	“emotional, mental and personality condition, even when they had concerns” that he could harm others	6	36
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis told the police in Rhode Island that he was hearing voices sent by a “microwave machine,”	6	47
		presence of mental illness	her son was paranoid and that the microwave episode was not the first of that kind he had experienced	6	63
		presence of mental illness	told his bosses one month before the shootings that he had a history of paranoid	10	2

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			episodes and most likely needed therapy		
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis claimed that he was being followed and was hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine."	10	36
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis continued to complain that the family was following him. He complained of hearing loud voices in his hotel room, though hotel employees could not hear them	10	44
		presence of mental illness	employee of the Experts called the hotel and said they were bringing Mr. Alexis home because he was "unstable,"	10	48
		presence of mental illness	His mother told the director that Mr. Alexis' paranoia tended to subside with time, but that "he likely needed to see a therapist."	10	53
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis had problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder	7	13
		presence of mental illness	complain that he had changed hotels three times because he was being pursued by people keeping him awake by sending vibrations through the walls.	8	2
		presence of mental illness	told them that a person he had argued with at an airport in Virginia "has sent three people to follow him" and that they were harassing him with a microwave machine	8	5
		presence of mental illness	sought treatment from the Veterans Affairs Department for psychiatric issues	8	11
		presence of mental illness	after the Seattle shooting in 2004 that his son suffered post-traumatic stress symptoms	8	106
		presence of mental illness	to complain that he was hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine," employees at the Residence Inn in nearby Middletown were struggling to cope with his behavior	9	1
		presence of mental illness	he knocked on doors to find the voices, woke up a person in one room and	9	4

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			frightened another so badly she asked to move		
		presence of mental illness	he is unstable and the company is bringing him home	9	9
		presence of mental illness	they knew Mr. Alexis was complaining about voices, they believed he was saying that the hotel was too noisy	9	15
		presence of mental illness	caused a disturbance last month, knocking on doors to find voices he was hearing.	9	36
		presence of mental illness	He complained about kitchen noises that were disturbing him in his fourth-floor room, though the kitchen was several floors	9	59
		presence of mental illness	he called the Newport police, telling them about the voices and saying he was being followed by people whom he had argued with at an airport	9	69
		presence of mental illness	that his son had anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder		93
	Complex cognitive ability	Complex cognitive ability in planning	My ELF weapon” – in the sawed-off Remington 870 shotgun he brought into the military facility’s Building #197 on the morning of September 16	2	6
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	“he was prepared to die in the attack and accepted death as the inevitable consequence of his actions,”	14	15
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	. Alexis is seen on surveillance video ducking into a bathroom and leaving with the shotgun	4	27
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	three weapons from the scene	13	133
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	recovered three guns from the scene	3	57
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	had a small bag believed to have contained a disassembled Remington 870 shotgun	1	45
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	Mr. Alexis entered the base with a concealed, sawed-off shotgun discharged from the Navy following a	6	30
ESCALATING THREAT	Deviant behavior	anti-social behavior	“pattern of misconduct	15	80

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		anti-social behavior	Alexis was kicked out of a metro Atlanta club for damaging the furnishings, according to a police report	12	28
		anti-social behavior	checkered history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		anti-social behavior	officials described as a "pattern of misconduct	3	27
		anti-social behavior	During his time in the service, he exhibited "a pattern of misbehavior	7	39
		anti-social behavior	shown a "pattern of misbehavior" during his four years as a reservist	8	77
		anti-social behavior	spent years in the Navy Reserve in Fort Worth, and was honorably discharged in 2011 despite "misbehavior."	9	64
		anti-social behavior	Alexis was honorably discharged after a "pattern of misconduct,"	11	81
		coping with firearms	shooting out the tires of a car in what he told the police was an anger-induced "blackout."	10	28
		coping with firearms	he thought Mr. Alexis was frustrated with the parking situation outside the work site. But Mr. Alexis told the police that he had had an anger-fueled blackout	7	8
		coping with firearms	neighbor called the police after she heard a pop, saw dust fly and noticed holes in her floor and ceiling. She told the police that Mr. Alexis had confronted her in the parking lot about making too much noise	7	47
		coping with firearms	shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout,"	11	88
		Fascination with violence	he would stay up late at night playing violent video games in his room.	9	46
		history of misconduct	he had eight instances of misconduct on his record, including insubordination, disorderly conduct, unauthorized absences from work, and at least one instance of drunkenness.	5	13
		history of violence	arrested Alexis in 2004 for shooting out the tires of another man's vehicle in what Alexis later told	15	90

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			detectives was an anger-fueled “blackout		
		history of violence	including police run-ins, that portray a man with increasingly violent tendencies.	5	106
		History of violence	The latter includes a 2004 arrest in Seattle, when he was accused of shooting the tires of a man’s truck in an anger-fueled “blackout,” according to a police report. Alexis’ father told police his son had anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder, which he suffered after working “as an active participant in rescue attempts” during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York	2	61
		history of violence	over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment	2	69
		history of violence	10 years, he showed that he was troubled – and had a predilection for violence	12	4
		history of violence	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12
		history of violence	Navy officials knew about Alexis’ 2004 arrest for shooting out the tires of a car	4	85
		history of violence	run-ins with police	3	30
		history of violence	knew about Alexis’ 2004 arrest for shooting out the tires of a car, but they decided to grant him security clearance anyway in 2007.	1	68
		history of violence	Mr. Alexis brandished a .45-caliber pistol and fired at the tires of a construction worker’s car	6	41
		history of violence	he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
		history of violence	shooting out the tires of a car in what he told the police was an anger-induced “blackout.”	10	28

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		history of violence	Mr. Alexis walked out of his grandmother's home one morning, pulled a .45-caliber pistol from his waistband and fired three rounds at a construction worker's car	7	5
		History of violence	In 2010, Mr. Alexis was arrested in Fort Worth for discharging a firearm.	7	45
		history of violence	investigated by police departments in Seattle and Fort Worth, for firing a gun in anger	8	54
		history of violence	Mr. Alexis was also twice investigated by other police departments in shooting episodes	8	86
		pior criminal gistory	arrested Alexis in 2004 for shooting out the tires of another man's vehicle in what Alexis later told detectives was an anger-fueled "blackout	15	90
		Prior criminal history	was arrested for disorderly conduct	5	2
		prior criminal history	Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004, when he was arrested in Seattle, accused of shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a Seattle Police Department report.	5	136
		prior criminal history	Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment. According to records, he told police he accidentally fired it while cleaning it	5	146
		prior criminal history	The latter includes a 2004 arrest in Seattle, when he was accused of shooting the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a police report. Alexis' father told police his son had anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder, which he suffered after working "as an active participant	2	61

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			in rescue attempts” during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York		
		prior criminal history	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12
		prior criminal history	Outside, Alexis cursed profusely, and when he defied police orders to stop, they arrested him for disorderly conduct	12	30
		prior criminal history	he allegedly fired a bullet through his ceiling into a neighbor’s apartment	12	36
		prior criminal history	arrested three times in three states	14	26
		prior criminal history	checkered history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		prior criminal history	His father told Seattle police after a 2004 arrest that Alexis was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder related to that experience.	13	64
		prior criminal history	he fired several shots into the tires of a car during an altercation over	13	103
		prior criminal history	run-ins with police	3	30
		prior criminal history	he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
		prior criminal history	Mr. Alexis had been arrested three times in three states	10	27
		prior criminal history	had problems with the law	7	4
		prior criminal history	Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004	11	87
		prior criminal history	August 2008 on a charge of disorderly conduct	11	98
		prior criminal history	Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment.	11	100
		Prior criminal history	Another arrest in Texas	5	10
		prior criminal history	in 2008 on a disorderly conduct charge	3	34
		using firearms to cope	Mr. Alexis brandished a .45-caliber pistol and fired at the tires of a	6	41

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			construction worker's car		
		using firearms to cope	he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
		Violence as a coping mechanism	kicked out of a club for damaging the furnishings and left the place releasing an unrelenting string of profanities	5	3
FEELS INFERIOR	Difference in power	power relationship	Ultra low frequency attack is what I've been subject to for the last 3 months," read a message obtained by federal authorities from Alexis's thumb drives, phones and computers. "And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me to this	2	12
IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED STRAIN OR GRIEVANCE	Presence of strain or grievance	escalation	including police run-ins, that portray a man with increasingly violent tendencies.	5	106
		escalation	Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004, when he was arrested in Seattle, accused of shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a Seattle Police Department report.	5	136
		escalation	Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment. According to records, he told police he accidentally fired it while cleaning it	5	146
		escalation	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12
		escalation	he allegedly fired a bullet through his ceiling into a neighbor's apartment	12	36
		escalation	had served in the Navy, but officials moved to discharge him in 2010	13	78
		escalation	history of infractions as a Navy reservist, mental	8	22

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			health problems and runs with the police over gun violence		
		escalation	he knocked on doors to find the voices, woke up a person in one room and frightened another so badly she asked to move	9	4
		escalation	caused a disturbance last month, knocking on doors to find voices he was hearing.	9	36
		grievance	“had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body,”	13	86
		grievance	told authorities the unseen individuals continued speaking to him through walls and the floor, and that they used “some sort of microwave machine” to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake	3	15
		grievance	he complained about his paychecks from the Experts, saying that they were late or that he was not getting paid enough	9	109
		grievance	Alexis was locked in a dispute over money with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy	11	10
		grievance	He was very frustrated with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy	11	132
		maximum carnage	He was armed with an AR-15, which is a semi-automatic rifle; another rifle and a semi-automatic Glock handgun, according to a law enforcement official.	15	55
		maximum harm	each packed with about a dozen pellets capable of causing tremendous damage	1	49
		maximum harm	Alexis made his way to an overlook above the atrium and opened fire into the cafeteria.	11	24
		motivation	had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body	12	68
		Motivation	“And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me this,”	14	14

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		motivation	Mr. Alexis claimed that he was being followed and was hearing voices sent by a “microwave machine.”	10	36
		motivation	told them that a person he had argued with at an airport in Virginia “has sent three people to follow him” and that they were harassing him with a microwave machine	8	5
		not driven by rage	“He looked very calm and composed. He didn’t look like a person that was angry or doing that type of event,”	1	53
		personal grievance	saying that the government had been attacking his brain for the past three months	14	2
		possible motivation	lack of evidence to merit a general discharge	5	17
		power relationship	frustrated with the government and how as a veteran he didn’t feel like he was getting treated right or fairly .”	12	63
		Strain	Ultra low frequency attack is what I’ve been subject to for the last 3 months,” read a message obtained by federal authorities from Alexis’s thumb drives, phones and computers. “And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me to this	2	12
		strain	locked in a dispute over money with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy.	5	26
		strain	Alexis claimed he wasn’t paid properly by the	5	177
		strain	frustrated with the government and how as a veteran he didn’t feel like he was getting treated right or fairly .”	12	63
		strain	Friends say he had been frustrated over pay and benefits issues	13	18
TRAINED TO USE WEAPONS AGAINST PEOPLE	Received prior training	discharged from the military	prompted the Navy to begin proceedings to separate him from the military.	5	10
		experience with firearms	He was ... knowledgeable with military rifles and handguns.	11	143
		military training	Alexis served as a full-time Navy reservist	5	94

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			between 2007 and 2011, according to military records. He achieved the rank of aviation electrician's mate 3rd class, working on aircraft electrical systems, the records show.		
		prior military training	He was in the Navy's ready reserve	15	78
		prior military training	until a few years ago had served in the Navy	2	5
		prior military training	2007 enlistment.	12	24
		prior military training	military contractor and former Navy reservist	14	7
		prior military training	Mr. Alexis was granted a midlevel security clearance in 2007 while he was a reservist	14	63
		prior military training	checkered history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		prior military training	had served in the Navy, but officials moved to discharge him in 2010	13	67
		prior military training	was a military contractor and was in the Navy's Ready Reserve	3	40
		prior military training	From 2007 to 2011, Mr. Alexis was a full-time reservist in the Navy	6	25
		prior military training	former Navy reservist	10	24
		prior military training	served his country as a Navy reservist	7	2
		prior military training	From 2007 to 2011, Mr. Alexis was a full-time reservist in the Navy	7	26
		prior military training	As an honorably discharged veteran, he cleared a basic hurdle	8	57
		prior military training	a former Navy reservist	9	11
		prior military training	spent years in the Navy Reserve	9	29
		prior military training	spent years in the Navy Reserve in Fort Worth, and was honorably discharged in 2011 despite "misbehavior."	9	64
		prior military training	a former Navy reservist and a current military contractor,	11	4
		prior military training	served as a full-time Navy reservist between 2007 and 2011	11	77
		prior training	Two days before the shooting, Alexis spent "a couple hours" shooting at Sharpshooters Small Arms Range	5	187
		prior training	spent "a couple hours" shooting at Sharpshooters Small	3	59

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
VICTIMS ARE COMPLICIT	Personal separation		Arms Range in northern Virginia		
		distance from known associates	We have not determined there to be any previous relationship	2	53
		distance from known associates	Alexis came out of the bathroom and immediately began shooting at random	4	30

Table C-2

Coding Matrix for Theodore Kaczynski

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
DIMINISHED ABILITY TO CONSIDER OUTCOMES	Complex cognitive ability	Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	I planned to murder a scientist -- as a means of revenge against organized society in general and the technological establishment in particular. . . . Unfortunately, I chickened out	12	25
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	I planned to murder a scientist -- as a means of revenge against organized society in general and the technological establishment in particular. . . . Unfortunately, I chickened out	12	38
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	The FBI's 18-year search for the elusive Unabomber	3	1
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Former Berkeley professor turned in by his family	3	3
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	He makes the switches by hand and probably mixes his own chemicals as well.	3	50
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	The authorities then arrested Mr. Kaczynski in his shack in Montana, where they found 40,000 handwritten journal pages that included information on bomb-making experiments and descriptions of his crimes	1	88
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	David first sent him \$1,000, then \$2,000	15	48
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Methodically prepared the deadly bombs, gloated over news accounts of their detonations and took pains to avoid getting caught	8	60
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	The device in experiment 244 was used in December 1994 and it gave a totally satisfactory result	8	108
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	The Unabomber was always careful	11	941
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Making untraceable bombs and delivering them to random targets	13	19
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Quaker Oats box, agents found what they had hoped for: 23 bomb igniters, each made from a piece of appliance cord pulled through a wooden plug. They	9	4

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
			were unique to the Unabomber.		
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	“How could we know he went to Harvard when he was 16 years old?”	9	41
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	He went on to study at Harvard and teach mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley	1	22
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	A math prodigy who graduated from Harvard and became a promising academic at the University of California at Berkeley	7	60
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	A brilliant mathematician who graduated from Harvard and taught at the University of California at Berkeley	15	51
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Some of the notes were written by hand, some were typed, and others were contained in a code of Mr. Kaczynski’s own design, which agents said they had deciphered by using a key they found in his Montana cabin.	8	23
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Mr. Kaczynski agreed that he would permit psychiatric testimony during a penalty phase of the trial	4	58
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Mr. Kaczynski avoided suspicion by varying his targets and locations, by shunning confrontations with people and by suspending attacks in the winter, when snow would capture footprints	2	24
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	“He was the smartest kid in the class,” Mr. Mosny said	11	318
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Graduated from high school in 1958 and won a scholarship to Harvard. He was only 16.	11	327
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Lonely boy genius to Harvard-trained star of pure mathematics, to rural recluse, to notorious murderer, to imprisoned extremist.	14	11
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	35,000-word manifesto that he had written to justify his actions and evangelize the ideas that he claimed inspired them.	14	19
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	The Harvard-trained math professor	13	1
		Complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	Accused Mr. Kaczynski of “a deliberate attempt to manipulate the trial process.”	5	7

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Evolving	In workmanlike lab notes recorded how he had taped razor blades and nails to a pipe bomb to increase its destructiveness.	8	3
		Premeditation		12	25
		Rational choice	Was aware of the wrongfulness of his actions and considered how to conceal his wrongdoing to continue the attacks	8	73
	Intervention	Ability to alleviate	Perhaps I will have better luck with work and money, so that I can go to visit you	15	21
		Ability to alleviate	Ted, playing the tutor, had David in the role of pupil	11	138
		Ability to alleviate	"I am pleased that you call yourself my friend. And I, in turn, call myself your friend."	11	966
		Seeking approval	They seemed deeply disappointed in Theodore Kaczynski's career failure, Mr. Sanchez said, and the son was angry with his parents in return	15	111
	Mental illness	Considered mentally ill by family	His family had been complicit in the idea of a mental illness	7	29
		Diagnosis of mental illness	"I think though he has done evil things, he is not an evil person. He is a deeply confused, troubled person."	6	22
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Dr. Johnson's report, filed under seal and not released publicly, concluded that Mr. Kaczynski, while competent to stand trial, suffered from serious mental illness	4	24
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Dr. Johnson found that Mr. Kaczynski was suffering from other serious mental illnesses, including "paranoid personality disorder with avoidant and antisocial features	4	73
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Ted has been a disturbed person for a long time and he's gotten more disturbed	11	25
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Saw his writing as evidence of schizophrenia	14	22
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Claimed the writings reflected the mind of a paranoid schizophrenic, not a cold-blooded killer	13	39
		Diagnosis of mental illness	While Johnson concluded that Kaczynski was mentally competent, she also diagnosed him as a paranoid schizophrenic.	13	50
		Diagnosis of mental illness	Ted's diagnosed mental illness."	5	34
		Did not want the label	Theodore's aims in disrupting his trial with	6	52

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
			protests against the defense lawyers' plan to describe him as mentally ill.		
		Did not want to be labeled	Contrary to what his lawyers contended, the author is not mentally ill	7	25
		Fears the label	A trial in which an insanity defense was offered would be too agonizing for him to bear	7	36
		Inability to think rationally	Rose swiftly to academic heights even as he became an emotional cripple.	11	58
		Lack of emotional intelligence	Who seemed incapable of sympathy, insight or simple connection with people.	11	105
		Lacking in emotional intelligence	Seeming to prize and cultivate his intellect over his emotions.	14	140
		Presence of mental illness	Had sought to portray his brother not as an evil manipulator but as a troubled, mentally ill man.	5	26
		Signs of mental illness at a young age	Mr. Kaczynski says that when he was 12, his father, who has since died, began calling him "sick" and compared him with an acquaintance who had been placed in a psychiatric institution.	7	54
		Signs of mental illness seen by family	"My mother imitated him in this respect," the book says, "and from then on until I was about 21 years old, both parents would apply to me such epithets as 'sick,' 'immature,' 'emotionally disturbed,' 'creep,' 'mind of a 2-year-old.'"	7	57
		Symptoms leading to mental illness	"This is symptomatic of Ted's illness," Mr. Bisceglie said, "and it is not uncommon in schizophrenia for this kind of nasty, angry, unpleasant striking out to occur."	7	41
FEELS INFERIOR	Difference in power	Power relationship	Most of the problems are direct or indirect results of the activity of large organizations -- corporations and governments.	11	645
		Power relationship	in a meticulous and cold-blooded campaign aimed at challenging society	5	13
		Power relationship	Mr. Kaczynski's struggle seemed more and more to highlight the legal system's difficulties in dealing with the mentally ill	5	38
IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED STRAIN OR GRIEVANCE	Extremist Ideology	Anti technological ideology	Bitterly criticizing the dehumanizing impact of technology on society	8	45

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Anti technological ideology	Mr. Kaczynski concentrated his attacks on loggers, miners and recreationists who used motorized vehicles	2	53
		Antitechnology ideology	“Anyone who will read the anarchist and radical environmentalist journals will see that opposition to the industrial-technological system is widespread and growing.”	10	46
		Antitechnology ideology	He did not like television or rock ‘n’ roll, and loud noises infuriated him,	11	417
		Antitechnology ideology	Industrial-technological society cannot be reformed in such a way as to prevent it from progressively narrowing the sphere of human freedom.”	11	653
		Antitechnology ideology	He spoke of air pollution and said something else about a world in which speed was too important.	11	778
		Communication that influenced terrorism	“It is obvious if you read the Unabomber’s manifesto that there is a heavy emphasis against technology and a lot of the other things that Earth First Journal focuses on in terms of the radical end of environmental politics,”	10	60
		Fueled by his ideology	to a one-man war against technology, and the cold calculation of the death of strangers.	11	63
		Ideological beliefs	Mountain Men Are Always Free	15	43
		Ideological beliefs	Mr. Kaczynski opened a local front in his one-man war against what he called the octopus of technology.	2	6
		Ideological beliefs	Mr. Kaczynski chopped his way into a vacation home nearly a mile from his cabin, “smashed up the interior pretty thoroughly,” and “thoroughly smashed” a motorcycle and four snowmobiles.	2	29
		Ideological beliefs	“I did, for example, attempt to injure trail bikers by setting traps for those who took their motorcycles off the road and back into the hills.”	2	48
		Ideological beliefs	He said he had blown up Mr. Mosser because he was an executive for a giant New York-based public relations firm	10	38
		Ideological beliefs	Unwarranted intrusions, pressure to conform to a world he hated.	11	619

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Ideological beliefs	One does not have freedom if anyone else (especially a large organization) has power over one.”	11	699
		Ideological beliefs	It made an argument that technology was profoundly harming society	11	805
		Ideological beliefs	Fomenting the collapse of the modern social order	14	8
		Ideological beliefs	35,000-word manifesto that he had written to justify his actions and evangelize the ideas that he claimed inspired them.	14	19
		Ideological beliefs	The environment and the alienating effects of technology were so heinous that the social and industrial underpinnings of modern life should be destroyed.	14	43
		Ideological beliefs	“politicians, corporation executives and remote, anonymous technicians and bureaucrats” control over “the life-and-death issues of one’s existence.”	14	99
		Ideological beliefs	His belief that technology is destroying humanity.	13	47
		Ideological beliefs	Anti-technology” bombing campaign	13	96
		Ideologically motivated	Unabomber’s bitter anti-technology manifesto in late 1995,	9	54
		Ideologically motivated	Regret at not having killed him, the man the journal sneeringly called “the genetic engineer.”	6	35
		Ideologically motivated	Thereby improve the chances of stopping technology	12	11
		Ideology ruled his life	Quit in a tailspin of disillusionment with mathematics -- the sole passion of his life, suddenly dead	11	12
		Sparking ideological beliefs	In 1983, he found a road paved through it	14	182
	Presence of strain or grievance	Coping by killing	Frustrated. Traveling expenses for raids such as the foregoing are very hard on my slender financial resources.	12	58
		Coping by killing	Mr. Kaczynski’s diaries that detailed his efforts to kill and, sometimes, his annoyance at failure.	5	55
		Escalation	The Unabomber, after nearly eight years, had committed a murder.	11	922
		Escalation	After 17 years, the F.B.I.’s quest for the serial terrorist had ended. An exultant	9	11
		Escalation		12	38
		Escalation	Revenge attempts have been gobbling much time,	12	55

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
			impeding other work. But I must succeed, must get revenge.		
		Escalation	booby-trapped motorcycle trails with wires strung between trees, sabotaged mining machinery with sand, burned logging equipment, poured sugar into snowmobile gas tanks and destroyed hunting and mining camps and vacation cabins with ax blows.	2	9
		Escalation	Everyone was reprimanded, but Teddy was unfazed	11	311
		Escalation	“frustrating, but I can’t seem to make a lethal bomb	5	58
		Felt justified	cheerful tones	5	48
		Grievance	Theodore J. Kaczynski, who acknowledged on Thursday that he had spent years trying to kill people and who has shown no remorse	6	2
		Grievance	My motive for doing what I am going to do is simply personal revenge.	12	8
		Grievance	I am motivated by a hatred for what is happening to freedom.	12	22
		Grievance	Excellent. Humane way to eliminate somebody. He probably never felt a thing. 25000 dollar reward offered. Rather flattering.	12	65
		Grievance	We have no regret about the fact that our bomb blew up the ‘wrong’ man, Gilbert Murray, instead of William N. Dennison, to whom it was addressed	12	68
		Grievance	He said his violent campaign was intended to bring about the collapse of the modern social order.	1	13
		Grievance	He went on a spree of environmental vandalism	1	25
		Grievance	Kaczynski built more than a dozen bombs and devised his plan to terrorize those he perceived to be advancing the evils of technology	1	28
		Grievance	The document condemned industrialization	1	80
		Grievance	He would be cleansed and redeemed of his treason against the values that he once held in common with me and many other people,	7	8
		Grievance	‘I know how to put him in touch with environmental radicals, and I believe they would accept him if he came to them repentant.’	7	10

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Ideological beliefs	Kaczynski claimed a moral high ground for his deadly campaign	13	30
		Increasing intensity	The explosions were becoming increasingly dangerous	11	920
		Justifying the continued attacks	Revenge	14	185
		No compassion	We have no regret about the fact that our bomb blew up the 'wrong' man, Gilbert Murray, instead of William N. Dennison, to whom it was addressed	12	68
		No plans to stop attacks	They also found a live bomb.	1	90
		No remorse	Killing three people and injuring 23 others	1	10
		No remorse	A fatal attack on one victim was "excellent	8	2
		No remorse	Frustrating that I can't seem to make a lethal bomb	8	80
		No remorse	I am no longer bothered by having crippled this guy. I laughed at the idea of having any compunction about crippling an airplane pilot	8	86
		No remorse	Excellent. Humane way to eliminate somebody. He probably never felt a thing.	8	90
		No remorse	..."He shows utterly no remorse"	13	56
		No remorse	he seemed self-confident to the point of defiance. Occasionally, he seemed to see the situation as comic or absurd.	5	107
		Persistence	Ted Kaczynski, the confessed killer who attacked academics, business officials and others over nearly 20 years	1	1
		Personal strain	I emphasize that my motivation is personal revenge. I don't pretend any kind of philosophical or moralistic justification	8	52
		Potential trigger	You could become infected by this feeling that society had taken a wrong turn	11	567
		Precipitating factors	Kaczynski's extraordinary biography emerged	14	32
		Prolonged attacks	Sending mail bombs that killed three people and wounded 23 others from 1978 to 1995.	13	16
		Rejection	"Ted did a total shutdown,"	11	867
		Relates individuals to ideological objectives	According to newspaper, vice chairman of computer sci. dept. picked it up. He was considered to be 'out of	12	56

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
			danger of losing any fingers', but would need further surgery for bone and tendon damage in hand.		
		Revenge	The package was addressed to a professor at the Chicago Circle campus of the University of Illinois, where it was left in a parking lot on May 24, 1978. But instead of being forwarded to its addressee, it was returned to its apparent sender, a professor at Northwestern University.	11	831
		Sees killing as necessary	I thought, I will kill but I will make at least some effort to avoid detection, so that I can kill again.	8	69
		Shift in target type	The bomber's interest in environmental targets was a departure from his earlier victims and might ultimately be traced to events in Lincoln itself.	10	81
		Strain	Publish his eight-page, 35,000-word "manifesto," a diatribe against technology	3	56
		Strain	When spring comes, maybe I will have better luck with a job and money so that I could go visit you	15	76
		Strain	They seemed deeply disappointed in Theodore Kaczynski's career failure, Mr. Sanchez said, and the son was angry with his parents in return	15	111
		Strain	Dr. Johnson concluded that Mr. Kaczynski had delusions that he was being "maligned and harassed by family members and modern society	4	28
		Strain	"The people we are out to get are scientists and engineers, especially in critical fields like computers and genetics," it said. The goal, it said, was nothing less than "the destruction of the worldwide industrial system."	11	1150
		Strain	Said he would stop the killing if it were published in three months	11	1178
		Strain	Aimed at bringing down the technological system.	5	3
VICTIMS ARE COMPLICIT	Personal separation	Desire to kill potential targets	Revenge attempts have been gobbling much time, impeding other work. But I	12	55

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Distance from known associates	must succeed, must get revenge. Making untraceable bombs and delivering them to random targets	13	19
		Distance from known associates	Aerial photographs had determined he was living at the place his younger brother had described	9	155
		Distance from known associates	After complicated preparations I succeeded in injuring the pres. of United A. L.	12	38
		Distance from known associates	Revenge attempts have been gobbling much time, impeding other work. But I must succeed, must get revenge.	12	55
		Distance from known associates	Kaczynski's victims appeared random	1	35
		Distance from known associates	Wrote that he had "no regret" about the bomb that killed Mr. Murray	8	41
		Distance from known associates	Who attacked academics, businessmen and random civilians	14	1
		Distance from known associates	Theodore Kaczynski had sent to his house, was also trying to process the end of the grueling Unabomber saga	6	11
		Distance from known associates	He expected to leave here without any contact with his brother other than the sight of him in court.	6	93
		Distanced from others	A means of controlling the access of others as it was a symbol of freedom.	11	145
VIOLENCE TO COPE	Deviant behavior	Antisocial tendencies	When the others began attending dances and dating, Teddy stayed home	11	319
		Antisocial tendencies	"He was intensely introverted"	11	378
		Distanced himself	He did not like television or rock 'n' roll, and loud noises infuriated him,	11	561
		Divided attention	Teddy was 7 then, and the aunt said he seemed crestfallen at having to share the attention his parents had lavished upon him.	11	204
		Feeling abandoned	"he became very unresponsive," David said. "He had been a smiling, happy, jovial kind of baby beforehand, and when he returned from the hospital, he showed little emotions for months."	11	194

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		History of anti-social tendencies	Ted has been a disturbed person for a long time and he's gotten more disturbed	11	35
		History of violence	Mr. Kaczynski took credit for "monkey-wrenching" and for shooting a dog to death	2	17
		Isolation	Over socialization can lead to low self-esteem, a sense of powerlessness, defeatism, guilt, etc. If a particular child is especially susceptible to such feelings, he ends by feeling ashamed of HIMSELF."	11	278
		Positive reinforcement	"Who says crime doesn't pay? I feel very good about this."	2	37
		Pushed relationships away	"If you want to be my friend," he wrote bluntly, "don't give me advice."	11	68
	Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Hypocritical	"Makes me about ready to join the ban-hunting crowd, just to keep these disgusting twerps out of the woods. Of course I'd hunt anyway.	2	63
		Isolation	but never love, never friendship	11	4
		Lack of coping skills	Now he seems haunted by the possibility that he somehow failed to understand or to find the magic words of comfort.	11	115
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Frustrated. Traveling expenses for raids such as the foregoing are very hard on my slender financial resources.	12	58
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	"There are many psychotic people in this world that don't spend their time in a cabin plotting to kill people,"	6	39
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	I act merely from a desire for revenge	12	16
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	He threatened to send another bomb "with intent to kill" if his document were not published in its entirety	3	59
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Promised to "permanently desist from terrorist activities" if the papers agreed to publish a manifesto	1	73
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	My ambition is to kill a scientist, big businessman, government official or the like. I would also like to kill a Communist	8	54
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	The book describes about 25 incidents of vandalism	2	50
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Justifications for murder had been crafted	11	8

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICE	LINE
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	The inability to cope with people, the misreading of intentions, the obsessions and rigidities, the anger lurking behind the calm eyes - - deteriorated at last, leaving someone even his family did not recognize on the rare	11	20
		Lack of traditional coping mechanisms	He is resentful and angry and fantasizes and actually does resort to violence against those individuals and organizations that he believes are hurting him	4	39
		Lacks traditional coping mechanisms	Since committing these crimes reported elsewhere in my notes I feel better. I am still plenty angry, you understand, but the difference is that I am now able to strike back, to a degree	8	71
		Wanted acceptance	If you want to be my friend, don't give me advice	15	130

Table C-3

Coding Matrix for Omar Mateen

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
DIMINISHED ABILITY TO CONSIDER OUTCOMES	Complex cognitive ability	communication that influenced terrorism	the man spoke on the phone to somebody in a foreign language and asked to buy 1,000 rounds of ammunition	15	52
		communication that influenced terrorism	, he had a conversation in a foreign language that was more concerning. Then he came back and he was requesting ammo	11	125
		complex cognitive ability in planning	earned an associate degree in criminal justice technology in 2006.	4	3
		complex cognitive ability in planning	When the shooter was killed, you could see a battery pack right next to him, which would indicate to us that there's a detonator of some sort	13	89
		complex cognitive ability in planning	he had explosives and accomplices at Pulse nightclub	1	13
		complex cognitive ability in planning	Mateen spent thousands of dollars	15	22
		complex cognitive ability in planning	Mateen tried to purchase body armor and a large amount of ammunition	15	58
		complex cognitive ability in planning	had made financial arrangements for his family,	11	21
		complex cognitive ability in planning	trying unsuccessfully to buy body armor and ammunition	11	23
		complex cognitive ability in planning	adding the name of his wife, Noor Salman, to his life insurance policy and other documents, and making sure she had access to his bank accounts.	11	34
		complex cognitive ability in planning	behavior suggested or meditation	11	48
		complex cognitive ability in planning	Mateen, 29, as the man who visited their store about six weeks earlier	11	119
		complex cognitive ability in planning	He legally bought the rifle and pistol in the past couple weeks	6	60
		complex cognitive ability in planning	Published reports said Mateen tried to purchase body armor	6	66
		complex cognitive ability in planning	when he purchased several weapons and hundreds of rounds of ammunition as he prepared for the shooting	10	82
		complex cognitive ability in problem	improved so strikingly in the classroom that he graduated from Stuart	3	97

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		solving and learning	Adult Community High School in April 2003 in the top half of his class — at the age of 16.		
		complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	working toward an associate degree in criminal justice technology.	3	102
		did not plan on being a victim	shooter retreats	14	20
		seeking a way out	threatens to put explosive vests on four hostages and to detonate	14	61
		target of opportunity	final selection of the Pulse appears to have been made based on the lack of security	10	5
		went to multiple locations	but then turned around one minute later and went back to Pulse.	10	37
	Intervention	inability to cope by traditional means	I saw that he was bipolar and he would get mad out of nowhere	12	21
	Intervention		For 10 months, F.B.I. agents investigated the gunman,	2	8
	Intervention		how much his wife knew before the attack.	2	31
	Intervention		She said she had tried to talk him out of waging an attack, the official said	2	106
	Intervention		Ms. Salman has told F.B.I. investigators that she had tried to talk her husband out of some kind of attack,	13	22
	Intervention		Salman likely had to go to the bank and sign documents to have access to her husband's accounts	11	41
	Intervention		"I knew when he left that he was going to commit the attack	5	11
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Always shaken. Always agitated. Always mad	3	32
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	talked about killing people all the time	4	110
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	even in this low-pressure position, he managed to unnerve and upset, especially when he seemed to think that he had been disrespected	3	191
	mental illness	history of mental illness	was emotionally unstable and suffered from mental illness	12	18
FEELS INFERIOR	Difference in power	power relationship	vengeance	15	33
IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED STRAIN OR GRIEVANCE	Extremist ideology	anti-social network	he pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.	13	49

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		anti-social peer group	Mr. Mateen “talked frequently of violence and obscenities” as a child and was the subject of 31 disciplinary actions from 1992 to 1999.	12	1
		claimed association to terrorist groups	when he made inflammatory comments to co-workers alleging possible terrorist ties	12	39
		claimed association to terrorist groups	once claimed ties to both Al Qaeda and Hezbollah	8	21
		claimed association to terrorist groups	statements he made three years ago to co-workers at a local courthouse about being tied to terrorism,	1	26
		claimed association to terrorist groups	I did it for ISIS. I did it for the Islamic State	15	42
		communication that influenced terrorism	Mateen’s electronic devices showed searches for jihadist propaganda, including videos of ISIS beheadings	15	44
		cultural norms	Mr. Mateen was incensed by the sight of two men kissing	3	216
		embraced radical ideology	made inflammatory comments claiming connections to overseas terrorists	8	98
		extremist claims	had suggested he may have had terrorist ties	4	9
		History of radicalized communication	incendiary comments he once made to co-workers at a local courthouse	8	7
		Homophobic behavior	come across two men kissing in Miami recently and was infuriated that his 3-year-old son had seen it	4	29
		inner conflict	leading two totally different lives	15	114
		inner turmoil	while some reports have suggested that he was gay	3	22
		Islamic State	great victory carried out by “our brother, Omar Mateen.”	8	145
		Lack of mental illness	The security company that hired Mateen said it conducted background checks	6	86
		Multiple ideological beliefs	Mr. Mateen’s motivation have revealed strands of Islamist radicalism, bigotry, mental illness and even self-hatred — one possibility being investigated was that he was gay. Mr. Mateen had expressed hatred of gays and made contradictory	13	45

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			claims of links to terrorist groups.		
		no formal ties	no indication that this was a plot directed from outside the United States	1	62
		radicalization	he pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.	13	49
		radicalization	Mateen's electronic devices showed searches for jihadist propaganda	6	26
		radicalization	co-workers said in 2013 that he had boasted of ties to the terrorist groups Hezbollah and Al Qaeda	2	70
		radicalization	himself in military uniform, pretending to be Afghanistan's president	3	51
		religious conflict	Mr. Mateen might have been	8	88
		Religious ideology	Mr. Mateen appeared to have been motivated by a mixture of violent radicalization and hatred for gays and lesbians	2	100
		religious ideology	Chuckling and declaring allegiance to the Islamic State, he opened fire at a gay and Latino nightclub	3	12
		religious ideology	occasional flashes of interest in radical Islam, enough to be investigated twice by the F.B.I. in recent years for possible extremist ties	3	19
		religious ideology	And, yes, he could be homophobic	3	158
		religious ideology	Though far-fetched and even contradictory — he claimed connections to Al Qaeda, the Sunni extremist group, and ties to its near opposite, the Shiite Hezbollah	3	174
		religious ideology	Mr. Mateen was incensed by the sight of two men kissing	3	216
		religious ideology	Mateen had called 911 once the attacks began and swore allegiance over the phone to the Islamic State.	4	26
		religious ideology	pledging allegiance to ISIS	12	11
		religious ideology	After seeing two men kissing in Miami, Mateen expressed outrage to his father	12	82
		religious ideology	hatred of gay people	8	17
		religious ideology	claimed allegiance to the Islamic State	1	8
		religious ideology	America and Russia stop bombing the Islamic state	15	29
		religious ideology	they believe Mateen was actually fueled by struggles with his	15	78

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		religious ideology	"America and Russia stop bombing the Islamic state," the gunman wrote	11	81
		religious ideology	"You kill innocent women and children by doing us airstrikes ... now taste the Islamic state vengeance."	11	84
		religious ideology	"One of the Caliphate's soldiers in America	6	93
		religious ideology	Mateen called 911 to pledge allegiance to ISIS	6	95
		religious ideology	he did make anti-gay comments when he was angry	7	50
		religious ideology	moments when he'd express his intolerance toward homosexuals	7	52
		religious ideology	shooter pledges allegiance to ISIS	14	44
		religious ideology	he wanted America to stop bombing his country	14	47
		religious ideology	takes responsibility for the attack and claims he did it for ISIS	14	51
		religious ideology	declared his allegiance to the Islamic State	5	21
	Presence of strain or grievance	communication that influenced terrorism	radical material he found online.	1	19
		communication that influenced terrorism	do not believe that Mr. Mateen received any specific direction or assistance from the Islamic State, but say he was radicalized online	5	42
		conflicting identities	Mr. Mateen might have been	8	91
		escalation	the perpetrator's behavior was alarming enough to attract the F.B.I.'s attention but could not be stopped.	2	36
		escalation	His former co-workers reported violent and racist comments	2	138
		escalation	Omar Mateen, told the police by phone that he would strap explosives	13	19
		grievance	co-workers said in 2013 that he had boasted of ties to the terrorist groups Hezbollah and Al Qaeda	2	70
		motivation	cool and calm	1	7
		No remorse	laughing or celebrating	1	155
		No remorse	shooter enters the bathroom and shoots several people hiding there.	14	25
		not acting out of rage	He was cool and calm when he was making those phone calls to us	6	53
		personal conflict	the gunman visited frequently over the past few years	11	155

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		personal grievance	The security contractor transferred him to work at a residential golfing community, and the sheriff alerted the F.B.I.	2	73
		personal strain	the gunman visited frequently	15	81
		strain	come to to the club two times a month for a period of three years.	6	78
TRAINED TO USE WEAPONS AGAINST PEOPLE	received prior training	prior law enforcement training	recommended that Mr. Mateen be dismissed from the officer training program.	9	92
		prior law enforcement training	that of a security guard. He completed a training course, passed a background check, and began working for a security firm called G4S.	3	143
		prior training	The security contractor transferred him to work at a residential golfing community, and the sheriff alerted the F.B.I.	2	73
		prior training	The security company that hired Mateen said it conducted background checks	6	86
		prior training	he went target shooting with friends	7	54
		Prior training	A year later, he was hired by one of the world's premier private security companies, G4S	4	3
VIOLENCE TO COPE	Deviant behavior	anti-social behavior	He is also said to talk about violence and sex	9	61
		anti-social behavior	unsettling comments about bringing a gun	9	94
		Anti-social behavior	scattershot anger made others feel unsafe	3	30
		anti-social behavior	replaced "Mariposa, Mariposa" with "marijuana, marijuana.	3	59
		anti-social behavior	imitating an exploding plane so soon after the Sept. 11 attacks	3	68
		anti-social behavior	excerpts from his elementary and middle school records that depicted him as a troubled student	13	96
		anti-social behavior	he was in constant trouble as early as elementary school and throughout high school	11	14
		anti-social peer groups	confusing because Mateen also claimed connections to other extremists groups	6	97
		controlling behavior	Mr. Mateen's pursuit veered toward stalking	3	169
		exposure to violence	violently abusive	8	19

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		history of anti-social behavior	future killer was suspended from for a total of 48 days	11	51
		history of anti-social behavior	not fit to serve as a member of the	11	58
		history of low self-control	In both elementary and middle school, his teachers described him as often being unable to focus or control himself in class	9	3
		history of low self-control	attitude and inability to show self-control in the classroom	9	69
		history of violence	behavior in third grade describes him as “constantly moving,” “verbally abusive,” “rude” and “aggressive	9	59
		history of violence	letter explaining an arrest on his record	9	77
		history of violence	unsettling comments about bringing a gun	9	94
		history of violence	Mr. Mateen to be a controlling husband who frequently forbade his wife to visit her family.	2	117
		history of violence	who spoke casually of killing those who offended him	3	29
		history of violence	remembered more for his scrapes with other classmates	3	34
		history of violence	Constantly moving, verbally abusive, rude, aggressive	3	58
		history of violence	collecting a string of suspensions — for fighting and other infractions — along the way.	3	76
		History of violence	Mr. Mateen had laughingly asked him “if he was to bring a gun to school would I tell anybody	3	134
		history of violence	began beating her and isolating her in their Florida home	3	159
		history of violence	after he abused her	4	7
		history of violence	he quickly became controlling, abusive and erratic after they were married	4	37
		history of violence	abused her periodically	12	17
		History of violence	He started abusing me physically, very often	12	26
		history of violence	violence and isolation	8	80
		history of violence	He almost killed me,” she said. “Because he started choking me	8	86
		history of violence	chilling history that included talking about	1	96

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			killing people, beating his former wife and voicing hatred		
		history of violence	asked a fellow recruit in 2007 whether the classmate would report him if he brought a gun to school.	11	16
		history of violence	fighting with injury	11	54
		history of violence	disciplined for behavioral issues 31 times in elementary school and had repeated intervention	11	69
		history of violence	Mateen threatened to bring a gun to school while he was in fifth grade and kill everyone	11	74
		history of violence	years of physical and mental abuse by her husband,	10	55
		history of violence	he beat her, confiscated her paychecks and isolated her in their Florida home	7	1
		history of violence	erratic behavior and a temper that would flare, sometimes without warning or provocation	7	43
		history of violence	Mr. Mateen had been "violent and abusive" toward Ms. Salman and had repeatedly threatened her	5	56
		history of violence	the abuse she suffered at Mateen's hands became so horrific that her family was forced to "rescue her,"	12	23
		inability to manage emotions	He was totally two different people sometimes,	7	47
		lack of self-control	Mr. Mateen "talked frequently of violence and obscenities" as a child and was the subject of 31 disciplinary actions from 1992 to 1999.	13	101
		was concerned with his image	shooter and his wife exchanged text messages during the Pulse nightclub rampage	15	1

Table C-4

Coding Matrix for Timothy McVeigh

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
DIMINISHED ABILITY TO CONSIDER OUTCOMES	Intervention	ability to alleviate	investigating a harassment complaint at a Marriott hotel encountered Alexis	13	84
		communication during the attack	Alexis had “multiple contacts” with officers from several agencies during the shooting spree	13	55
		difficulty managing emotions	become easily frustrated over small things and could hold a grudge	5	100
		Government assistance	Alexis was “having problems sleeping” and was “hearing voices.” He was growing increasingly troubled and in recent months had exhibited signs of mental problems and, the source said, he tried to get help at a VA facility in Rhode Island	5	50
		inability to cope with stress	Mr. Alexis got into an argument with a family that he thought was mocking him.	10	38
		Intervention	Alexis was “having problems sleeping” and was “hearing voices.” He was growing increasingly troubled and in recent months had exhibited signs of mental problems and, the source said, he tried to get help at a VA facility in Rhode Island	5	50
		Intervention	hearing voices or having trouble sleeping	12	61
		Intervention	the VA Medical Center in Providence gave him medicine to help him sleep. A few days later, he went to a VA medical center in Washington to request a refill	4	77
		Intervention	a police sergeant alerted authorities at Naval Station Newport to Alexis “hearing voices.”	3	20
		Intervention	Alexis contacted two Veterans Affairs hospitals around the capital	3	36
		Intervention	Alexis received treatment on August 23 when he visited the emergency room at the VA Medical Center	1	18
		Intervention	He reportedly said he did not.	1	25

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		Intervention	decided to keep him on the job and did not require him to seek treatment	10	4
		Intervention	the Experts did not attempt to get Mr. Alexis to seek mental health care, a finding that the Experts has not disputed.	10	57
		Intervention	Mr. Alexis did visit a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Providence, R.I., on Aug. 23, the veterans department said, but he did not mention hearing voices and complained only of having trouble sleeping	10	59
		Intervention	he twice went to Veterans Affairs hospitals last month seeking treatment for insomnia — he was never committed and so was legally able in Virginia to buy the weapon	8	57
		Intervention	contacted the Newport naval base police and faxed a copy of Mr. Alexis's wild statements.	8	123
		Intervention	complaining of insomnia but did not say that he was hearing voices	8	127
		Intervention	said to the medical personnel in Washington that he was still having trouble sleeping and the doctors prescribed him more Trazodone	8	137
		Intervention	they knew Mr. Alexis was complaining about voices, they believed he was saying that the hotel was too noisy	9	15
		Intervention	bizarre behavior was noted by others, including hotel employees, guards at a Virginia airport and the police in Newport	9	19
		Intervention	Visiting an emergency room at a veterans' medical center in August, he said only that he was having trouble sleeping	9	51
		Intervention	Alexis had recently made contact with two Veterans Administration hospitals for apparent psychological issues	11	12
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	civilian contractor about a payment issue	15	85
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	hinted at a residual anger	12	42

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	history of angry outbursts over the last decade	14	25
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	He thought a woman was laughing at him and became angry. "He started getting a little belligerent, and started using profanity, and going off	4	71
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	he fired several shots into the tires of a car during an altercation over	13	103
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	had outbursts of rage, some extreme; he told the police in Seattle in 2004 that he shot out the tires of a construction worker's car in an anger-fueled "blackout	9	39
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	"Why is she laughing at me?"	9	77
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	"You could see there was something very wrong with him," she said, adding that she felt he could easily become violent	9	89
		lack of traditional coping mechanisms	Alexis seemed "frustrated with life."	11	129
	Mental Illness	diagnosis of mental illness	Alexis had recently made contact with two Veterans Administration hospitals for apparent psychological issues	5	28
		presence of mental illness	His father told Seattle police in 2004 that his son was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder after taking part in 9/11 rescue efforts	5	44
		presence of mental illness	basically snapped	5	49
		presence of mental illness	According to that report, which is related to an investigation into a harassment complaint at a Marriott hotel in Newport, Alexis said he first heard the people "talking to him through a wall" at a Residence Inn in Middletown, Rhode Island, where he'd been staying.	5	57
		presence of mental illness	anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder	5	142
		presence of mental illness	delusional belief that he was being controlled or influenced by extremely low frequency electromagnetic waves	2	1
		presence of mental illness	My ELF weapon" – in the sawed-off Remington 870	2	6

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			shotgun he brought into the military facility's Building #197 on the morning of September 16		
		presence of mental illness	"End to the torment!" "Not what y'all say!" And "Better off this way!"	2	35
		presence of mental illness	"voices" emanating from the walls of hotels he'd been staying at.	2	41
		presence of mental illness	his son had anger management issues related to PTSD	12	20
		presence of mental illness	hearing voices or having trouble sleeping	12	61
		presence of mental illness	had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body	12	68
		presence of mental illness	sent "vibrations through the ceiling, penetrating his body so he cannot fall asleep,"	12	73
		presence of mental illness	saying that the government had been attacking his brain for the past three months	14	2
		presence of mental illness	"Ultra-low frequency attack is what I've been subject to for the last three months,"	14	10
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis told the police in Newport, R.I., that he had been hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine."	14	36
		presence of mental illness	"my elf weapon," "end to the torment," "not what ya'll say" and "better off this way" were etched into the side of the shotgun	14	48
		presence of mental illness	unexplained etchings on a shotgun	4	1
		presence of mental illness	They read: "Better off this way" and "My elf weapon."	4	38
		presence of mental illness	was hearing voices and was convinced that someone was using a "microwave machine" to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake	4	67
		presence of mental illness	may have contacted Veterans Affairs hospitals for possible treatment of psychological issues	13	19
		presence of mental illness	His father told Seattle police after a 2004 arrest that Alexis was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder related to that experience.	13	64
		presence of mental illness	He was hearing voices and having problems sleeping	13	79

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		presence of mental illness	Alexis "basically snapped	13	82
		presence of mental illness	including a history of trouble in the Navy and psychological issues	3	3
		presence of mental illness	Alexis told police he believed an individual he'd gotten into a verbal spat with had sent three "people to follow him and keep him awake by talking to him and sending vibrations into his body."	3	8
		presence of mental illness	told authorities the unseen individuals continued speaking to him through walls and the floor, and that they used "some sort of microwave machine" to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake	3	15
		presence of mental illness	Alexis made unexplained etchings into the shotgun used in the attack	1	11
		presence of mental illness	"emotional, mental and personality condition, even when they had concerns" that he could harm others	6	36
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis told the police in Rhode Island that he was hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine,"	6	47
		presence of mental illness	her son was paranoid and that the microwave episode was not the first of that kind he had experienced	6	63
		presence of mental illness	told his bosses one month before the shootings that he had a history of paranoid episodes and most likely needed therapy	10	2
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis claimed that he was being followed and was hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine."	10	36
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis continued to complain that the family was following him. He complained of hearing loud voices in his hotel room, though hotel employees could not hear them	10	44
		presence of mental illness	employee of the Experts called the hotel and said they were bringing Mr. Alexis home because he was "unstable,"	10	48
		presence of mental illness	His mother told the director that Mr. Alexis' paranoia tended to subside with time, but that "he likely needed to see a therapist."	10	53

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		presence of mental illness	Mr. Alexis had problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder	7	13
		presence of mental illness	complain that he had changed hotels three times because he was being pursued by people keeping him awake by sending vibrations through the walls.	8	2
		presence of mental illness	told them that a person he had argued with at an airport in Virginia "has sent three people to follow him" and that they were harassing him with a microwave machine	8	5
		presence of mental illness	sought treatment from the Veterans Affairs Department for psychiatric issues	8	11
		presence of mental illness	after the Seattle shooting in 2004 that his son suffered post-traumatic stress symptoms	8	106
		presence of mental illness	to complain that he was hearing voices sent by a "microwave machine," employees at the Residence Inn in nearby Middletown were struggling to cope with his behavior	9	1
		presence of mental illness	he knocked on doors to find the voices, woke up a person in one room and frightened another so badly she asked to move	9	4
		presence of mental illness	he is unstable and the company is bringing him home	9	9
		presence of mental illness	they knew Mr. Alexis was complaining about voices, they believed he was saying that the hotel was too noisy	9	15
		presence of mental illness	caused a disturbance last month, knocking on doors to find voices he was hearing.	9	36
		presence of mental illness	He complained about kitchen noises that were disturbing him in his fourth-floor room, though the kitchen was several floors	9	59
		presence of mental illness	he called the Newport police, telling them about the voices and saying he was being followed by people whom he had argued with at an airport	9	69
		presence of mental illness	that his son had anger management problems		93

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			associated with post-traumatic stress disorder		
	Complex cognitive ability	Complex cognitive ability in planning	My ELF weapon” – in the sawed-off Remington 870 shotgun he brought into the military facility’s Building #197 on the morning of September 16	2	6
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	“he was prepared to die in the attack and accepted death as the inevitable consequence of his actions,”	14	15
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	. Alexis is seen on surveillance video ducking into a bathroom and leaving with the shotgun	4	27
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	three weapons from the scene	13	133
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	recovered three guns from the scene	3	57
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	had a small bag believed to have contained a disassembled Remington 870 shotgun	1	45
		Complex cognitive ability in planning	Mr. Alexis entered the base with a concealed, sawed-off shotgun	6	30
ESCALATING THREAT	Deviant behavior	anti-social behavior	discharged from the Navy following a “pattern of misconduct	15	80
		anti-social behavior	Alexis was kicked out of a metro Atlanta club for damaging the furnishings, according to a police report	12	28
		anti-social behavior	checkered history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		anti-social behavior	officials described as a “pattern of misconduct	3	27
		anti-social behavior	During his time in the service, he exhibited “a pattern of misbehavior	7	39
		anti-social behavior	shown a “pattern of misbehavior” during his four years as a reservist	8	77
		anti-social behavior	spent years in the Navy Reserve in Fort Worth, and was honorably discharged in 2011 despite “misbehavior.”	9	64
		anti-social behavior	Alexis was honorably discharged after a “pattern of misconduct,”	11	81
		coping with firearms	shooting out the tires of a car in what he told the police was an anger-induced “blackout.”	10	28
		coping with firearms	he thought Mr. Alexis was frustrated with the parking situation outside the work site. But Mr. Alexis told the police that he had had an anger-fueled blackout	7	8

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		coping with firearms	neighbor called the police after she heard a pop, saw dust fly and noticed holes in her floor and ceiling. She told the police that Mr. Alexis had confronted her in the parking lot about making too much noise	7	47
		coping with firearms	shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout,"	11	88
		Fascination with violence	he would stay up late at night playing violent video games in his room.	9	46
		history of misconduct	he had eight instances of misconduct on his record, including insubordination, disorderly conduct, unauthorized absences from work, and at least one instance of drunkenness.	5	13
		history of violence	arrested Alexis in 2004 for shooting out the tires of another man's vehicle in what Alexis later told detectives was an anger-fueled "blackout	15	90
		history of violence	including police run-ins, that portray a man with increasingly violent tendencies.	5	106
		History of violence	The latter includes a 2004 arrest in Seattle, when he was accused of shooting the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a police report. Alexis' father told police his son had anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder, which he suffered after working "as an active participant in rescue attempts" during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York	2	61
		history of violence	over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment	2	69
		history of violence	10 years, he showed that he was troubled – and had a predilection for violence	12	4
		history of violence	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12
		history of violence	Navy officials knew about Alexis' 2004 arrest for	4	85

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			shooting out the tires of a car		
	history of violence		run-ins with police	3	30
	history of violence		knew about Alexis' 2004 arrest for shooting out the tires of a car, but they decided to grant him security clearance anyway in 2007.	1	68
	history of violence		Mr. Alexis brandished a .45-caliber pistol and fired at the tires of a construction worker's car	6	41
	history of violence		he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
	history of violence		shooting out the tires of a car in what he told the police was an anger-induced "blackout."	10	28
	history of violence		Mr. Alexis walked out of his grandmother's home one morning, pulled a .45-caliber pistol from his waistband and fired three rounds at a construction worker's car	7	5
	History of violence		In 2010, Mr. Alexis was arrested in Fort Worth for discharging a firearm.	7	45
	history of violence		investigated by police departments in Seattle and Fort Worth, for firing a gun in anger	8	54
	history of violence		Mr. Alexis was also twice investigated by other police departments in shooting episodes	8	86
	prior criminal history		arrested Alexis in 2004 for shooting out the tires of another man's vehicle in what Alexis later told detectives was an anger-fueled "blackout	15	90
	Prior criminal history		was arrested for disorderly conduct	5	2
	prior criminal history		Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004, when he was arrested in Seattle, accused of shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a Seattle Police Department report.	5	136
	prior criminal history		Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment. According to records, he told police	5	146

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			he accidentally fired it while cleaning it		
		prior criminal history	The latter includes a 2004 arrest in Seattle, when he was accused of shooting the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a police report. Alexis' father told police his son had anger management problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder, which he suffered after working "as an active participant in rescue attempts" during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York	2	61
		prior criminal history	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12
		prior criminal history	Outside, Alexis cursed profusely, and when he defied police orders to stop, they arrested him for disorderly conduct	12	30
		prior criminal history	he allegedly fired a bullet through his ceiling into a neighbor's apartment	12	36
		prior criminal history	arrested three times in three states	14	26
		prior criminal history	checkered history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		prior criminal history	His father told Seattle police after a 2004 arrest that Alexis was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder related to that experience.	13	64
		prior criminal history	he fired several shots into the tires of a car during an altercation over	13	103
		prior criminal history	run-ins with police	3	30
		prior criminal history	he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
		prior criminal history	Mr. Alexis had been arrested three times in three states	10	27
		prior criminal history	had problems with the law	7	4
		prior criminal history	Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004	11	87

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		prior criminal history	August 2008 on a charge of disorderly conduct	11	98
		prior criminal history	Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment.	11	100
		Prior criminal history	Another arrest in Texas	5	10
		prior criminal history	in 2008 on a disorderly conduct charge	3	34
		using firearms to cope	Mr. Alexis brandished a .45-caliber pistol and fired at the tires of a construction worker's car	6	41
		using firearms to cope	he was arrested by the police in Fort Worth after he fired through the ceiling of his residence	6	42
		Violence as a coping mechanism	kicked out of a club for damaging the furnishings and left the place releasing an unrelenting string of profanities	5	3
FEELS INFERIOR	Difference in power	power relationship	Ultra low frequency attack is what I've been subject to for the last 3 months," read a message obtained by federal authorities from Alexis's thumb drives, phones and computers. "And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me to this	2	12
IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED STRAIN OR GRIEVANCE	Presence of strain or grievance	escalation	including police run-ins, that portray a man with increasingly violent tendencies.	5	106
		escalation	Alexis appeared to have had sporadic run-ins with the law, dating back to at least 2004, when he was arrested in Seattle, accused of shooting out the tires of a man's truck in an anger-fueled "blackout," according to a Seattle Police Department report.	5	136
		escalation	Alexis was arrested by Fort Worth, Texas, police but never charged over an allegation that he fired a gun through the ceiling of his apartment. According to records, he told police he accidentally fired it while cleaning it	5	146
		escalation	Alexis fired his Glock into two tires of a Honda Accord near a Seattle home where he was staying. He was arrested and charged with malicious mischief.	12	12

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		escalation	he allegedly fired a bullet through his ceiling into a neighbor's apartment	12	36
		escalation	had served in the Navy, but officials moved to discharge him in 2010	13	78
		escalation	history of infractions as a Navy reservist, mental health problems and run-ins with the police over gun violence	8	22
		escalation	he knocked on doors to find the voices, woke up a person in one room and frightened another so badly she asked to move	9	4
		escalation	caused a disturbance last month, knocking on doors to find voices he was hearing.	9	36
		grievance	"had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body,"	13	86
		grievance	told authorities the unseen individuals continued speaking to him through walls and the floor, and that they used "some sort of microwave machine" to send vibrations into his body to keep him awake	3	15
		grievance	he complained about his paychecks from the Experts, saying that they were late or that he was not getting paid enough	9	109
		grievance	Alexis was locked in a dispute over money with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy	11	10
		grievance	He was very frustrated with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy	11	132
		maximum carnage	He was armed with an AR-15, which is a semi-automatic rifle; another rifle and a semi-automatic Glock handgun, according to a law enforcement official.	15	55
		maximum harm	each packed with about a dozen pellets capable of causing tremendous damage	1	49
		maximum harm	Alexis made his way to an overlook above the atrium and opened fire into the cafeteria.	11	24
		motivation	had sent three people to follow him and to talk, keep him awake and send vibrations into his body	12	68

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
		Motivation	“And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me this,”	14	14
		motivation	Mr. Alexis claimed that he was being followed and was hearing voices sent by a “microwave machine.”	10	36
		motivation	told them that a person he had argued with at an airport in Virginia “has sent three people to follow him” and that they were harassing him with a microwave machine	8	5
		not driven by rage	“He looked very calm and composed. He didn’t look like a person that was angry or doing that type of event,”	1	53
		personal grievance	saying that the government had been attacking his brain for the past three months	14	2
		possible motivation	lack of evidence to merit a general discharge	5	17
		power relationship	frustrated with the government and how as a veteran he didn’t feel like he was getting treated right or fairly .”	12	63
		Starin	Ultra low frequency attack is what I’ve been subject to for the last 3 months,” read a message obtained by federal authorities from Alexis’s thumb drives, phones and computers. “And to be perfectly honest, that is what has driven me to this	2	12
		strain	locked in a dispute over money with the company that contracted him to work for the Navy.	5	26
		strain	Alexis claimed he wasn’t paid properly by the	5	177
		strain	frustrated with the government and how as a veteran he didn’t feel like he was getting treated right or fairly .”	12	63
		strain	Friends say he had been frustrated over pay and benefits issues	13	18
TRAINED TO USE WEAPONS AGAINST PEOPLE	Received prior training	discharged from the military	prompted the Navy to begin proceedings to separate him from the military.	5	10
		experience with firearms	He was ... knowledgeable with military rifles and handguns.	11	143
		military training	Alexis served as a full-time Navy reservist between 2007 and 2011, according to military records. He	5	94

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
			achieved the rank of aviation electrician's mate 3rd class, working on aircraft electrical systems, the records show.		
		prior military training	He was in the Navy's ready reserve	15	78
		prior military training	until a few years ago had served in the Navy	2	5
		prior military training	2007 enlistment.	12	24
		prior military training	military contractor and former Navy reservist	14	7
		prior military training	Mr. Alexis was granted a midlevel security clearance in 2007 while he was a reservist	14	63
		prior military training	checked history in the Navy and with civilian police.	4	6
		prior military training	had served in the Navy, but officials moved to discharge him in 2010	13	67
		prior military training	was a military contractor and was in the Navy's Ready Reserve	3	40
		prior military training	From 2007 to 2011, Mr. Alexis was a full-time reservist in the Navy	6	25
		prior military training	former Navy reservist	10	24
		prior military training	served his country as a Navy reservist	7	2
		prior military training	From 2007 to 2011, Mr. Alexis was a full-time reservist in the Navy	7	26
		prior military training	As an honorably discharged veteran, he cleared a basic hurdle	8	57
		prior military training	a former Navy reservist	9	11
		prior military training	spent years in the Navy Reserve	9	29
		prior military training	spent years in the Navy Reserve in Fort Worth, and was honorably discharged in 2011 despite "misbehavior."	9	64
		prior military training	a former Navy reservist and a current military contractor,	11	4
		prior military training	served as a full-time Navy reservist between 2007 and 2011	11	77
		prior training	Two days before the shooting, Alexis spent "a couple hours" shooting at Sharpshooters Small Arms Range	5	187
		prior training	spent "a couple hours" shooting at Sharpshooters Small Arms Range in northern Virginia	3	59

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	ARTICLE	LINE
VICTIMS ARE COMPLICIT	Personal separation	distance from known associates	We have not determined there to be any previous relationship	2	53
		distance from known associates	Alexis came out of the bathroom and immediately began shooting at random	4	30

Table C-5

Coding Matrix for the Unabomber Manifesto

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	PARAGRAPH	
DIMINISHED ABILITY TO CONSIDER OUTCOMES	Complex cognitive ability	complex cognitive ability in planning	determining who he will need to recruit	187	
		complex cognitive ability in planning	determining who he will need to recruit	188	
		complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	ability to form a coherent essay and present his thoughts	6	
		complex cognitive ability in problem solving and learning	approaches the essay in an academic way, defining terms and proper structure	7	
ESCALATING THREAT	mental illness	acknowledging internal issues	Acknowledge lower self-esteem, depression and the like, does not directly admit he feels this way, but says it is widespread	32	
		anti-social personality	He distances himself from others; feels that socializing was forced upon him	24	
		presence of mental illness	From his past, believes that professors see themselves are superior to him, possible low self-esteem or interactions when he was employed as a professor	13	
	Deviant behavior	striving	He lives in seclusion to make obtaining necessities more difficult; Escalates the harm from attacks to not become bored	35	
	FEELS INFERIOR	Difference in power	does not like conformity	Doesn't fit in socially and sees himself as different than others, believes advancement of society is at fault	46
			Feels alienated	Sees himself as not being accepted because of his race; feels the "system" is attempting to make every individual carbon copies	29
			goal attainment	states that to achieve goals must go through the power process, continues until he succeeds states will have mental disorders if not, such as low self-esteem depression etc....	44
			lack of freedom	believes the concept of freedom is provided by the government and is only to benefit the system, says individuals do not actually have full freedom, but only the amount needed to help advance the system	97
			loss of fulfillment	Through traditional activities, he was not able to feel fulfilled	64
			power relationship	expresses the problem is with large organizations and the individual has very little to no power	197
		power process	if people are unhappy with loss of control, given drugs to cope	145	

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	PARAGRAPH
		power relationship	felt that the majority group had significantly more power and prestige	18
		power relationship	believes the system restricts choice	72
		power relationship	explains that society limits behavior, when the government goes to far rebellion happens then society replaces the inefficient control with a more efficient one	143
		power relationship	believes leftists are only concerned with obtaining power	219
		power relationship	power by portraying morality	221
		power relationship	advances gain more money from the elicits, no benefit for the system to reduce costs to help lower class	note 20
		power struggle	believes the system is the cause of personal and psychological problems.	49-58
		power struggle	it seems that Ted had adopted the goals of the University, but was unable to gain acceptance, hence felt betrayed	83
		power struggle	believes the system has too much control	86
		power struggle	feels the system only helps people when it is convenient or beneficial to the larger system	119
		power struggle	believes genetic code of ethics would ultimately be the choice of individuals higher in society	124
		power struggle	believes tech is the ultimate social driving force	126
		power struggle	equates the evolution of automobiles to decreasing freedom	127
		power struggle	believes individuals will choose their work requirements over personal or others freedom	131
		power struggle	He believes the system is designed to mold children and individuals to benefit the system	148
		power struggle	believes the system will use any force necessary to control behavior to conform	150
		power struggle	believes tech will allow no limits to societal advancement, human endurance will limit society advancing, thus humans will have to adapt to fit the system	151
		power struggle	believes the system is attempting total control and will success in a few decades if not stopped	163
		power struggle	believes the other future for society is that only elites will have power	174
		power struggle	explains that leftists will go along with political correctness in universities, even if they do not agree	225
		power struggle	explains how the lack of goals leads to low self-esteem boredom etc...	note 6
		power struggle	Small groups are dangerous to the system	note 7
		power struggle	individuals manipulated by the system to buy more products	note 11

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	PARAGRAPH
		power relationship	believes work, even for small business are not sufficient goals	65
		power-relationship	because of minimal to no autonomy attempting to determine why those in charge of advancement are harming him	10
		power struggle	sees society as not allowing individuals to have full control over fulfilling their own needs	94
IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED STRAIN OR GRIEVANCE	Extremist Ideology	anti-genetics ideology	believes the Government will genetically engineer children	123
		antitechnology ideology	believes that individuals are losing free will of goal attainment to the system	93
		antitechnology ideology	believes society is hurting individuals and that this progression cannot be stopped	110
		antitechnology ideology	struggle and death are better than losing dignity and freedom	168
		antitechnology ideology	believes anti-tech is the only way and must be for and against something - says nature is the aspect the ideology is for	183
		anti-technology ideology	does not like technological advancement	49
		anti-technology ideology	believes that advances in society have created need and desires that one could live without. Believing these are harmful to society	63
		anti-technology ideology	believes freedom and technology cannot co-exist	112
		anti-technology ideology	believes genetic engineering will evolve into the system making the ideal humans	128
		anti-technology ideology	believes every step forward for tech means freedom must decrease	129
		anti-technology ideology	believes that the system will adapt only when it benefits the system. No personal autonomy	139
		anti-technology ideology	explains tech is modifying human behavior without the previous limits	144
		anti-technology ideology	feels mass media is psychologically changing modern man	147
		anti-technology ideology	believes technological society is the cause of problems in society and this trend will continue as technology advances	170
		anti-technology ideology	believes technology governs how society operates, not politics	note 33
		appealing to other ideologies	appealing to environmentalists to further anti-tech ideology	184
		enabling persuasion	providing examples of how large-scale tech cannot survive, but individuals can continue on small-scale tech	209
		Felt rejected	Was exposed to radical ideas based on protecting segments of society, acknowledging these but disagree with their importance	28
		ideological beliefs	anti-tech and environmentalist ideology	1
		ideological beliefs	He believes the larger society determines what is right and	11

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	PARAGRAPH
			wrong, believes the larger majority is oppressive	
		ideological beliefs	feels advancement in society is due to factors other than personal drive and effort; feels his efforts in the past have been thwarted because he is not part of a minority group	21
		ideological beliefs	Building argument against technological advancement in making individuals more frustrated with their peers	48
		ideological beliefs	believes security is not attainable	67
		ideological beliefs	believes the system limits options and influences free-will	73
		ideological beliefs	believes society advancing is the ultimate cause of psychological problems	77
		ideological beliefs	He believes the drive to complete goals is only personal fulfillment	88
		ideological beliefs	believes the system must limit individual choice to function	114
		ideological beliefs	says the system helps minorities and lower class to the extent it helps the system and only because it helps the system	note 4
		ideological beliefs	distinguishes between two different kinds of tech	208
		ideological beliefs	people are dependent on the system	note 12
		internal conflict	conflicting on how to define leftism	8
		loss of control	believes as machines advance, potentially society may be forced to allow machines control of society	173
		motivation	believe University professors are the ones who are influencing the direction of society	12
		motivation	By harming, he has power, explaining why he must place reasoning behind his attacks	34
		motivation	explains that fulfillment from surrogate activities may be more important to some, attacks provided fulfillment to him	40
		motivation	explains that to have the essay read, he had to kill people	96
		motivation	believes the only way to change the system is to have a revolution	111
		motivation	believes the only way to get freedom back is to start a revolution	130
		motivation	believes the revolution will restore freedom if attacked when it is weak, and technology is destroyed	135
		motivation	believes only way to overthrow the system is to create stress to break down system, revolution then implement anti-tech ideology	166
		motivation	says leftists can't be in power; explains this happened in universities, possible motivation for Ted to leave his employment and feeling betrayed from not having his essay published	216
		persuading others	calling for others to believe his message and join the cause	4

THEME	CATEGORY	CODE	EXCERPT OR QUOTE	PARAGRAPH
		radicalization	persuading readers to act, says revolution is easier than reforming the system	141
		radicalizing new individuals	attempting to convert new unracialized people to join in his cause	5
		society at fault	believes societal problems are inflicted by modernization of society and self-inflicted	45
		System overtaking society	for the tech to advance the system must be the same in around the World	note 18
	Presence of strain or grievance	Felt defeated	When presenting his essay, because he did not obtain his goal of acceptance in academia, he felt defeated; angered	37
		grievance	feels he is part of the weaker group; feels the majority is trying to hinder society at larger	15
		grievance	feels that others do not believe in him; feels his attack will punish those for belittling him or those who seem like enemies in his mind	19
		Grievance	believed technological advancement was harming society	1
		justifying antisocial acts	justifying his and others radical actions, but blaming others for these actions	30
		justifying his hatred	Finding explanations for being able to harm and kill others, while he says this is about others, may be his internal thoughts of himself	25
		personally harmed	feels that he was pushed into mathematics by his parents, believes society was at fault	115
		placing blame	felt his parents were to blame for him being different	18
		possible motivation	believes the reasoning for pursuing scientific work is absurd. Possibly, Ted lost his identification to why he pursued mathematics	87
		potential definition of grievance	He determined secluded life was better possibly feels others determine him to be inferior	9
		reduced autonomy	the system will remove individual choice	2
		self-isolation	At a young age he felt "pushed" to socialize with others, felt out of place and awkward	26
		self-defeating	felt betrayed when his success in academia did not escalate his identity within the University	84
		System overtaking society	Individuals will become dependent, thus resulting in more harm if the system fails	3
VICTIMS ARE COMPLICIT	Personal separation	Distance from peers	Associates attempted to get him to fit in while at the Universities, but he distanced himself and saw himself as different; Felt his ideas were rejected by his peers	27
		identification of targets	explains uprising is against tech not political	193

Appendix D: References for News Reports

Data Set Citations

Within this study, the data set consisted of fifteen news articles for each of the lone-wolf terrorists under examination. The only exception to this was for Theodore Kaczynski, in which the Unabomber Manifesto was also reviewed and treated as a separate entity. It was decided to include the manifesto after the data collection process had begun, and the scope of data retrieval had been set. The basis of including the manifesto was because since the document was written in Kaczynski's own words, it would provide valuable insight into his thought process and potentially, what he hoped would occur because of his bombing campaign.

Below, the references of each media report are separated by the offender and are listed in alphabetical order. The designated number of the article is also included in the coding matrix to allow for review of where each code was derived from, along with a brief statement of how the corresponding statement was interrupted.

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Appendix E: Reflective Journal Entries

Reflective Writing

To enhance trustworthiness of the study, reflective writing was employed during the data collection and analysis phase (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The following entries were written to provide context on the data collection process, what stood out during a given day or week, and how the data was interpreted by the researcher. While qualitative data lacks on replicability since the two different researchers may interpret the same data in different ways, this provides the underlying thought process to allow the reader to determine if they would come to similar conclusions (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

10/2/2023

Today I searched Google for additional articles related to Omar Mateen. To be deliberate in searching for the offender's background, I used the search terms, CNN, Omar Mateen and background. The results returned an article related to Omar Mateen scouting Disney complexes for an attack, an article related to Omar Mateen's background, and a video report on what authorities knew about Omar Mateen. The search did not yield any other related articles related to the offender. Currently, this brings the total articles for Omar Mateen to six.

The articles found prior related to Aaron Alexis is nine. Ted Kaczynski and Timothy McVeigh have the least amount thus far. I will be searching later this week for additional articles from CNN on both offenders. The search of the New York Times will begin later this week to next week. After a good selection of articles are found on all offenders, the articles will be reviewed, and the initial coding process started.

I began searching for articles related to the four lone-wolf terrorists I will be examining in the study. I began by opening the news article published on CNN.com, *Omar Mateen pledged allegiance to ISIS, official says*, that was used for the Prospectus and Proposal to inform the current inquiry. I saved the story into a Word file for later analysis and began searching related articles listed within the database. I found an article related to Omar Mateen's motivation for committing the Pulse Nightclub shooting. I also located an article related to the story that explained the timeline of the attack. Both articles were saved in a Word document for future analysis.

Next, I accessed the previously saved link for the news article on cnn.com, *Who is the Navy Yard gunman Aaron Alexis?* This article was used to provide background for the literature review of the current study. This article was also saved into a Word document, and then other articles listed on the webpage that are related were examined.

With the above two lone-wolf terrorist attacks, four printed articles were found and saved. Both topics listed an array of video stories. I sought advice from Dr. Koehle to determine if these could be used in the analysis due to the wording provided in the Proposal.

I began searching CNN.com for articles on Aaron Alexis and Timothy McVeigh. When using the traditional search function, searching each offender returned results more than 2,000 articles. Upon reviewing the results, the articles were not related to the respective lone-wolf terrorist. I attempted to use search limiters by placing the name in quotations, but still the search results were not related to the individual. To find preliminary data, and assuming that the news stories may be outdated to be on the current platform, I searched using Google, and searched for CNN AND Aaron Alexis, as well as CNN AND Timothy McVeigh. When searching in this manner, I found nine articles related to Aaron Alexis and four related to Timothy McVeigh. The written media reports, I save the corresponding link to a Word document, as well as the entire article to allow for later analysis. Of these articles, there are a few video reports, and the link was saved in a Word document. The corresponding document will be used to provide a space for later analysis, by either taking notes on what sticks out from watching the video and providing a space for coding. It will be discussed during the appointment with Dr. Morris whether transcribing the video would be beneficial, or if taking notes and writing down reflective notes on the video would provide sufficient analysis.

Today, I began to use the same strategy and searched Goggle for articles from CNN that were related to Ted Kaczynski. While the search did not yield results like the other lone wolves, I assume this is because of the timeframe that Ted Kaczynski committed his attacks. I did find three articles that may provide insight. One related to letters that were written to a journalist. I am aware that articles that cover what was said and written by Ted will be beneficial and provide a unique insight, because he voiced his motivations and beliefs widely. More search limiters and strategies will be developed to widen the net on articles found related to this individual.

Today I met Dr. Morris through a Zoom meeting. During the meeting we went over my list of Apriori codes and developed an initial coding plan. He did say that I had a quite large list, and when I explained that I wanted to attempt to cover any factors that may come up and had a worry that I may uncover factors that I had not even considered. I had originally thought of using open coding within the study, and he stated that I am able to do that. He explained that what was covered in the Proposal is the basic framework, and if needed, I can implement open coding, as well as include media outlets for additional sources, if needed. He explained that I should not have to resubmit to IRB for these changes, but advised that if this is to occur, to defer to Dr. Koehle for the final advice on what steps to take. The concern for additional source outlets comes after finding that there are not many sources covering Theodore Kaczynski in terms of the investigation and the offender's background. Thus far, what has been uncovered is primarily written in the early 2000's reporting on events at that time with the offender and his court proceedings.

Additionally, he went over the Excel document that is needed to submit with my Final Study to show how I derived codes and why I code terms or phrases with the said codes. We also decided that an effective way to code the video reports would be to watch the video, take notes on points that were reported and code those notes accordingly. He said that transcribing the video report would not be necessary. As I continued to search for reports and began the coding process, he asked for me to reach back out to see how the process is unfolding.

10/29/2023

Today I began a deliberate search utilizing Google to search for articles from CNN that were related to Omar Mateen's background. In the search terms, I included "Omar Mateen background AND CNN." I was able to locate three new articles, one video report and a written report related to his background, and one related to the potential that Mateen was scouting Disney properties for an attack. These articles were the only three new articles that were returned in the results that were not present in previous searches.

This brings the total thus far to six articles for Mateen, nine for Alexis, three for Kaczynski and four for McVeigh. I will be attempting to find more CNN related articles with the adjusted search terms this week. I will also be starting to search the New York Times later this week, or next. It is anticipated that more articles will be available for the later lone wolves on the New York Times, because this media outlet was more prevalent during that timeframe

After the meeting with Dr. Morris, I wanted to expand on my search for literature related to Theodore Kaczynski and Timothy McVeigh. These two offenders had the least number of results found from CNN news reports thus far. Before this week, I had only found three news articles related to Ted Kaczynski, so the search on reports from the New York Times began with this lone wolf. To help make the broader search more efficient, I began searching using Google's search engine, and search for "Theodore Kaczynski" AND "New York Times." The top results returned seven news articles about the offender, and one referring to the submission from Ted Kaczynski in which he submitted his full manifesto to the New York Times and the Washington Post. These articles were saved into a Word document, a separate file for each article, along with the corresponding link. The link for his manifesto was also saved for potential review pending approval from my dissertation chair because of the significant length of the document. The search will continue this week to expand on the data set with this offender, and search for articles related to Timothy McVeigh.

11/12/2023

This week I concentrated on finding more articles on Timothy McVeigh. I continued the search using Google, as this was more efficient when searching for articles published from CNN. I was only able to find two new related articles; one was a television review on the McVeigh Tapes and a review of the book that inspired McVeigh. I then went to the New York Times search function, and was able to search for “Timothy McVeigh,” Timothy McVeigh Motivation,” and Timothy McVeigh background,” and was able to find eight additional articles that are related to his motivations, ideology, and desire to commit the attack. As with the other articles, I converted the news reports into a Word document for analysis, including the direct link for creating proper citations and providing the ability to access the articles later.

I also received approval to include the Unabomber Manifesto into the analysis because it will provide a unique insight into the motivations and desires of Theodore Kaczynski. Articles related to this offender are at eleven obtained currently. A search to find four more articles will continue at the beginning of the next academic term. Additionally, articles obtained related to Aaron Alexis are at nine obtained, and those related to Omar Mateen are at six. The search will also continue to find a total of fifteen for these offenders, as well.

While fifteen articles per offender was chosen as a starting point, this in no way specifies if fifteen is sufficient. This can only be determined after the analysis phase begins and it is determined if data saturation is achieved in terms of no new motivating

circumstances, ideological pursuits, or other extraneous factors that compel the lone-wolf terrorist.

This week I have found additional articles related to Theodore Kaczynski, to make the cumulative total 15 articles. The articles I found were printed in the New York Times and found on their website. The search criteria used was entering in Ted Kaczynski. I had tried to search using limiters, such as including, “AND motivation,” “AND background,” which did not return many novel results. Because most of the articles that were returned have already been including in the data collection for the project, I included articles that discussed the writings by Ted Kaczynski, which can help display his state of mind, possible motivations, and characteristics of his World view at the time he had written the letters and journals discussed in the reports.

After finding the additional articles, I had decided the best way to approach the data analysis would be to review the articles, without separating the specific constructs and analyzing the entry. I reviewed the five most recent articles. In an article describing his interactions with a Mexican farm worker, which had been a friend of Ted and David Kaczynski, it stuck out that Ted seemed to be seeking companionship but did not want to disclose his entire anti-social thoughts. In an additional article related to the trial and potential of mental illness being seen as a factor in the commission of his crimes, it was interesting that his lawyers wanted to include the mental illness plea because it was determined that Kaczynski was seen as having schizophrenia. Ted did not want this plea to be entered because he did not want to be labeled as sick or mentally ill. Additionally, it was noted in multiple articles, that Ted was an exceptional mathematician and had

graduated Harvard at the age of 16. This goes against previous literature that explained it was assumed that lone wolves tend to lack complex cognitive ability.

Today I listened to the published manifesto from the Unabomber, Theodore Kaczynski. The 35,000-word essay took about three hours to listen to. During the review, a few notable statements and points that Kaczynski had made stood out to me. It was notable that he kept referring to genetic engineering being one of the pitfalls of upcoming technology and that the potential of genetic engineering becoming a reality had to be thwarted. Additionally, he explained that he worried about the promise of technology processing and machines taking over the World, as well as machines making some trades defunct for profitable work, and those individuals being forced into meagre work, unable to find a fulfilling career for themselves. Kosinski kept phrasing that the promise of the future was pushing adults to mold their children into conforming to the norms of the system and that this is detracting from the children's ability to enjoy and embrace nature. The entire article provided a glimpse of the complex thinking and analytical skills that he maintained, and well as the ability to contemplate his actions and consequences of those actions.

Today I continued the search for articles. I had found that I had accumulated fifteen articles related to Timothy McVeigh, so I continued to search for articles related to Omar Mateen. I began searching Google by entering the search terms “Omar Mateen AND New York Times.” I was able to find approximately four more articles, bringing the total to ten. I then searched for “New York Times AND Pulse Night Club,” but could not find articles that had not previously been included. I then decided to try searching “New York Times AND Omar Mateen,” and was able to find five additional articles. The articles found related to Mateen’s background, motivations, as well as other depictions of Mateen. Particularly of interest is an article that covers Mateen’s background from school to his former employment. Additionally, I found an article which covers how Mateen had expressed his intentions to his significant other prior to the attack.

This week I began to search for the remaining fifteen articles related to Aaron Alexis. To do this, the search terms “New York Times AND Aaron Alexis,” were used. The top results were published news articles from the 2013 time-period, when the attack occurred. Because nine articles were found previously from CNN, 6 articles were selected based upon the topic being more closely related to the background of Aaron Alexis to gain insight into why the attack occurred. One of the articles, which is unique to this offender, is a Navy review of Aaron Alexis’ service, which will provide a more comprehensive history of the individual, as well as flags that stood out to the FBI.

It is planned that the data analysis phase will continue this upcoming week with the brief audio review to gain a broader understanding of the news article, then following with a detailed review to code the entry and determine factors that are apparent about the offenders that were selected.

This week I continued to listen to the collected news articles to gain a first impression of what data has been collected. I listened to five articles reporting on the Navy Yard attack committed by Aaron Alexis. What was interesting is that his anger seemed to stem more from his employment, rather than directly from ideology. Although, ideology did seem to exacerbate his anger and desire to act. I have not begun to review the profile that was gained from the background investigation, but it is expected that this document will shed light upon much more than his motivations.

I also began to organize the news articles by numbering them from one to fifteen, so that the coding document can more easily be interpreted to match up the news article, section the code is referring to, as well as the basis of the code for the entry. I also came to an organizational plan in which one Excel file will be saved for each offender. All codes related to the specific individual will be compiled into this file, and the file will be organized into what the code entails, such as behavioral factors, ideological, and the like. This will allow the “among and between” offender analysis to be more efficient.

After these activities were completed this week, I began to listen to more articles on Omar Matteen. The main aspects that really stuck out with this offender is the fact that his close associates knew of his anger and frustration, but he maintained a hidden lifestyle, in which he frequented the night club he attacked. This leads to the question of if his motivation was fueled by inner turmoil and disdain, and he was struggling with self-acceptance and blaming others for his choices.

This week I began to read and code the articles written about Ted Kaczynski. So far, I have begun coding the first articles. I had begun, as my Proposal described, using A Priori coding. I soon saw that open coding would also need to be used. This was discussed with Dr. Morris during the last appointment, and he explained that open coding could be implemented without needing to resubmit to IRB because this did not change the overall design. While I had created a substantial list of codes, I quickly saw those aspects, such as “no remorse,” and “premeditation,” stuck out in terms of how Ted Kaczynski saw his attacks, as well as how he defined what the ultimate goal of the bombings were.

I had submitted the first two articles to my Chair for his feedback, but the third article, which was showing Ted’s journal writings, seemed to have much more information on how he saw the attacks and his underlying motivation. After the initial coding of the third document, I decided to wait for more feedback on the process and if I am on the right track.

Thus far, what has been the most astounding, is the fact that Ted did not have remorse for his actions and wanted to kill his victims. It was surprising that the only thing he saw as “bad,” was the amount of money spent for the attacks. It is seeming that he does not see his victims as individuals, but rather those who work in the Technology field, as one complete entity. Because of this, each harm or death is seen as a “win,” and furthering his message of needing to stop the progression of technology.

This week I began reviewing and coding the articles collected that were referencing Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing. Of the articles I have begun coding, Timothy McVeigh is the first of the lone-wolves I have reviewed that was motivated by political ideology, namely, that the Government was infringing on the rights of citizens, and the main precipitating event was the FBI raid in Waco, Texas.

So far, the main point that had stuck out was the amount of premeditation involved with his attack. He had sought assistance from his friends, which were old military acquaintances. This also suggested that McVeigh was looking for approval from those close to him. In the articles reviewed thus far, none of his friends had attempted to stop him from going through with the attack, rather those mentioned had aided or offered comments that seemed to help forge the plan.

During the coding, I have paid attention to any avenue that the lone wolf could have found an avenue to voice their grievance or alleviate their strain, and in the case of McVeigh, where the radicalization is against the Government, this had brought up the concept that traditional means of coping would be very minimal, if at all present. Additionally, because he was influenced by the Turner Diaries, which emphasized anti-Government sentiments, and he felt close to those at Waco, his social network, real and perceived, only supported committing the attack.

Additionally, because McVeigh's target was the Government, he only saw the human toll of his attack as "collateral damage." What makes this statement stand out is the fact that McVeigh had military training, and this concept is prevalent in war zones

and in the training provided to soldiers. As well, McVeigh did not see the employees, or even the children in the building as individuals, but as being complicit with the Government and made statements of wanting to be outside of the building, “and shoot anyone who comes out.”

While I have only reviewed four articles so far, I have found that those about McVeigh seemed to focus less on McVeigh, and more on his associates, publications, and the like. While this may be because McVeigh and the bombing had been heavily reported in other articles, it is worth noting.

This week I began to review and code articles related to Omar Mateen. In the three articles I had reviewed, I was surprised that the factors that seemed to perpetuate the attack were a desire to gain attention or to assimilate with those he shared similar views with. In this, I mean that it was mentioned that he was associated with A-Qaeda and Hizballah, which the articles pointed out that the two terrorist organizations held very different religious views, to the extent that one who was associated with one group, would never hold the views of the other. Additionally, much of Mateen's past was stricken with argumentative, abusive behavior that he perpetuated against others. He would make statements that would elicit fear or surprise from those he interacted with.

While he was said to have graduated at an early age, after experiencing setbacks in lower levels of education, this showed that Mateen did exhibit complex cognitive ability, but he was more concerned with his image, rather than the learning experience. While the other lone wolves that have been reviewed thus far had shown direct factors of their ideology and the real or perceived grievance or strain, in the articles reviewed so far, it has been more of interpreting the aspects of his life, associates, and beliefs. Direct statements have not been provided in these beginning articles.

I began to continue my review of the articles collected about Omar Mateen today. On trying to open a link to the video report titled, “Investigators look into the past of Omar Mateen,” I had found that the link was broken. When this was found, I started the search for another article related to Omar Mateen by searching Google, using the search terms “Omar Mateen AND CNN.” In the results, I found an additional article that was not already part of the collected data. The new article, “Orlando shooter texted wife during attack, source says,” was saved as a Word document to allow for coding the data.

After reading the article a few points that stuck out were the conversation that Mateen was reported to have had at the gun store and his possible internal conflict with his own sexuality. Because these aspects would add to the religious conflict, the entries were coded as religious ideology. Additionally, this attack provided aspects which stood out as a grievance, but also as a strain. Which may provide an avenue to explain why this attack was so deadly, as compared to other lone-wolf terrorist incidents. Additionally, when it was reported that Omar had conversed with his wife and posted to Facebook during the attack, this showed that he was able to think rationally and was not consumed with rage. He was able to think critically and provide ways of voicing his message to the public.

Today I began reviewing articles related to Aaron Alexis. What had stood out the most is the recurring theme of mental-mental illness. In the four articles that have been reviewed thus far, each article spoke of the instances that Alexis had called police to report people following him and talking through hotel room walls in order to keep him awake. He also said these people were deploying weapons that used microwaves to hem him. He had stated these people were sent by the Government. While this claim did not yield any actual perpetrators, this may have been the over-arching motivation for Alexis to commit the attack.

Additionally, it was repeatedly reported that Alexis did have prior military experience, a history of violence, anger management and interactions with Law Enforcement. He had prior training in using firearms and had even used firearms in events that were reported to the police. While some of his prior interactions resulted in arrest, he did not have any formal convictions, so it did not prevent him from obtaining firearms, removing his ability to have security clearance, and did not allow the Navy to discharge Alexis with anything less than a honorable discharge.

Much of the codes have been repeated among the first four articles and am interested in seeing if the pattern continues into the articles obtained from the New York Times. At this point, the four articles reviewed were all from CNN.

Today I reviewed three more articles related to Omar Mateen. I also incorporated filling out the coding matrix with the codes and entries retrieved from the articles. Through the articles, I saw recurring codes centered around that Omar Mateen had a history of violence, mental illness and claimed association to terrorist groups. While he did claim association to ISIS and Al Qaeda, these claims were not proven, thus were determined to only be threatening statements made to scare individuals. Mateen did seem to embrace the Islamic State's ideology, even though it was reported that Mateen was not very religious. It is also worth noting that Mateen was said to have frequented the nightclub often, and may have experienced conflict with his self-image, thus enraging him even more.

Mateen had a history of acting out, maintained a violent history and used violence to cope with those who were close to him and those who he knew only in passing. While he was not formally diagnosed, his ex-wife stated that he had signs of mental illness and was bi-polar. This link may have added to the decision to commit and attack, as he maintained an altered state of reality, and this could have negatively affected his ability to cope and think rationally. While he planned the attack, by choosing the scene and buying ammunition and firearms in advance, it is not clear how much planning went into the attack. He had made statements to police that he had bombs strapped to individuals and on his person, which could have been a way to, not only increase the fear, but provides evidence that he did not plan of being a victim of his own attack, because he was trying to stop police from entering the building.

This week I continued to review articles related to Omar Mateen and to compile the coding matrix with the code that were derived from the reviewed data. Through the articles, I see that Omar Mateen had a desire to inflict fear upon those he knew. This was evident from the fact that he tried to contact his wife during the attack to see if she was following the news. I found it surprising that he had claimed allegiance to ISIS throughout the news articles. While the FBI had investigated Mateen twice, they found nothing to justify keeping him under surveillance. I was also struck that during the trip to purchase firearms and ammunition, it was reported that he was being directed by an individual he was conversing with over the phone.

It was reported that Mateen had frequented the nightclub and potentially, it can be inferred that he knew many, or all the potential victims. Also, he was making statements to police that he had explosives and continued to make other threats to postpone law enforcement entering the building. This could be that Mateen had planned on being able to survive the attack, or that he simply wanted to inflict even more fear upon victims.

Mateen also had a history of being violent and verbally abusive to those he knew. While this may mean he maintained internal conflict related to his self-image and associations. While these details will never be able to be examined more carefully, it can be said that he was not diagnosed with a mental illness and acted out of more free will and rage, as opposed to being radicalized and driven completely by rage. Is it clear that other factors persuaded him to commit the violent attack.

Today I concentrated on coding the remaining articles related to Omar Mateen, totaling six articles. These articles ranged from reporting on significantly reporting on the background of Omar Mateen, scantily reporting on his background, while other articles concentrated on the attack and his wife or ex-wife, respectively. Through the coding process, the most prominent points that stuck out were the fact that Mateen utilized violence across various situations and against classmates, co-workers and family members, as well as complete strangers. This also includes the fear of violence in the form of threats of using firearms.

It was also heavily reported that Mateen claimed association to ISIS, but also had claimed he was a member of Al-Qaeda on prior occasions. This is extremely contradictory because while both are Islamic terrorist organizations, they conflict with each other. The prevailing thought was that Mateen had chosen to attack the Pulse Nightclub because it was a club for homosexuals. While the reasoning may be based on religious ideology, that homosexuality is not in-line with Islam, Mateen's own sexuality came into question because he had frequented the club for years prior to the attack.

What was striking was the fact that police were able to trace Mateen's path using cell phone data during the hours leading up to the attack, and it appeared he had scoped out other locations prior to choosing to attack Pulse, and ultimately came to this decision because Pulse had much less security than the Disney properties and the other nightclub he had searched. Additionally, one of the articles reported that Mateen had conversed with others using a foreign language during preparation and once during the attack. This

hinted that he may have had direction from someone in the larger group, but this fact had not been fruitful during the investigation after the attack.

Taking all the articles together, Mateen's history of threats and violence in multiple environments and using differing levels of violence, it almost seems that Mateen was only using the religious ideology as a vehicle to explain his attack or to exacerbate the fear placed upon his victims. This is also a difficult line to determine because his father claimed Mateen was not very religious, but his wife had stated that he was. While this is in different phases of his life, Mateen's beliefs would have been exhibited in everyday life to all of those who knew him well. Additionally, what does lend credence to the concept of external group radicalization is the fact that Mateen had taken, what was termed a pilgrimage and an additional trip to Saudi Arabia in years prior to the attack.

With today being the start of the new term, I wanted to get a start on moving previously coded articles into the coding matrix and review new articles. I started with articles related to Theodore Kaczynski. I moved three articles that were previously coded into the matrix and coded two new articles. What stood out to me was the prevalence of Kaczynski's ideological motivation and the possible presence of mental illness. Thus far, the articles have not stated that he was clinically diagnosed, but that his family and his brother's lawyer saw signs of mental illness. It is significant that his family would state these factors, because those closest to him would notice subtle differences in his behavior and actions, as well as reactions to external factors that may not be consistent with what would be considered normal. As well, Theodore consistently denounced the allegation of mental illness, but could offer no rational explanations of his behaviors. Let alone, a rational person would seek alternatives to voice his opinions and concerns, before resorting to killing in the manner that had taken place.

It was also surprising to see the prevalence of his academic achievement and that he left it behind to pursue a recluse lifestyle. Most of the articles thus far have mentioned this fact and continually speak of the grievances that spurred the attacks. The grievance he felt was fueled by a hatred for technological advancement, environmental degradation (as he saw it) and advances in genetic manipulation.

The last article reviewed today also spoke about Ted's thoughts toward his brother leading the FBI to investigate Ted. I thought it notable that Ted said he could forgive his brother, if his brother would join the cause. In essence, the aim of his attacks

was to get others to embrace the message of anti-technology and the like. This seemed like it may have been a last effort to convert anyone, in this case, his brother, to be radicalized. The article also spoke about Ted knowing other radicals that would accept his brother, which opens the question of communication that may have influenced Ted, or if this was a symptom of a possible underlying mental illness.

Today I continued to review articles related to Theodore Kaczynski. I reviewed and coded three more articles into the coding matrix. These articles seemed to “read” a little different than the previous articles. What was prominent in the beginning of the review was the isolation that Theodore had put himself in, isolating himself from loved ones and what was revealed in the articles, was that he had a friend in Mexico, in which he corresponded with. Additionally, the prevalence of his strain, ideological beliefs and hatred for society in every aspect of his life. When he wrote to his friend, he portrayed loneliness, but when others tried to associate with him, it seemed as though he pushed them away. While it was not stated in the articles, it almost seemed as if Theodore was attempting a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more he felt hurt by society and distanced himself, the more he could justify harming others in return.

In the last article, it was reported that Theodore underwent a court ordered evaluation and was determined to be mentally ill, and that his actions could be explained by the diagnosis. Additionally, stating that his family abused him was also a symptom of the diagnosed illness. Dr. Johnson found that Mr. Kaczynski was suffering from other serious mental illnesses, including “paranoid personality disorder with avoidant and antisocial features.” While it cannot be determined at this point, of the articles reviewed thus far, it seems that Theodore is the only one of the four lone wolves in the current study and is the only one that has been diagnosed with a mental disorder. Additionally, it seems that the ideological beliefs, the strain or grievance that the individual holds, and

level of cognitive function may have an impact on how severe the attack is, the persistence of the lone-wolf and the outcome of the attack.

This week the remaining articles related to Theodore Kaczynski were reviewed and coded. The most prominent themes that stuck out were the fact that he continued his bombing campaign to voice his ideological beliefs, seeming as a way to alleviate his perceived strain. One of the articles mentioned that two of his targets were mentioned in a radical environmentalist publication. Law enforcement had believed Ted may have been radicalized by this publication because two of his victims were chosen due to their position in large organizations that, in Ted's eyes, had been destroying nature.

Much of the codes that stuck out from the articles were repetitive from previous articles, leading to the conclusion that data saturation had been reached within the fifteen articles that had been acquired. The Unabomber Manifesto will still be reviewed later to gain a better grasp of Ted's own thoughts and motivations.

When contemplating how the Unabomber may differ or be the same as other lone-wolf terrorists, the idea that the harm and duration of the attack may be impacted by the ideology, or the perceived power relationship came up as a possible explanation. In the beginning years, Ted seemed to feel that society was under attack by universities and technological advancement. In this case, his own thoughts and perceptions were radical ideas. Later in the campaign, he concentrated on the destruction of nature, and felt he had more counterparts who held the same beliefs, due to the radical publications. Because of having more people who he believed agreed with him and wanted those in charge of the destruction to "pay," Ted increased his effort and the lethality of his attacks increased. This idea is also reinforced by the previously reviewed article that reported that Ted

could forgive his brother for turning him in, if his brother joined the “cause,” that he had once believed in.

This week I began coding and integrating articles related to Timothy McVeigh into the coding matrix. The articles related to Timothy McVeigh have had a striking difference, as compared to those about Ted Kaczynski. I have noticed that the articles related to McVeigh have focused more on his preparation, his hatred for the Government and how he had assistance in planning and preparing for the attack from his close friends. I try to do reflective journals every day that I code, but this week, I had a hard time trying to put into words how the codes stuck out to me when reading the articles. It seems the focus was on McVeigh's military experience and his level of preparation. He had committed crimes to finance and acquire supplies to build the bomb that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City.

Another vast difference is that McVeigh had begun his anti-Government campaign, ignited heavily after reading *The Turner Diaries*, by preaching and passing out propaganda to gain support for the anarchist cause. Additionally, his close associates knew that he had a dead seated hatred for the Government, and after the siege at Waco and Ruby Ridge, McVeigh's rage only escalated. He gained acceptance from his peers by having them help with the plot and planning. Ultimately, his friends would not participate in the actual bombing but are still considered complicit in the eyes of the Criminal Justice system.

Throughout his life, and even during his military career, he seemed to excel, until he attempted to join the Special Forces, which ultimately led to him resigning. He had no signs of mental illness and did not become radicalized until after his departure from the

military. He did stress the fact of “collateral damage,” from the attack, which leads me to believe that his military training had a strong influence on how he saw the victims of the attack. Additionally, it seems that, as with International Terrorism, if the overarching target, the Government in the case of McVeigh, has significantly more power over the perpetrator, the attack and methods will be much more harmful. When comparing McVeigh to Kaczynski, while Ted believed technological advances were damaging the environment and society, Ted was blaming this on individual people, hence the bombs were directed at an individual, rather than the much larger one used in Oklahoma City.

This week I continued coding articles related to Timothy McVeigh. A total of twelve articles are now coded into the matrix. What stood out most to me today, was the fact that articles portrayed McVeigh as an individual who was negatively influenced by messages in far-right propaganda. While these writings and movies did influence his ideological beliefs, ultimately McVeigh had an extensive amount of time, during preparation and planning, that he could have aborted his decision to bomb the Federal building. The messages that were portrayed from these literary artifacts did help to shape his anti-Government beliefs, but those in the far-right groups did not condone the attack. Additionally, it was continually reported that the author of *The Turner Diaries* saw the bombing as wrong.

Additionally, I did notice a stark contrast between articles. Some of the articles reported in depth about McVeigh and his motivation, while others scantily reported about McVeigh. Other than his ideological beliefs, it was reported that aspects of his personality are present in serial-killers, and they reported that his upbringing may have impacted why he did not have many close associates and was easily persuaded into believing the ideological messages from extremist groups.

It still seems that ideological beliefs of the perpetrator have a significant impact on how harmful the attack is and may stem over to the choice of weapon used. McVeigh had a lack of coping mechanisms, such as with Kaczynski, but there are not many options to voice concerns to the Government, when the ideological beliefs are directed at The

Government. This may help explain why attacks based upon political ideology are much more lethal and why the victims or potential victims were only seen as collateral damage.

This week I have coded the remaining articles related to Timothy McVeigh. I had noticed that reporters had focused extensively on speaking about McVeigh's history in the military and how he dropped out of Special Forces training because of the difficulty. I had noticed that McVeigh did seem to lack formal community ties in a traditional community, such as a stable household, stable employment, relationships with neighbors and the like. Rather, he had ties on the gun show circuit and mainly associated with individuals who held similar radical views. This may have led to the strength of his disdain for the Government.

Additionally, it seems that firearms became his personal identity at a young age, and formed his internal identity. In this, when the Government would try to decrease the 2nd Amendment rights of citizens, McVeigh felt that the Government was personally attacking him. Because McVeigh associated with those who held similar anti-Government ideological views, his radical ideas, statements, and actions would be positively reinforced by his anti-social peer group.

It was surprising to find out how many of his family and friends had known of his disdain for the Government and potential to act out in violent ways, but none of them attempted to intervene or notify authorities about the impending attack. While these individuals were said to have made plea deals to avoid stringent charges, it still provides the thought that this attack may have been avoidable, if these people had spoken out.

What really stands out is that the certainty and force put into this attack leads one to believe that the power relationship, the Government against one individual has a

significant impact on the lethality placed upon the attack. Additionally, because it seemed to McVeigh that the Government was attacking him personally, there was excessive force placed upon ensuring maximum casualties and damage.

This week the remainder of the articles related to Omar Mateen were reviewed and coded. The results were then entered into the coding matrix. The most significant points that stuck out were the fact that Mateen would use violence and violent threats in any situation and to cope with any type of stressful emotion. He would use violence against his family and would use controlling behavior against his loved ones. Additionally, he would make threats to bring firearms into places of employment and educational facilities, which had occurred throughout his life.

As mentioned previously, it is remarkable that Mateen embraced the message of Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah, when the two terrorist organizations are in conflict with each other. Ultimately, during the attack, Mateen would claim allegiance to the Islamic State. While he exhibited hate in varying circumstances toward homosexuals, it is questionable if the attack was ultimately a hate crime, and the choice to pledge allegiance to the Islamic State was only to inflict more fear upon a larger audience.

At this point, the extensive review consists of articles related to Timothy McVeigh, Theodore Kaczynski and Omar Mateen. Mateen is the first of these lone wolves to commit his attack with firearms, rather than explosives. It seems that Mateen felt the targets were individual people and he wanted to be more direct and visible to the victims as he committed harm.

This week I reviewed and coded 7 articles related to Aaron Alexis, the shooter at the Washington Navy Yard. What was unique about the articles related to Alexis was the fact that the reporting centered around his former military service, that he had prior encounters with law enforcement for misconduct and using firearms to express his anger and that Alexis had a history of displaying signs of mental illness. Through the review thus far, the reporting centered so much on these factors that I found myself questioning if he really was a lone-wolf or just a mentally disturbed individual who committed a mass shooting. Because he perpetrated the attack in retaliation, for what he believed was the Government sending individuals to harm him, this can be seen as a grievance fueled attack. Additionally, there were signs that he was facing personal strains that contributed to his belief that the Government was out to harm him. This included the military contractor he was working for, not compensating him properly.

The overarching factor is the presence of mental illness. What is ironic is that Alexis did attempt to get help from the VA hospital on two separate occasions, but it was not reported that he was formerly diagnosed or treated for any condition. In his previous contacts with law enforcement, he had prior arrests, but he had filed a complaint against those who he believed were following him. The investigation found no individuals following Alexis, and the Navy was informed of the incident in which Alexis was hearing voices. In the articles, it was not reported that any action was taken to potentially help Alexis with the delusions.

This week I finished reviewing and coding articles related to Aaron Alexis. I ended up having to find a new article to replace the video report from CNN because the video would not play after trying the link on two separate occasions. The articles reviewed, the remaining eight, were consistent in the reporting on the Navy Yard shooting and the background of Alexis. The articles repeatedly focused on the presence of mental illness, mainly Alexis hearing voices and believing that individuals were sent to harm him. It is astounding that the Police, hotel staff, his employer, and the Government, including the Navy and VA hospitals knew of the allegations, but did not investigate further. Additionally, while at the VA seeking assistance for trouble sleeping, it appears that, it was asked if Alexis suffered from thoughts of suicide and depression, but no one asked why he had trouble sleeping.

As with previous articles, it was extensively reported that he had a military background and maintained a history of other psychological disorders, mainly PTSD. The perception of his perceived grievance with compensation from work with the Government contractor, The Experts, was also reiterated. Again, this week, I found myself questioning if Alexis was truly a lone-wolf, or just a mass shooter. As mentioned previously, because the perception of individuals sent to harm him was mentioned, and his belief was that the Government was the one in charge of the weapons believed to be used, as well as the perceived grievance, for this study, it would constitute a lone-wolf because he was not driven by a desire to kill, but rather a desire to alleviate the perceived grievance and harm being placed upon him.

This week I began to review and code the Unabomber Manifesto written by Theodore Kaczynski. The structure of the coding matrix was adapted to fit the specific document. Because this was written by one individual and maintains seemingly one thought per paragraph, the matrix lists the paragraph for the code and a note. Where there are two potential codes, those were listed as well, but for ease, the specific line numbers are excluded. Additionally, transitioning from coding news articles to an essay written by an individual posed some challenges. I found that the codes are more abstract and the meanings of what was written are more of inferred meaning, rather than stated as “matter of fact.”

In the first two pages, ten paragraphs of the manifesto, it seems that Theodore was attempting to grab the readers’ attention and set the stage for converting people to believe his ideological beliefs. Thus far, his academic background sticks out with the way he formatted his paper and began defining the concepts he would be covering.

Additionally, this week, I began to set up the outline for the remaining chapters of the dissertation. While these are only the generic template, it provides foresight into what sections remain and begins the formulation of how to covert my findings into the written excerpts and room for the discussion.

This week, I reviewed and coded another two pages of the Unabomber Manifesto. When reviewing the article, the writings that Kaczynski wrote to describe “leftist psychology,” seemed as though he was explaining how he viewed other people he had worked with at Universities and interacted with in the academic realm. I found that when trying to apply codes to the entries, the meanings were more abstract, and some entries seemed to display his inner thoughts or feelings about how he was treated in the academic world and felt that society viewed him. I did find it striking that he spoke about an objective reality, which in academic terms, was the prevailing research paradigm of the time, especially with him being a PhD in mathematics.

Additionally, in the first pages of the manifesto, it seems that he is setting the stage for blaming others, including his parents, co-workers, technological groups and more generally, those advancing society, for explaining his hardships and explaining why he is the way he is. Where this parallels the other lone wolves is in the fact that they all felt harm was done by a more powerful group or the Government, and they believed the harm was not self-inflicted or self-perceived. Where he does differ is in the fact that Kaczynski does make connections between aspects of his life, from childhood to adulthood, and is able to place blame on multiple aspects. He ultimately lays blame on societal expectations, on which his campaign will be based.

This week, I continued to code the Unabomber Manifesto. I had originally planned to code another two pages but had noticed that the total work count was only approximately 6,500 words. Upon further inspection, I found that the file saved from The New York Times was not the complete Manifesto. The complete manifesto, published by The Washington Post showed 64 pages and 35,000 words, as had been stated in terms of the length in previous reports. I verified that the pages that had previously been coded matched the page numbers in the longer version and that the paragraphs were the same.

All total, 11 pages have now been coded. Thus far, in the first 11 pages, it seems that Kaczynski is setting the stage for attempting to persuade others to believe in his anti-technology ideological beliefs. Additionally, what stood out the most is that it seems he is persuaded to attack by what he terms the power process. He feels that he is hindered because he doesn't want to conform to societal norms. Much of what has been read thus far seems to be his inner thoughts on why he is frustrated with society, but he writes it as not trying to place specific blame, nor state that the "ones who are harmed" are his own motivations.

Through the explanation of the power process, it seems that he may have escalated his attacks because he wanted to have goals and he had become bored. Kaczynski explains that the factors of having attainable goals, having power, effort and autonomy. He explains that when powerful individuals in the past were unable to exert effort, they became bored. Additionally, without clear attainable goals, there was not the

desire to place effort, and the person would eventually fall out of their persistence to place effort into the activity.

This week I continued coding the Unabomber Manifesto. All total, twenty-five pages have been reviewed and coded. Thus far, it seems that Theodore Kaczynski was setting the stage for attempting to persuade readers into believing his view on the harms of technological advancement and society modernizing. I have found it difficult to apply the Apriori codes in the same manner as with the news articles. I have employed open coding more extensively and have been trying to focus on what the deeper meaning of each paragraph was, as well as the thought process of Kaczynski during the process of writing.

I found it interesting that Kaczynski displayed motivation and explained that to get people to read his essay, he must harm people. Additionally, he writes extensively on the power process, and it still seems apparent that he felt that his life was being directed by others, up until he quit his job and moved into seclusion. He specifically states that most of the goals are not chosen by only an individual and lacks complete free will. This is because, as Kaczynski believes, goals are directly or indirectly influenced by the system, meaning Government or large organizations.

As mentioned previously, it seems that the power struggle between the Lonewolf and their intended or perceived target seems to play a significant role in the duration and severity of the attack. With Kaczynski, on top of mental illness, he had built up aggression from his parents impressing the excellence of academics, the pressure of peers at school urging him to be more social, the lack of adapting a social system at the University, then feeling betrayed when presenting his essay for publication and being

turned down. It seems that Ted feels that all the goals that were impressed upon him were to fit in, for future employment or to please others.

This week I reviewed and coded another ten pages of the Unabomber Manifesto. As I read further into the document, it is striking that the article seems to be more of a persuasive letter, providing reasons to why technology is damaging and why society should create a revolution to overthrow large organization and society in general, before all individual freedoms and individual choice is completely taken away. It is also worth noting that Kaczynski seems to focus on aspects of his own life that he had seen as unpleasant. Such as explaining that children should not be forced to study math or science, and that they do not find these subjects fascinating, that they are only in pursuit because of societal pressures.

Throughout the review of the document this week, the most prominent themes that emerged was the strength of the power relationship, and that the only way for individuals to take control back, is to revolt. While it was stated in news articles, the fact that Kaczynski had mental issues, it is apparent that as he became more secluded, and hateful of society. Additionally, as more ideological beliefs emerged, he reported more of those aspects to gain traction for his movement since other ideological themes, such as environmentalism sat well with Kaczynski and those movements had passionate followers.

This week I continued coding the Unabomber Manifesto and now have over 40 pages reviewed and coded. It is becoming evident that the document was written at various stages when Kaczynski was focusing on differing and additional ideological beliefs. For example, within the various sections, he changes his stance from focusing more on environmental factors, and features of society that are centered on employment, socialization and employment. As the sections progress, he writes more about genetic engineering, what seems to be artificial intelligence and technology taking over control of society and jobs. Through the entire document, thus far, what is most significant is the power struggle between what he believes free choice and freedom in general is, and the loss of control to the larger system.

Another aspect that has stuck out is the apparent persuasion to obtain more followers to his ideology and support for his ideals. Ted believes the only way to change the system is to create a total revolution and implement a society based upon the ideology that technology, genetic engineering and industrial society are detrimental to society. In addition, he seems to be writing significantly about internal struggles, such as his parents focusing on academic success, psychological defects, that lack of a peer network, just to name a few, and is blaming those on the “system.” It does seem that Ted was apparent of his status, mental health, and reasons that he focused on academics, rather than socializing, but his personality and mental issues are placing blame on not only his associates, but society at large. In trying to compare the other lone-wolf terrorists, it seems that a significant factor is the presence of mental illness, also incorporating

personality disorders, but also the power that the oppressor maintains. This power can be real or perceived. Additionally, it seems that the longer this “threat” persists, the more harmful the attack will be.

This week I finished reviewing and coding the Unabomber Manifesto. Like in past weeks, the main point that stuck out was the emphasis that Kaczynski placed on the power that large organizations hold. When reviewing the manifesto, it was clear that it was written during the entire timespan of his attacks. This is because his emphasis started with anti-technology themes and the power of the elite, to include genetic engineering, growing environmentalist ideology, and advances in aspects of psychology and mental health. The overarching motivation, based upon prominent topics from each paragraph seems to center on the loss of power and choice that individuals hold, and that the system is who holds the ultimate power. In this, Kaczynski stresses that the system is not only the Government, but namely large organizations and the wealthy elite.

Through the essay he constantly stresses that programs and initiatives that are designed to help minority groups and only in place to help the system. In addition, these programs will only help those less fortunate to the point that it benefits the system. Toward the end of his essay, it seemed that he shifted his writing to persuade those with other radical ideological beliefs to take part in his anti-technology ideology to overthrow the industrial society and revert to a World that is rooted in nature. Knowing that he read about the environmental movement, it seems this was because of how prominent the movement had been and the destructive efforts that these radical groups and the attacks they had placed upon loggers, developers and the like.

The review also reiterates previous thoughts when comparing the four lone wolves. It seems that the more significant the perceived power is over the lone wolf, the

more deadly the attack will be. The choice of weapon also seems to be decided by the target. This seems to be true in terms of distance from the lone-wolf, how specific or abstract the target is, and the harm the lone-wolf wants to inflict. These concepts will become clearer and more defined once categorization and thematic analysis is conducted over the previously coded articles.

7/7/2024

This week I began by reviewing all the coded data in the coding matrix to begin categorizing. Once the data was reviewed, I began forming and defining categories. At first, it was difficult to separate the Apriori codes into categories, because I had seen these as technically being categories because the codes were similar across all participants. I decided the best course would be to expand on the code of complex cognitive ability and condense the remaining codes.

At the time of this entry, I have eight categories, and have begun applying these through all of the lone wolves.

While applying categories, this process showed the prominent points that reporters had written about and the overall focus of the articles. While this may be due to what information was available at the date of the news article, the points that the reporters wanted to convey, or some other extraneous factor, it does shed light on what aspects of the offender's life was divulged and the importance the media had placed on it. Additionally, while the Unabomber Manifesto was written by a lone-wolf and conveyed his own thoughts, it is worth noting that the most significant category for the paragraphs seems to center around his ideological beliefs.

After applying the categories thus far, it became clear that the document should be submitted for the weekly feedback to ensure the process is coming along as expected. I had attempted to schedule with Dr. Morris for feedback and assistance, but his schedule is still blocked out on the website.

This week I continued to categorize the data in the coding matrix. I am noticing that similarities and differences between the four lone-wolf terrorists are beginning to stand out more, than they previously had. It remains clear that the power relationship, or difference in power between the lone-wolf and the target of their ideological beliefs seems to be one of the most prominent factors. That the more the level of power is above the lone-wolf, the more determined the lone-wolf is to act, and the more harmful the attack. Additionally, I have been setting aside the theme from prior research that mental illness plays a factor in a terrorist becoming radicalized and committing an attack, but it is becoming clear that in the vast number of cases this trait is present. This may be because the mental illness influences the lone-wolf's ability to cope, it may cause the perceived injustice to be more severe, or a multitude of other factors.

It is also becoming clear that the lone-wolf's identity is a major factor. If the perceived injustice harms or minimizes their own self-perception, they are more likely to lash out. A secondary theme seems to be that if the ideology is more abstract, the presence of a peer group that supports the decision to attack is present. It also seems that the lone wolves have used violence in the past as a way of expressing their emotions in various situations and they all lack coping mechanisms to express their strain or grievance. The only exception to this is Arron Alexis, in which he had sought assistance, but those at the VA hospital did not ask enough questions to elicit more information.

This week I finished categorizing the coded data. What stuck out was the prevalence of codes related to the use of violence in other unrelated situations, the history of misconduct and interactions with law enforcement and the fact that the lone wolves had spoke of their plans in some way, shape, or form, prior to the attack. It is notable that while most of the codes could be fit neatly into a category, there were select few codes that were not similar among offenders and required a category of “other” to be created.

While themes are beginning to emerge with reading and re-reading the coded data and categories, the most prominent themes seem to be the presence and importance of the power relationship, the presence of mental illness, the continued use of violent acts, and the lack of formal mechanisms to cope with their real or perceived strains or grievances.

Additionally, this week I began to incorporate the reflective journals into an appendix, as well as the definitions of the A priori codes and categories. When codes and categories were entered into the paper, they were ordered alphabetically. In terms of the journal entries, the entries had to be reformatted without the header listing the date to keep the format of the overall dissertation consistent.

This week I met with Dr. Mohammad and reviewed the process I had been using for categorization. During the meeting, I found out that the categories should be completely unique compared to the codes that were used. After learning this, I went through and revised the category list and rereviewed the coding matrix to apply the newly defined categories. I had also found out that the coding matrix needs to be turned into tables for presentation in my final dissertation.

When rereviewing the data a few new points stuck out. I was able to recategorize, to remove the category of other. This provided more insight that all the offenders do share more similarities, and where they differ is mainly in terms of their extremist beliefs and complex cognitive ability. It also stood out that the radicalization and level of violence does not seem to differ based upon the level of cognitive ability. This means that in terms of having normal or average cognitive function and being at a level considered a genius does not seem to influence interpreting and dealing with stress and problems. Additionally, it remains clear that all of the offenders seemed to have avenues that could have been implemented to diffuse the situation and avoid an attack.

This week I revised my coding scheme and categories to make them more concise and meaningful. It was determined that the code of “complex cognitive ability” would better signify a category, rather than a code. The more specific codes of “complex cognitive ability in planning” and “complex cognitive ability in learning” replaced the original A priori code. Once this was completed, I began to derive themes from the data. What stuck out is that multiple categories seem to combine to influence the offender to commit an attack. It remains clear that power is one of the most significant factors. Additionally, the lack of coping mechanisms allows the offender’s rage to build up over time. In all the cases, the offender has seemed to have an ability to carefully craft the plan, not merely attacking others in a spontaneous emotional response. While I was creating themes, it did become clear that I need to review the resources on Walden’s website, as I feel that the themes may need to be more concisely identified, then expanded upon in the final paper.

I also edited the appendices for the code and category definitions, as well as added the remaining reflective journals to date, into the respective appendix. When adding the reflective journals, I went ahead and revised the entries for grammar and spelling. I also took time to review the entries to allow the data and insights to remain fresh in my mind and assist in theme generation.

This week I reviewed the online module related to theme creation to ensure I was following the proper procedures. Next, I reviewed the themes I had previously created to make more concise names and created a sixth theme. When reviewing the categories and applying the themes, what stood out was the fact that various categories could potentially impact more than a singular theme, but because of methodological procedures, these impacts were left off the definitions, then placed into themes that represented the overarching categories better. Additionally, it does stand out that an offender only maintaining one or two of the provided themes will result in a lone-wolf attack, but it seems that the presence of the six themes leads to committing an attack. I plan on meeting with Dr. Morris in the beginning of the Fall term and seeking advice from my dissertation chair to ensure I am on the right path and have been complying with the proper theme generation process.

The next steps will be to create and organize formal reference pages for the data set, and creating a table to show the coding process that was utilized. I feel that this will provide another opportunity to review the data in a different way before writing the results and discussion chapters of my paper.