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Lethality of Lone Actor Terrorists Attacks

A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

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1 Introduction

Because of one man, 102 people were shot, of which 49 people lost their lives and 53 were wounded on June 12th, 2016 in Orlando, Florida in the United States. Omar Mateen succeeded with his lone actor terrorist attack by entering the Pulse nightclub where he started shooting. It ended up being the deadliest terrorist attack in the United States since September 11, 2001 (Straub, et al., 2017). This is an example of a lone actor terrorist attack, and while it is not a new phenomenon, in recent years it poses a greater threat with more lone actor terrorist attacks in North America and other Western societies. (Spaaij, 2012; Nesser, 2012; Phillips, 2017)

In the United States, lone actor terrorism had been an ongoing security threat before it raised an equivalent amount of concern in Europe. In 2003, FBI Director Mueller stated in his speech on the 'War on Terrorism': "the threat from single individuals sympathetic or affiliated with Al Qaeda, acting without external support or surrounding conspiracies, is increasing" (Mueller, 2003). CIA Director Leon Panetta stated in 2010 that lone actor terrorism should receive the primary attention of the security services (Fox News, 2010). Former President Barack Obama stated in 2011 that lone actor terrorism is the biggest threat for the United States (CNN, 2011). It is argued that because of the increased group-based counter-terrorism in the United States, an environment for lone actor terrorists is developing (Phillips, 2017).

Other Western societies also underline the threat lone actor terrorism poses. The European Police Chiefs Convention of 2011 concluded regarding the 'future for terrorism': "The changing dynamics in our societies, together with technological advances, may encourage isolated, disaffected individuals to turn into violent extremists, to the extreme of becoming 'lone wolf' terrorists" (European Police Chiefs Convention, 2011, p. 1). The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) Director-General Irvine has claimed in 2011 that in keeping with the trend of the recent years, homegrown lone actor terrorism like the lone actor attack of Anders Breivik in Norway is a principal concern (Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, 2012). Anders Behring Breivik, one of the most notorious lone actor terrorists, killed 77 and wounded hundreds more in a two-sequence attack (Norges Offentlige Utredninger, 2012). In addition, since the rise of ISIS in and around Syria, the group has pledged to commit more terrorist attacks in the 'West' as a decentralized attack strategy conducted by returned foreign fighters. Without proof of a correlation, there simultaneously is a rise of ISIS sympathizers that plotted lone actor attacks in the 'West', making the threat even greater (Hegghammer & Nesser, 2015).

It is the challenge for counter-terrorism agencies to counter lone actor terrorist threats. However, lone actor terrorist attacks remain an increasing concern for law enforcement due to the difficulty in

identifying and detecting lone actor terrorists, making them particularly deadly (Spaaij, 2012; Simon, 2015; PET, 2011; Phillips, 2017; Ellis, et al., 2016; Europol, 2018). In addition, lone actor terrorists have no single profile and targets are random (Bakker & De Graaf, 2010; Ellis, et al., 2016; Barnes, 2012). In 2010, US Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano stated: "They're not using the phones, the computer networks, or any – they're not talking with others any other way that we might get some inkling about what is being planned" (Kerley, 2010).

While the threat of lone actor attacks is increasing in Europe and the United States and attacks are difficult to prevent, the lethality of a lone actor attack remains relatively low compared to group-based terrorism. Spaaij (2012) conducted a study on lethality in 15 western countries and concluded that of the 198 in his research sample, 123 people lost their lives, which is an average of 0.62 deaths per incident. This is a low rating when you look at the average deaths of all terrorist attacks (including group-based) within his study: 1.6 (Spaaij, 2012). In addition, Ellis et al. (2016) argued a number of 1.22 fatalities and 2.13 injuries per launched lone actor terrorist attack in their study. Philips (2017) conducted a comparative study between the lethality of group-based terrorism and lone actor terrorism. Philips also argued that lone actor terrorism is less deadly than other terrorist attacks. However, his research *did* show that in the United States and France it was the other way around. Hamm and Spaaij (2017) conducted research focusing on the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks in the United States and indicated an increase in lethality up to an average of 8.6, which is significantly higher than the other figures.

1.1 Problem definition

While the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks is relatively low compared to group-based terrorism, an increase in lethality in the United States is visible (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). However, some cases, such as the case of Omar Mateen, are an exception to the figures. This leads to a question that Philips (2017) posed in his research: why are some lone actor terrorist attacks more lethal than others? Information with regard to this question seems sparse. This is reinforced by the fact that studies on lethality of terrorist attacks focus more on group-based terrorism because they have more 'resources' to be more lethal than lone actor terrorists (Spaaij, 2010; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Phillips, 2017). For example, Asal & Rethemeyer (2008) conducted a study that addressed the question why some terrorist organizations are more lethal than others. The determinants addressed in their study could shed some light on lone actor terrorism. However, some of their indicators are only compatible with group-based terrorist organizations, not lone actor terrorists. Other studies specific on the differentiations regarding the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks are seemingly not conducted. The aim for this study was to explore this research gap on understanding the determinants of the lethality

between lone actor terrorists via a qualitative approach. In order to do so, the following research question was formulated:

How can fluctuations in lethality between lone actor terrorist attacks that are conducted in the United States be explained?

1.2 Key concepts

So far, this introduction uses the concepts of *terrorism*, *lone actor terrorism,* and *lethality* that need some further explanation to help clarify how these concepts are interpreted throughout this thesis.

Terrorism

One considerable characteristic regarding terrorism is the inability to have a collective and definitive answer to fundamental questions such as: what is terrorism? (Schuurman & Eijkman, 2013). Terrorism "may be the most important word in the political vocabulary" (Schmid, 2004, p. 376). For example, it would be effective for the United Nations (UN) to have a collective agreement on what terrorism is, and thus have a collective definition of terrorism. Since the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre the UN attempted to have an agreement on the definition. However, some nations that are members of the UN were unwilling to accept the new definition as some nations have different perspectives on who are terrorists and who are not (Bruce, 2013). As Jenkins (1982) famously explains the differentiations in interpretation: "…one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" (p. 12). The UN eventually stated an interim draft on the definition which downplays political justification: "…resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act" (United Nations, 2002, p. 6).

Academic researchers have also tried for many years to reach consensus on the definition of terrorism. For example, Walter Laqueur defines terrorism as: "Terrorism is the illegitimate use of force to achieve a political objective by targeting innocent people" (as cited in Bruce, 2013, p. 27). Tore Bjørgo's definition of terrorism focuses on the *methods* of the terrorist attacks to gain a political goal: "Terrorism is a set of methods of combat rather than an identifiable ideology or movement, and involves premeditated use of violence against (primarily) non-combatants in order to achieve a psychological effect of fear on others than the immediate targets" (Bjørgo, 2005, p. 12). While Laqueur elaborated on the use of 'force', and Bjørgo on the methods of terrorist attacks, Fernando Reinares (2005) explains terrorism in three traits, and when these traits are present, it distinguishes acts of terrorism from other forms of violence. Firstly, an act of violence is considered as terrorism when its physical effects within a certain population or social aggregate are likely to condition

attitudes and behavior in a determined direction and are out of proportion with respect to its actual or potential material consequences. Secondly for that violence to have such impact it must be systematic and rather unpredictable, and usually against targets with symbolic relevance within a cultural frame and institutional context. And thirdly, the harming of the targets must convey messages and threats that make terrorism a mechanism of communication and control (Reinares, 2005).

One study on *terrorism* has done comprehensive work to further help defining terrorism. Schmid and Jongman (1988) conducted a study on the term terrorism and established that from a total of 109 definitions there are 22 that frequently used 'definitional elements'. The first 5 frequently used elements are: 1) violence, 2) politics, 3) fear, 4) threat, and 5) effects and reactions. It seems that the definitions described for terrorism have elements that are reflected in studies about the concept of *terrorism.* To include Laqueur's *use of force,* Bjørgo's *methods*, and Reinares's *traits,* Schmid's (2012) definition of terrorism, that also covers 'definitional elements' the three academics raised, is used for this thesis. His definition refers to "… a doctrine about the presumed effectiveness of a special form or tactic of fear-generating, coercive political violence and, on the other hand, to a conspiratorial practice of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent action without the legal or moral constraints, targeting mainly civilians and non-combatants, performed for its propagandistic and psychological effects on various audiences and conflict parties" (Schmid, 2012, p. 158).

Lone actor terrorism

Defining *lone actor terrorism* is also disputed and still in debate. According to Spaaij & Hamm (2015), academic literature on the concept of lone actor terrorism suffers from bad quality and rigor, including the definition. In addition, the term 'wolf' instead of 'actor' is regularly used to portray individuals acting alone, but critics argue that lone actors remain having social interaction (Schuurman, et al., 2017). The term 'wolf' refers to myths and is used by sensationalists to illustrate a single and stealthy attacker which, most of the time, does not describe reality (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). This thesis followed the former reasoning as lone actor terrorists are not to be seen as sensational individuals for the media, but rather more formally with a level of social interaction with others.

Another dispute on the concept of lone actor terrorism is that there is a disagreement on the interpretation focusing on the level of isolation. Three distinctions can be made on what constitutes to be a lone actor by definition. Firstly, dyads or triads that operated together but do not have any connection to a group or network. A broad conceptualization of lone actor terrorism was made by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) that gives a general definition on the concept of lone actor terrorism with dyad or triads: "The threat or use of violence by a single perpetrator (or small cell), not acting out of purely personal material reasons, with the aim of influencing a wider

audience, and who acts without any direct support in the planning, preparation and execution of the attack, and whose decision to act is not directed by any group or other individuals (although possibly inspired by others)" (Ellis, et al., 2016, p. 3). Secondly, individuals that operated independently but had or have connections with such groups. Gill, Horgan and Deckert (2014) emphasized in their research that they used samples of individual terrorist with or without 'command and control' links. Thirdly, there are definitions that only focus on the individual that operated independently from groups or networks. This thesis tried to understand how one individual, without the help of others, could be more lethal than others and used therefore Spaaij's concept of a lone actor terrorist. Spaaij (2010) substantiated that lone 'wolf' (Spaaij refers to wolfs) terrorism must be isolated as much from other types of terrorism and political violence, and therefore, he argues: "Lone wolf terrorism involves terrorist attacks carried out by persons who (a) operate individually, (b) do not belong to an organized terrorist group or network, and (c) whose modus operandi are conceived and directed by the individual without direct outside command or hierarchy" (p. 856). This conceptualization is similar (nearly the same) to that of Gruenewald, Chermak & Freilich (2013) who also argue that the lone actor terrorist operates alone, is not a member of a group, and operates without any direction of an external source. As it is uncommon to be a true lone actor, those individuals can identify themselves or sympathize with an extremist movement but are not part of it (Schuurman, et al., 2017).

Lethality

The impact of terrorist attacks can be comprehensive. The impact of lone actor terrorist attacks could affect psychological, economic, social, and political levels. These impacts can have short-term as well as long-term effects (Waxman, 2011). Simon (2015) acknowledges this argument by stating that the number of lone actor terrorist attacks or the number of fatalities of such attacks are not an effective way to measure trends: "In terrorism, it is the type of incident and its impact upon society and government that counts" (p. 239). However, this paper focuses on the direct fatalities of a lone actor terrorist attack where *lethality* is considered as a measurement of "success" by lone actor terrorists (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008). Philips (2017) defined the lethality of the attacks as "the number of deaths attributed to each lone actor terrorist attack" (p. 541). However, this does not include the number of wounded people that occurred during a lone actor terrorist attack. Therefore, in this research the lethality of attacks "represents the combined number of fatalities and injuries committed by each lone wolf terrorist under study" (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017, p. 36).

1.3 Scientific and social relevance

According to Spaaij (2010) there are multiple studies that help to understand the collective form of terrorism. It suggests that there is a need for more studies regarding lone actor terrorism that is in contradiction with the threat of lone actor terrorism. As Hoffman (2003) states: "Increasingly, lone

individuals with no connection with or formal ties to established or identifiable terrorist organizations are rising up to engage in violence" (pp. 16-17).

Academic

Academic studies about terrorism in general usually focus on group-based terrorism due to the majority of violence carried out by terrorist groups (Spaaij, 2012). The Congressional Research Service of the United States has listed a total of 1,649 reports regarding the topic of terrorism. Only ten of them focus on lone actor terrorism (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). One reason for this is the difficulty in conducting research on lone actor terrorism (Ellis, et al., 2016). However, in recent years studies on lone actor terrorism are conducted, partially due to the rise of the phenomenon. (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). These studies focus on the understanding of lone actor terrorism regarding the topics of the extent and impact of a terrorist attack, motivations (Gill, Horgan, & Deckert, 2014), ideologies, psychology, modus operandi, radicalization, target selection, and interdiction and prevention strategies (Gill & Corner, 2016; Barnes, 2012; Becker, 2014; Brynielsson, et al., 2013; Corner & Gill, 2015; Drake, 1998; Ellis, et al., 2016; Moskalenko & McCauley, 2011; Simon, 2015). Nevertheless, studies on lone actor terrorism remain difficult to compare due to a variety of reasons, including difficulties regarding what constitutes lone actor terrorism and how lone actor terrorists can be studied usefully (Spaaij, 2012; Nesser, 2012; Phillips, 2017).

Also, counter-terrorism approaches are addressed (Bakker & De Graaf, 2011). However, policymakers and some scholars are arguing that lone actor terrorism is becoming more threatening, but there is little knowledge on how lethal lone actor terrorists are (Phillips, 2017). It therefore seems there is a distinct lack of research on factors influencing the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks (Alakoc, 2017; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Phillips, 2017). This is to some degree due to the favor of conducting research on group-based terrorism which has more resources to be potentially more lethal, as for example the study of Asal & Rethemeyer (2008). However, deviant cases such as the case of Omar Mateen contribute to a high number of fatalities. To understand what determines the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks, and to attend the suggested research gap, it is therefore academically relevant to add to literature on the topic of the lethality of lone actor terrorism.

Social

As described previously, lone actor terrorism poses a greater threat and is promoted by some terrorist groups in Western societies. With the lack of research on lone actor terrorism, police and intelligence officials find themselves ill-prepared for the challenges lone actor terrorism pose (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). In addition, in some countries counter-terrorism resources focus on group-based terrorism shifting towards lone actor attacks. With the threat becoming greater, possible attacks with a high

number of fatalities increase. Research on the fluctuations of lethality among lone actor terrorist attacks could, therefore, provide new ways for intervention of counter-terrorism agencies, which have difficulty combatting the phenomenon. They could prioritize and/or (re)allocate resources to potentially reduce or prevent the attack or otherwise its lethality (Bakker & De Graaf, 2011; Hemmingby, 2017).

With this in mind, it should be stated that the *number* of casualties of any terrorist attack, thus also of a lone actor terrorist attack, matter to the public and the authorities (Hemmingby, 2017). It puts pressure on the relationship between the public who fear future attacks, the media and its coverage, and the authorities being 'instructed' to act more decisively regarding terrorism (Nacos, 2016). As Sun Tzu, the Chinese war theorist, stated: "Kill one, frighten thousands" (Clutterbuck, 1994, p. 3). Therefore, this thesis also contributed by empirically studying fluctuations of lethality among lone actor terrorist attacks to obtain a balanced and objective picture of the problem and also contributed to find determinants that can be used for further empirical studies or by government organizations that focus on counter-terrorism policy.

1.4 Guide

This thesis followed a slightly different design than traditional research designs due to the qualitative and explorative nature (Maxwell, 2013). The introduction addressed the recent threat of lone actor terrorism including an explanation of the key concepts used in this thesis. It further addressed the problem of definition and research question. In order to address the research question, the remainder of this thesis was structured as follows. Chapter 2 consists of the research design in which the logic of case selection and the selected cases, the method of data collection and analysis, and an assessment of the limitations are addressed. Chapter 3 consists of the literature review on what is known of lone actor terrorism and lethality. The literature review conducted on the topic is addressed to conclude the analytical framework that is used in Chapter 4 to structure the analysis. Chapter 4 consists of the case descriptions and analysis of the cases. In Chapter 5 a conclusion is formulated based on the analysis of the cases. The same chapter also formulates what the limitations were during the thesis and possible future research topics. The bibliography of this thesis can be found in Chapter 6.

2 Research design

As the research design is the 'architectural blueprint' of the thesis, the aim is to link all factors of a research together, which are the credibility, usefulness, and feasibility (Bickman & Rog, 2009, p. 11). Therefore, this chapter starts with addressing the justification of this research design, which follows a more nonlinear path. Secondly, the case selection criteria are addressed followed by a brief introduction of the cases. Thirdly, a description of how data were collected and analyzed that form the basis of chapter 3. Finally, an assessment of the limitations regarding this qualitative research is addressed.

2.1 Justification of the research design

The main aim of this research is to determine why some lone actor terrorist attacks are more lethal than others. This requires in-depth understanding of the concepts, relationships among assumptions, and *context* which potentially requires the identification of unanticipated phenomena that influence these contexts (Maxwell, 2013; Neuman, 2014). It is expected that context among the variables is significant. In addition, due to scarcity of literature on fluctuations in lethality among lone actor terrorist attacks, a qualitative exploratory research based on a comparative case study of six cases is conducted. While the initial starting point of this research was deductive, a form of inductive research took place additionally on the basis of 'grounded theory', which is, among others, an additional motivation to have a qualitative comparative case study (Neuman, 2014).

Qualitative research is more flexible in the degree of information gathering. There are fewer predefined subjects or behaviors and there is room for information that is presented (Hart, Boeije, & Hox, 2009; Maxwell, 2013). As Hammersley & Atkinson (1995) stated: "A research design should be a reflexive process operating through every stage of the project." (p. 24). Because the analysis of the cases could lead to unexpected explanations of the suggested variables due to the context of the variables, the research design of this thesis is bound for modification during the research, making qualitative research even more suitable. Nevertheless, an analytic framework is given in the next chapter to have guidelines for the analysis of the cases.

This paper aimed to have intricate details of the cases for in-depth examination of the fluctuations in lethality. Therefore, multiple cases were chosen to *compare* their lethality among the variables, as comparative case study is a method of discovering (empirical) relations among variables (Lijphart, 1971). A case study design gives more intricate details of social processes, allows for more in-depth examination by increased visibility, and can be heuristic and holistic (Lijphart, 1971; Neuman, 2014). Yin (2003) describes case-studies as: "In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when "how"

or “why” questions are being posed, when the investigation has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.” (p. 1).

2.2 Logic of case selection

Cases were selected on the basis of multiple criteria that must be present in order for this research to be a (lone actor) terrorist attack. Choosing cases regarding lone actor terrorist attacks remains subjective due to the ongoing debate of how lone actor terrorism is defined (Ellis, et al., 2016). As Spaaij (2012) argues: “Taking into account these limitations as well as the difficulties associated with defining lone wolf terrorism, it is clear that some degree of arbitrariness inevitably remains present in labelling an act “lone wolf terrorism”.” (p. 27). With this in mind, this study only chose cases in which the individual operated autonomously. Groups of two or three are left out as group dynamics can influence the individuals within the group and it surpasses the initial aim of the research question (McCauley & Segal, 1987).

To compare cases and to make an inference about the phenomenon, the dependent variable should vary among cases. Without the variation of the dependent variable, it will not be possible to make an inference about the phenomenon, what the purpose was of this study (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999). Therefore, of the six cases that were analyzed, three cases had a dependent variable with a low number of lethality, and the other three cases had a dependent variable with a high number of lethality, and therefore, is regarded as robust (Campbell, 2018; Lijphart, 1971; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). Three cases that were selected have a dependent variable that was lower than the average of lethality Hamm & Spaaij (2017) have indicated, which is respectively 8.6. Only cases with at least one dead or wounded victim were taken into consideration. The other three cases had a dependent variable that is higher than the average of Hamm and Spaaij (2017) with at least more than 8 fatalities.

Drake (1998) describes different kinds of ‘target selection’ by lone actor terrorists. This is further elaborated upon in the next chapter. However, only cases where the aim or possibility was to have a high number of casualties were chosen for case comparison. These are mass casualty attacks, discriminate attacks, and mass-destruction attacks (Drake, 1998). It would not be ‘fair’ to take a lone actor terrorist attack where the goal was to eliminate a single target and compare it with a case where the goal was to (potentially) eliminate as many people as possible. In addition, as the literature is generally in agreement that the most frequently used weapons are firearms followed by bombs (Spaaij, 2012; Gruenewald, Chermak, & Freilich, 2013; Van der Heide, 2011), the selected cases only consist of attacks with these weapons.

This study focused itself towards lone actor attacks in the United States of America, where lone actor terrorism is of greater threat and has a greater number of lone actor attacks conducted (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Phillips, 2017). In the United States the lone actor attacks were predominantly executed by males who used bombs or firearms, half of them with military experience (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). This was taken into the case selection. A time-span for this thesis was taken into consideration but was left out because the subject matter doesn't relate to a time-span. However, attacks that have committed more recently seem to have more open-source information available what was needed for analysis (Spaaij, 2012; Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018).

Cases

Cases were bound to the limitations described in the previous section, particularly on the variation of the dependent variable, to make an inference of the phenomenon. This brought the following cases being selected for further analysis. First three cases that had a lower number of fatalities than average are addressed, followed by three cases which had a higher rate of fatalities than average.

The first case is the lone actor terrorist attack of Adbdulhakim Muhammad on the first of June 2009, in Little Rock, Arkansas. While two recruiter military personnel were taking a break in front of a joint Army-Navy recruitment center, a SUV with Adbdulhakim Muhammad in it pulled up. Adbdulhakim almost immediately began shooting on the two victims in front of the recruitment center with a SKS rifle. Both individuals died of their wounds. Eventually, Adbdulhakim Muhammad was arrested and said in a police interview that he was motivated by Salafi-jihadi beliefs (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014).

The second case is the lone actor terrorist attack of Frazier Glenn Miller who opened fire outside a Jewish Community Center in Kansas City, Missouri. With his actions Frazier killed three Jewish people, one of which was a 14-year-old boy. During his arrest he yelled "Heil Hitler" (Fitzsimmons, 2014). Frazier had a long history of white supremacist and Anti-Semitist beliefs. He was a minister, former army officer, leader of the paramilitary offshoot Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (CKKKK) and later the White Patriot Party (Martin & Kushner, 2011).

The third case is the lone actor terrorist attack by Mir Aimal Kansi, a Pakistani who fired with an assault rifle at cars that waited in turn to turn into the main entrance of the C.I.A. headquarters in Langley in 1993. The shooting led to the killing of two employees of the C.I.A. and injured three. After the shooting Mir Aimal fled to Pakistan where, after four and a half years, the F.B.I. arrested him. During his arrest he made clear that his motives were political because of what happened during the war in the Persian Gulf in 1991 (Weiner, 1998).

The fourth case is the 'Unabomber' (which stands for University and Airline Bomber) Ted Kaczynski. Kaczynski was a highly intelligent and educated man who conducted a nationwide bombing campaign in the United States in which he killed 3 and wounded 23 others as a form of discriminate attacks. He was arrested in 1996 and pleaded guilty. Kaczynski also wrote a comprehensive manifesto where he showed his motives to kill people to get attention to reach an anarchistic society (Spaaij, 2012; Miller W. R., 2012).

The fifth case is the lone actor terrorist attack by military officer Nidal Hasan who shot and killed 13 and injured 32 more during his attack at Fort Hood military base on November 5th, 2009. In a later statement Hasan said that he had a mission to complete which referred to religious beliefs. His actions focused merely on military personnel. This was evident because before the shooting he went to a civilian contractor on the scene urging her to leave (Poppe, 2018).

The sixth and last case is the lone actor terrorist attack of Omar Mateen who shot and killed 49 and wounded 58 in the Pulse Nightclub, in Orlando Florida United States, before getting killed by law enforcement. It was the deadliest terrorist attack since 9/11 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). His killings seem to be a reaction to the anti-ISIS campaign of the United States in Syria, calling himself a 'soldier of God' with the intent to do more harm (Harris, 2016).

2.3 Method of data collection

It is important, and in the interest of a case study, to properly map out the research processes used. This is because the reliability of a case study is often the main point of criticism due to the open nature of a qualitative research method. By outlining a good description of the research processes the reliability can be somewhat improved (Lijphart, 1971). This section contributes to this reliability for this study.

Data sources and gathering

Data were collected using desk research (Neuman, 2014). The data sources that Smith (2008) argues, that can be used for primary and secondary data, were the Internet and Leiden University's own journal catalogue (or Google Scholar if needed), (online) libraries such as Lexis Nexis (with only access to Dutch newspapers), government publications, archival records and documents, and online media outlets. The media, however, could be somewhat biased in what they report. Therefore, data collection for this study used a continuum of reliability of open source data. To address the reliability, each source is qualified based on Table 1 and when more reliable information was gathered this source was used over less reliable sources. When media outlets use citations or remarks of others

from for example a court proceeding, this source would be argued reliable. It is up to the author of this thesis to interpret the descriptive nature of such sources for analysis.

Least reliable	Partially reliable	Somewhat reliable	Reliable	Very reliable
Internet blogs	Tabloids	Broadsheet	Manifestos, warrants, expert witness reports	Trial transcripts, trial memorandums, interviews, police documents

Table 1: Continuum of reliability.

Primary and secondary source data

A consensus exists that primary sources regarding lone actor terrorists are rare and thus valuable (Ellis, et al., 2016). A problem in attaining primary data on terrorism (and lone actor terrorism) is due to the violent and the relative scarcity of lone actor terrorist attacks and the difficulty to access privileged information, that presents a researcher with several practical constraints for doing research (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). This suggests a time-consuming study if primary sources are to be collected. However, for some cases primary sources via desk research remain available, such as autobiographical data, testimonies or transcripts of court proceedings or police calls, unbiased newspapers published immediately after the event, etc. If primary sources are limited for a case, secondary sources were used to put besides primary data to improve the quantity and quality of information. It could further improve the context of each case, which is a characteristic of qualitative research (Neuman, 2014).

2.4 Method of data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is less standardized. An in-depth analysis is needed to increase causal inference of the indicators characterized in the next chapter and how it influences the dependent variable (Neuman, 2014). Therefore, typical as well as deviant cases of lone actor terrorism that are documented in detail were chosen for comparison (Campbell, 2018). As comparative case studies are multiple experiments and not instances of multiple subjects across single experiments (Campbell, 2018), comparative case studies use iterative analysis of each case with a final comparison of the emergent themes. The results are therefore not pooled and are post-hoc in nature whereby comparison may be independent of the level of analysis of the case (Campbell, 2018). This ‘interpretive’ study has multiple indicators for the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks, making the explanation of the mechanism between X and Y difficult (Lijphart, 1971). Qualitative analysis

techniques have the ability to analyze multiple conjunctural causes and was used additionally as a tool for analyzing the cases, improving the reliability and internal validity (Yin, 2013). For this effect, the illustrative analysis method was used (Neuman, 2014).

2.5 Assessment of limitations

In the previous chapters, elements that improve the validity and reliability have already been addressed. This section further elaborates by assessing the limitations. Although validity and reliability are closely associated with quantitative measurement, the principles are addressed, however differently.

Reliability

The first and foremost limitation of this study is the limited accessibility to primary sources regarding the cases of lone actor terrorist attacks. Smith (2008) argues that secondary sources could be a matter of concern to the level of accuracy and interpretation which would have implications for the reliability and validity. In addition, there is even less information on lone actor terrorist attacks before the rise of the internet (Neuman, 2014; Quiggin, 2013). For this thesis cases were also chosen for their availability of primary and secondary sources, although it still is possible for the cases to have limited information. Furthermore, already mentioned is the subjectivity of choosing cases which regard to lone actor terrorism. It is not always granted that the case in question is interpreted differently by other researchers of public officials. With regard to this implication, the cases chosen were well considered based on the definition used for lone actor terrorism in the thesis (which can be found in Chapter 1). This indirectly refers to an implication with qualitative research: a certain *bias* in data collection and/or analysis that is distorted by the researcher's 'theory'. According to Maxwell (2013), this is nearly impossible to eliminate. However, this is not the main concern in qualitative research where context among variables is what is of importance.

Validity

Internal validity proves if the research is measuring what it is supposed to measure (Neuman, 2014). Addressing if indicators of a lone actor terrorist attack influences the lethality is important in this exploratory case study. However, with comparative case studies it is difficult to limit extraneous variables. To address this, the selected cases for the comparative case study design were as similar as possible (Lijphart, 1971). 'Rich data' of lone actor terrorist attacks are needed for research, which improve the validity (Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, cases with rich data were chosen, but this rarely represents the entire population affecting the external validity. In addition, bound to the limitation of time, a weakness of this comparative case study is the small number of cases in order to be generalizable. The generalizability refers to the extent to which a wider scope can be attributed to the

results than the examined case itself. However, to be generalizable is of less importance in an exploratory research (Neuman, 2014). It can contribute to the inferential process by enabling the most appropriate cases, and analytic generalization could be possible and case design contributes to the inferential process (Yin, 2013; Maxwell, 2013; Neuman, 2014; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). In addition, the thesis also contributes to discover contrasts, similarities or patterns across the cases which could be used for further research.

To improve the external validity this study picked cases of lone actor terrorist attacks that were deviant cases as well as typical cases. When expectations can be formulated from any source with regard to the normal situation, information about the deviating cases can provide more insight into the circumstances in which statements of a more general nature must be nuanced. With regard to typical cases, this is the opposite of deviant cases. By having typical cases in this research, the information cannot be rejected on grounds of its specific or deviant nature. (Hutjes & Buuren, 1992; Lijphart, 1971)

3 Literature review

In this chapter the literature review is addressed to gather and assess what is known about the lethality of lone actor terrorism. Although some studies are conducted addressing the lethality of terrorist attacks (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Alakoc, 2017; Phillips, 2017; Corner & Gill, 2015), the two previous chapters have outlined the scarcity of information on the topic. The aim is to use the available literature to arrive at an analytical framework for analyzing lone actor terrorist lethality in a qualitative set up. In order to do so, main findings that appear to influence the lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks were identified. Some indicators are derived from studies that focused on group-based terrorism. Where applicable, group-based findings are 'translated' to apply to lone actors as well. When taking, among others, the literature into consideration, certain elements appear to influence the lethality. These elements are brought under *motivation, capacity,* both of which influence the *target planning*, that complete the analytical framework. These factors are the structure in the subsequent chapter for the assessment of the six cases.

3.1 Motivation

A lone actor terrorist can be as deadly as he wants to be: he has no limitations in deadliness that group-based terrorism might have (Phillips, 2017). Mass killings of people with other 'views' could, for ideologically motivated lone actors be a process, of showing others the 'light' and is a motivation to kill even more (Maynard, 2014). Motivation for this thesis refers to "… an individual goal-directed attention toward planning, preparing, and ultimately committing an act of terrorist violence." (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018, p. 1192). It is argued that ideologically motivated, lone actor terrorists have a lower moral ground to conduct lethal attacks (Bandura, 1990). While lone actor terrorists operate alone, being influenced by ideology remains a social interaction: "Almost all of our knowledge is acquired, not by our own autonomous exploration, but relying on information from others." (Baurmann, 2007, p. 151). Maynard (2014) describes ideology as "… a distinctive system of normative, semantic, and/or reputedly factual ideas, typically shared by members of groups or societies, which underpins their understandings of their political world and shapes in their political behaviour." (p. 824). Maynard (2014) further argues that the pathways of ideology to mass killing are threefold for the individual to have an ideological justification to violence. These are to generate *motives* for violence, *legitimating* perceptions to make violence permissible, and/or to provide rationalizing *resources* for dealing with the 'permission' of violence after the violence occurs (Grossman, 2005; Maynard, 2014).

Another trajectory suggests that the type of ideology influences the lethality. Hoffman (1999) argues that the degree of lethality is influenced by ideological perspectives: "…terrorism motivated in whole or in part by religious imperatives has often led to more intense acts of violence that have produced

considerably higher levels of fatalities – at least compared with the relatively more discriminate and less lethal incidents perpetrated by secular terrorist organizations." (p. 19). In addition, according to Asal & Rethemeyer (2008) ideology has two characteristics that influence a degree in lethality. The first characteristic is the ideology's *audience* and the second characteristic is the ideology's *capacity* to define the 'other'. Ideology's audience refers to the lone actor's his or her supernatural audience. Other ideologies are more 'earthly' audiences what they call ethnonationalists (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008), which is similar to Drake's premise of audience and othering (Drake, 1998). The capacity of defining the 'other' consists of people of the general population that is regarded by the lone actor as the 'other'. If a lone actor views converts as a cause, then the lone actor has an incentive to be higher up the 'moral ground' to justify the killing. This would lead to an assumption to legitimize killings, the more the better, increasing the lethality of attacks and showing a variance in lethality via the ideology of a lone actor terrorist (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008).

Regardless of ideology's differentiation, "terrorist ideology, no matter how unrealistic, must be taken seriously as a guide to intentions. Coupled with analysis of capabilities it provides a basis for expectations." (Crenshaw, 1987, p. 15). However, motivations for terrorists to become violent remain vague. This is due to the combination of extreme ideology and own personal grievances, leading that the truth lies in the mind of the terrorist (Spaaij, 2012).

3.2 Capacity

In order for motivation to sustain for conducting an attack, a lone actor terrorist also has to have a perceived capability to carry out a terrorist attack successfully, although according to the study of Schuurman, Bakker, Gill & Bouhana, (2018), not all lone actors a capable terrorists. For group based terrorism to be lethal, they must have the capabilities and resources to successfully carry out their plans (Jackson & Frelinger, 2009), and having more resources can lead to bigger (and complex) terrorist attacks with possibly more fatalities (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Boyns & Ballard, 2004; Drake, 1998). However, Spaaij (2012) argues that while lone actor terrorist attacks are on the rise, this is not the case with the overall lethality if the higher number of victims is the main aim of the attack. In the study of Asal and Rethemeyer (2008) 'resources' have a practical, financial and cognitive element. In addition, Asal, Gill, Rethemeyer & Horgan (2015) stated that the variety of lethality between group-based terrorist attacks is the capability of such terrorists. Capability in their study consisted not only of the acquisition of funds, weapons, and explosives, but also the presence of a basic level of experience and technical proficiency. These and antecedent violent behavior are addressed.

Experience with weapons

Fluctuations in expertise or experience to make bombs or use firearms is a determining factor to what extent a lone actor terrorist is lethal (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Asal, Gill, Rethemeyer, & Horgan, 2015). Statistically, having experience with weapons is an important factor to be more lethal. However, this claim is not conclusive as Breivik was not experienced in any weaponry (Ellis, et al., 2016). Military personnel could be more experienced to use weaponry than civilians. In the United States, however, the use of firearms is more common among civilians suggesting they also have a degree of experience in firearms. Limited weapons related expertise could account for lower lethality. This supports that some lone actor terrorist chose to conduct less sophisticated modes of attack to be successful as making bombs proved to be difficult, or bombs were difficult to acquire and the use of firearms does not need a lot of training (Van der Heide, 2011; Kenney, 2010; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017).

Availability of weapons

Even when a terrorist has experience with firearms or has bomb-making skills, without funds and weapons his or her capacity is limited. The availability of weapons is a central theme for the development of an attack (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). To acquire weapons, a terrorist needs funds. While the availability of having funds does not directly lead to increased lethality, having funds to acquire equipment does (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008). Terrorists need money to acquire weapons and transportation to conduct their attack. Just as ordinary people, terrorists gain their funds either legal or illegal (Drake, 1998). A terrorist does not need the most sophisticated weaponry to be lethal. However, without the availability of weapons the extent of their capacity is limited (Drake, 1998).

The availability of weaponry differs among countries. It could be argued that firearms are easily accessible national attributes in the United States that could make lone actor terrorists more lethal than in other countries (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Phillips, 2017). A study on weapon use in the United States indicated that firearms are the most used weaponry for lone actor terrorists in the post 9/11 era (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Before that it was bombings, however, the United States restricted the purchase of bomb making materials which could explain the increase of lethality by firearms (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). There are multiple examples of lone actor terrorists using (advanced) firearms like Anders Breivik, Nidal Hasan, or Omar Mateen, who all killed exceptional high number of people (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Norges Offentlige Utredninger, 2012).

Another example of weaponry that can be used by terrorists is the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which Breivik addressed in his manifest (Berwick, 2011; Duyvesteyn, 2004). A particularly lethal form of weaponry is suicide attacks as they are by nature more conducive than non-suicide attacks. A terrorist has his own attack under control with regard to timing and location. Hence, a

suicide attack is utilized optimally when the target is densely populated and easily accessible (Alakoc, 2017). Also, knives can be used, although the lethality rate is the lowest among conventional weaponry (Ellis, et al., 2016). The use of vehicles, like the terrorist attack in Nice where Mohamed Bouhlel killed 84 people, is an example that ordinary equipment also can turn extremely deadly (BBC, 2016; Duyvesteyn, 2004; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017).

Antecedent violent behavior

To overcome the moral discipline to kill others could also be via internalization of extremist ideology or to view violence with the intent to desensitize, improving capability acquisition (Bandura, 1990). Therefore, the capacity of a lone actor terrorist to conduct a terrorist attack also has a cognitive dimension that could influence the lethality (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). A lone actor terrorist could pragmatically be capable to conduct a terrorist attack and be ideologically motivated to see the 'others' as inferior. Still, a lone actor terrorist needs a psychological impetus in order to engage in a violent attack, which does not come easily (Gill & Corner, 2016; Bouhana & Wikström, 2010). Hamm and Spaaij (2017) refer to this psychological impetus as the 'warrior subculture' (p. 55). For example, James Kopp, a terrorist who shot and killed Dr. Barnett Slepian for anti-abortion motivations, opened his testimony in court with the following: "To pick up a gun and aim it at another human being, and to fire, it's not a human thing to do. It's not nice. It's not pleasant. It's gory, it's bloody. It overcomes every human instinct" (UPI, 2002).

Military studies regarding having the psychological capability to kill another suggest that killing within a group is easier than killing as a lone actor terrorist (Grossman, 2005). Social interaction, such as cognitive, evaluative, or affective elements within a group, can impact and shape behavior. This is difficult to realize for a lone actor given the fact that he or she is not impacted by a group (Gill & Corner, 2016). In Anders Breivik's manifesto, Breivik acknowledges the difficulty of preparing mentally alone for an attack (Berwick, 2011). Thus, if the lone actor has a history of violence or has experience to conduct violence, that individual could have less boundaries to cross to overcome the psychological factor to kill another (Gill & Corner, 2016).

3.3 Target planning

Target planning couples the elements of *motivation* and *capacity* of a lone actor terrorist's for conducting an attack. Empirical research conducted regarding the tactics of a lone actor terrorist argue that lone actor terrorist attacks are 'rarely' sudden or/and impulsive, and that multiple factors influence target planning (Gill, Horgan, & Deckert, 2014). The ICCT supplements this by stating that target selection is exceptionally diverse (Bakker & De Graaf, 2010). In addition, Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, and Bouhana (2018) argued that motivation and capability are related situational processes as

capability is associated with the attack preparation and planning. It is used to sustain beyond the perception of motivation for a person and to have a perception of initial capability to actually initiate an attack and therefore have some form of pre-attack behavior. This suggests that certain ideologies coupled with the capacities of a terrorist provide a basis of expectations (Crenshaw, 1987). In sum, ideology and capacity influence the *target planning*, resulting in variances of lethality via target selection, weapon choice, duration of planning and target characteristics that are addressed here below.

Target selection

When terrorists make the decision to use violence, one step is to determine who or what will be attacked (Drake, 1998). Ideology is an important component in target selection for terrorists, as ideology defines how terrorists see the world around them, defining a degree in being discriminate (Asal, et al., 2009; Bandura, 1990; Becker, 2014; Drake, 1998). Drake (1998) argues about targeting: "Whilst the ideology of a terrorist group sets out the moral parameters within which they operate, the selection of targets is also affected by the effect or effects which they wish their violence to achieve." (p. 53). Events and actions of potential victims and other actors are being interpreted in terms of the terrorist's cause (Drake, 1998, p. 23). The ideology of a terrorist identifies who the enemies are by applying a measure of who is 'good' and who is 'bad', making some targets legitimate in their cause, suggesting a variance in lethality (Duyvesteyn, 2004). Research suggests that ideologies that have more 'earthly' audiences are not as broad hatred and permissive morally characterized as religious ideologies. This is contested by other studies, arguing that both religious and 'earthly' ideologies can be as indiscriminate in target selection (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Benjamin & Simon, 2000; Laqueur, 2001; Maynard, 2014). In addition, according to the concept of New Terrorism, target selection is no longer selecting a symbolic target, but has a more indiscriminate nature to achieve as much damage as possible (Duyvesteyn, 2004). However, Duyvesteyn (2004) disagrees, arguing that evidence does not support this completely as targets can still be symbolic for the attacker (Hoffman, 2006; Duyvesteyn, 2004). It comes down to the view of the future victims. If they are seen as potential converts to the cause, the terrorist has an incentive to be discriminate about who he kills (Hoffman, 2006). Otherwise there is a clear dividing line leading between 'good' and 'bad' for the terrorist to be more indiscriminate (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Asal, et al., 2009; Drake, 1998; Juergensmeyer, 2003).

Weapon choice

Next to choosing targets within their ideology, a lone actor terrorist chooses the weapon that fits his cause. Non-empirical and more anecdotal studies regarding lone actor terrorists attacks argue that simple forms of weaponry, like firearms or knives, are being used (Burton & Stewart, 2008; Phillips,

2017; Simon, 2015). Conventional weapons remain lethal instruments, although some studies suggest a trend in WMD (Duyvesteyn, 2004). For example, Simon (2015) argues that lone actor terrorists more easily will use WMD over group-based terrorism because they do *not* have to fear a backlash from society and restrictions of terrorist organizations. However, Duyvesteyn (2004) contests the use of WMD as it is only used twice, seeing no trend in the use of WMD. Still, weapon choice is also influenced by the ideology of the lone actor terrorist. If the lone actor is discriminate in its killing, WMD is not favorable as they are also likely to kill people that are 'good' in their ideology.

Duyvesteyn (2004) did argue a discrepancy among the willingness to die for ideological motives and the willingness to take lives. This assumption suggests that terrorists could use self-sacrifice for their ideology as a self-gratifying reward, closely related to religious ideology, potentially increasing the lethality as they do not need an escape plan (Alakoc, 2017; Clarke & Newman, 2006). However, required for this is a specific typology of instrumental-rational behavior influenced weapon choice for reaching their goals (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2011). The type of weapon chosen by the lone actor terrorist can have a constraining effect on the selected target (Clarke & Newman, 2006). For example, although is it increasingly easy to find manuals for making bombs, it remains difficult to successfully build a bomb that also requires more planning (Asal, Gill, Rethemeyer, & Horgan, 2015). Because of the sophistication of making bombs, lone actor terrorists tend to use weapons that are easy to operate and access, like firearms or knives (Gruenewald, Chermak, & Freilich, 2013).

With regard to the United States, a study claimed that the use of explosives was preferred in U.S. based lone actor attacks (Ellis, et al., 2016). However, this study was argued to be biased in regard to the methodology due to so called 'sting' operations of law enforcement that tricked the potential terrorist buying explosives (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015). Instead, since 9/11 firearms have displaced explosives as favored due to the relative ease to acquire firearms in the United States (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Lindekilde, O'Connor, & Schuurman, 2017).

Pre-attack planning

Characteristics regarding lone actor terrorist attacks are present in literature, with numerous studies conducted regarding the pre-attack behavior (Corner & Gill, 2015; Ellis, et al., 2016; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). For example, some studies conclude that lone actor attacks are random and impulsive (Meloy & Pollard, 2017). Other studies argue the contrary and conclude that lone actor terrorists follow more or less the same planning and preparation as group-based terrorists (Gill, Horgan, & Deckert, 2014; Ellis, et al., 2016). Lindekilde, O'Connor & Schuurman (2017) studied differences occurring in the pre-attack behavior of Autonomous and Volatile radicalized lone actor terrorists. They argued that when there is more time spent on preparing for an attack, there seems to be a higher number of casualties. In their study, autonomous lone actors

are being described as individuals that are socially and politically well integrated in radical milieus, and volatile lone actors refers to "…brief interludes of intense political or religious engagement before reverting to patterns of hedonistic behavior…" (Lindekilde, O'Connor, & Schuurman, 2017, p. 5). Their exploratory study argued that autonomous radicalized lone actors are more successful in their attack due to their pre-attack behaviors with a longer route of preparation than volatile lone actors that conduct attacks more impulsively (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill, & Bouhana, 2018). A recent study argues that terrorists execute a cost-benefit analysis which measures the success rate contrary to the possible failure of an attack when taking in consideration their *motivation* and *capacity* (Gill, Marchment, Corner, & Bouhana, 2018). In sum, it suggests that careful planning of an attack could lead to more fatalities.

Target characteristics

Terrorists choose targets with a cost-benefit analysis with value-maximizing solutions (Asal, et al., 2009; Gill, Marchment, Corner, & Bouhana, 2018). Therefore, inter alia they intend to increase the probability of success with target selection on their objectives. A recent quantitative study on the relationship between the surroundings of a target and lethality of domestic extremist incidents in the United States was conducted in which the 'EVIL DONE' (Exposed, Vital, Iconic, Legitimate, Destructible, Occupied, Near, Easy) framework by Clarke and Newman (2006) was used. The principle of the framework is that certain locations have certain vulnerabilities that, when chosen by a terrorist for attack, increases the lethality of such an attack (St. George, Chermak, Holt, McGarrell, & Thomas, 2017). Relevant to this thesis target characteristics are if the target is easy to access, is occupied by potential victims, and/or is easy to destroy.

A target is considered 'easy' if the target has limited security measures taken to counter a threat, dividing a target in soft and hard targets (Asal, et al., 2009). So called 'soft-targets', which are vulnerable people with no security, are chosen particularly by terrorists with ideological motives and Volatile actors (Lindekilde, O'Connor, & Schuurman, 2017). It shows the 'moral framework' in which the terrorists act. 'Hard' targets, or high value targets, are potential victims with more security making them more difficult to eliminate (Asal, et al., 2009; St. George, Chermak, Holt, McGarrell, & Thomas, 2017). It is expected that when high-value targets are chosen, the target planning of a lone actor terrorist is more complex than when a softer target is chosen (Gill & Corner, 2016). It could be argued that targets are considered 'secured' in the eyes of the terrorist when it is not secured (Clarke & Newman, 2006; St. George, Chermak, Holt, McGarrell, & Thomas, 2017). An 'Occupied' target is a target that has people in or around it. When there is a high number of people at the target, it increases the lethality. This can be related to a method of killing called 'corralling' by the United States Marshals Lone Wolf Terrorism Task Force. Corralling refers to victims that are inside a (packed) 'comfort zone', and thus where victims do not pay attention to their surroundings and will

not have any guard (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Destructible targets are targets that can, in varying degrees, be destroyed which could lead to mass casualties.

3.4 Analytical framework

This section summarizes the literature review to arrive at an analytical framework that was used for the assessment of the six cases. Each element, *motive*, *capacity*, and *target planning* is addressed, and how the variances among the elements were analyzed is elaborated upon.

Motivation

Lone actor terrorists have a variety of ideological backgrounds that depict how they see the world around them, and therefore, specify who is the enemy (Spaaij, 2012). The categories that this thesis used to classify ideology are leftist, rightist, nationalist-separatist, religion, and single issue based on the study of Piazza (2009). Already established is that ideology could influence the degree of lethality of a terrorist attack (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Crenshaw, 1987; Maynard, 2014; Phillips, 2017). To analyze the justification for violence, six recurring 'justificatory mechanisms' of Maynard (2014) that describe how ideology is 'fed' to perpetrators was used. These are dehumanization, guilt-attribution, threat-construction, deagentification, virtue-talk, and future-bias (Maynard, 2014, pp. 830-833). The first three mechanisms primarily focus on the victims to portray them as subhuman, referring to the 'othering' of Asal and Rethemeyer (2008). The latter three focus on the perpetrator himself. While the mechanisms are explained as separate functioning mechanisms, the mechanisms are intertwined and complement each other.

Dehumanization of the victims encourages killings in multiple ways (Drake, 1998). The first is excluding the victims from the universe of obligations perceived by the perpetrator (Opotow, 1990). The second is to motivate violence via revulsion and the need to 'purify' alien infections. The third and last is to provide a 'euphemistic lexicon' communication about the killing, such as 'cleaning' or 'pest-control'. This eases the legitimation and rationalization (Maynard, 2014). Accusing victims of past or present crimes is another way to portray victims to justify killings, which Maynard (2014) refers to guilt-attribution. The perpetrator would generate the desire of vengeance by framing the victims as targets to legitimize killings (Drake, 1998). Usually a clear proof of the victim's guilt is unavailable (Maynard, 2014). Another mismatch between the eyes of an outsider and the mind of the perpetrator is to see the harmless victims as dangerous threats. What is important is the *perceived* perspective in the killer's ideological worldview that the victims are threatening (Chirot & McCauley, 2010). Threat-construction has three effects: frame the victims to legitimized targets, reframing the killer's legitimacy to kill, and to establish a clear motivation to kill. Maynard (2014) refers with deagentification to the lack of the perpetrator's meaningful responsibility on the causes of his killings.

Instead, the killer sees their individual actions as atrocity-justified ideologies and as an inevitable or necessary act (Spaaij, 2012; Maynard, 2014). Some justifying ideologies for the perpetrator's killings come from quasi-deterministic conceptions of history. In sum, deagentification shields the killer's perception of moral responsibility for the killings caused (Maynard, 2014). Maynard (2014) refers with virtue-talk to the rhetorical presentation of killings as a token of the praiseworthy character. Therefore, virtue-talk attempts to connect the killings with sedimented, respectable social values, such as duty, vigilance, courage etc., degenerating moral qualms or resistance (Maynard, 2014; Moskalenko & McCauley, 2011). Extremist ideology could mark a utopian killing justification. Future-bias to a future-orientated moral fallacy that the present killings outweigh the future positives to justify the killings. The future-bias is amplified with historical context of authorities that previously saw moral ground of killing the innocent for a better future (Maynard, 2014).

Capacity

With regard to capacity, the analysis mainly took into consideration to what extent the lone actor terrorist had funds to come by weaponry and develop his attack, to what extent the terrorist had experience or expertise with the use of weaponry such as bombs or firearms, if the terrorist conducted training with the selected weaponry, and to what extent the terrorist had antecedent violent behavior. With regard to funds: funds do not make someone more lethal, having funds in order to train or acquire firearms or bomb making material does, influencing the capacity, and therefore is included. With regard to antecedent violent behavior, the lone actor could have military experience, or the lone actor had any *criminal convictions* prior to his attack, and/or the lone actor had any *history in violent behavior* that could increase the moral disengagement to kill another (Gill & Corner, 2016). For example, the terrorist could have had training to conduct violence or have had a tour to a violent conflict when he was in the military. Criminal convictions could also be an identification for a violent history, as some criminal offenses lead to more violence as others. Other possibilities that suggest an increase in past violent behavior were taken into consideration.

Target planning

Target planning couples the elements *motivation* and *capacity*. Therefore, for this element the indicators of *motivation* and *capacity* will show variances that influence the indicators for this element. One of which is target selection, and with that, to what extent the target is discriminate, the target is easy, occupied, and secured. Also, motivation and capacity could indicate to what extent there was a certain pre-attack behavior, influencing the level of patience and duration of the lone actor's attack. Finally, weapon choice is taken into the analysis as both elements influence which sort of weapon was used.

Visualization of analytical framework

To have a clear visual of the theoretical relationships among constructs and concepts, an analytical framework is given that can be seen in table 2. The constructs are mutually interdependent and by analyzing the cases from this framework, data, design and theory are brought together (Neuman, 2014).

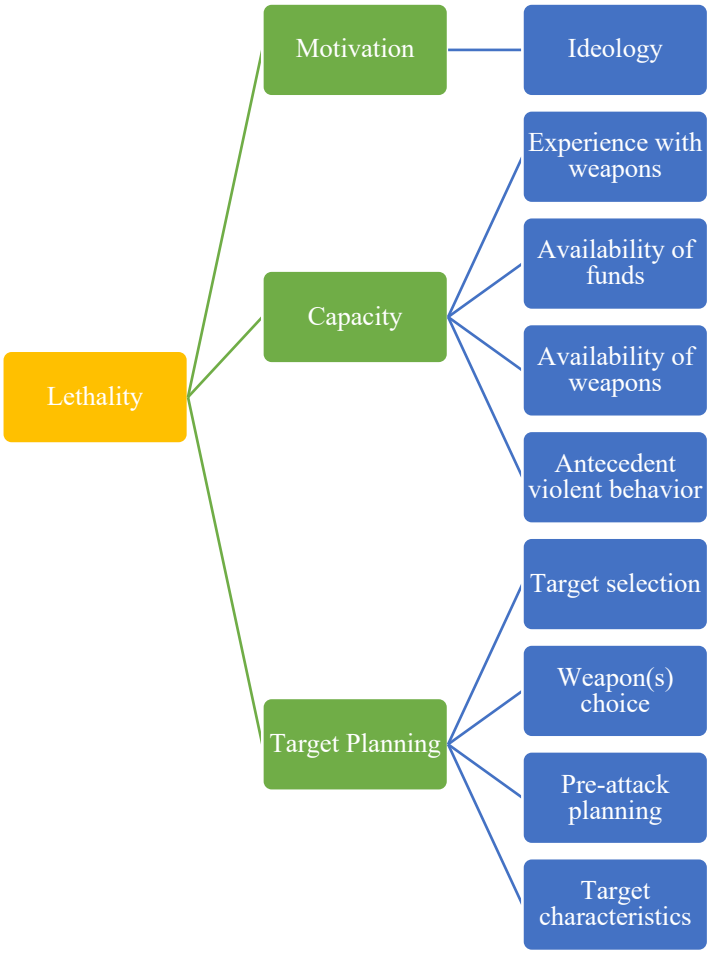

Table 2: Visualization of the analytical framework.

4 Analysis

This chapter consists of a comprehensive analysis of the cases and it is structured as follows. Each case starts with a chronological description of the case that leans into the indicators described in the analytical framework. After the description of the case, an analysis is conducted on each case that specifically takes up the elements of *motivation*, *capacity*, and *target planning* and to what extent each indicator explains the lethality of a lone actor terrorist attack. The first three cases are the cases that had a low number of fatalities, followed by the three cases with a high number of fatalities. This leads to the first case of Adbdulhakim Muhammad, followed by Frazier Glenn Miller, Mir Aimal Kansi, Ted Kaczynski, Nidal Hasan, and lastly Omar Mateen. After all cases are described and analyzed, a brief overview of the main findings is given.

4.1 Adbdulhakim Muhammad

Adbdulhakim Muhammad was born on July 9, 1985 as Carlos Bledsoe and grew up in Memphis, Tennessee (Bledsoe, 2011). According to the father of Adbdulhakim, in his early days he was a happy kid, liked his dogs, and eventually graduated from high school in 2003 and went to college at Tennessee State University in Nashville. During a telephone interview with Melvin Bledsoe, the father of Abdulhakim, he stated that Abdulhakim was involved in his family business and wanted, therefore, to have a bachelor's in business administration (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). However, Adbdulhakim's own reflection of his history was less positive as he explains that he was suspended at school on multiple occasions for fighting and characterizing himself as being a gang member (Gray, 2010). While his affiliation of being a gang member can be overrated, however, a police report describes an incident in which Adbdulhakim was fighting with another man and that both were being affiliated with a gang that was called 'Vice Lords' (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014).

Adbdulhakim was involved in more violent incidents according to records from Shelby County Sheriff's Office (Gray, 2010). One of which is that Adbdulhakim entered a barbershop and asked Derrick Cathey to go outside so that they could fight each other. Employees of the barbershop told Adbdulhakim to leave, which he did. However, he returned to the barbershop with a couple of friends and pulled a knife (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). Another incident involves a car crash where the car of Adbdulhakim was hit. Adbdulhakim got out of his car and started to damage the other car with brass knuckles. He also threatened the driver of the other car with death (Gray, 2010; Stambaugh, 2009). After Abdulhakim's violent history and terrorist attack prosecutor Larry Jegley would state in an interview with Gartenstein-Ross that he thought Abdulhakim ended up being a killer without being Islamic radicalized, while Abdulhakim's lawyer Hensley argued the contrary (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014).

One incident would change his life in such way that he became interested in religion. It started when a car was pulled over by the police with Abdulhakim in the back seat. The driver fled the scene while Abdulhakim was arrested. When the car was searched, the police found weapons and drugs in the car, a shotgun, a SKS assault rifle, and some marijuana. Abdulhakim claimed to the police that he was trying to sell it all to the man that fled the scene (Harper, 2004). For his actions, Abdulhakim would face up to 14 years in prison. However, this frightened Abdulhakim, he wrote in one of his letters to Kristina Goetz, and with his lawyer they were offered a plea deal that included a year probation (Goetz, 2010).

The fear of being imprisoned for so many years motivated Abdulhakim to become interested in religion to improve his life, he wrote. He first looked at Christianity, but that did not convince him because it was not comprehensible (Goetz, 2010). After some other religions, Abdulhakim ended up exploring Islam. Abdulhakim became enthusiastic with Islam and the congregants in the mosque he visited accepted Abdulhakim "…embraced me [Abdulhakim] like I was a long (lost) brother." (Goetz, n.d.). He was given a Qur'an which he read, ending up becoming Muslim (Goetz, 2010). After Abdulhakim's conversion he embraced the practice of Salafism. His parents noticed that Abdulhakim took down the pictures from the walls in his bedroom, including that of Martin Luther King, which held an emotional resonance with the family (Bledsoe, 2011). When his parents asked why he did this, his answer was to honor Allah, as certain Islamic rulings say that pictures depicting anything with a soul is impermissible (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). In addition, his dog also had to go for Islamic reasons. Abdulhakim adopted more legalistic practices from there on out, one of which was changing his name (Homeland Security, 2015).

In 2007, Abdulhakim left the United States to go to Yemen to seek more knowledge of Islam and the religious practice as Salafi (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). In his letters to Goetz from prison, Abdulhakim wrote that he loved the Jihad even before he went to Yemen (Goetz, 2010). It is unclear what precisely Abdulhakim acquired in Yemen, but it is interpreted as to learn more about the Islam (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). Abdulhakim would later express a worldview that embraced the need for violent action. The following statement shows Abdulhakim put political rage in the center of his explanation of his actions:

"What lead to the attack on the Recruiting Center was this. America and it's allies are waging an all-out war on Islam and Muslims. Even before 9/11 it was involved in a war against Islam. The US Foreign Policy regarding occupied Palestine was the sole purpose of 9/11. In Islam there's a call to duty -Jihad- and it's of different types but the one I'm mentioning is a defensive struggle or fight with weapons against those who attack, kill, maim the Muslims. And this is apart of Islam. […] Like I said before in a past interview we believe in an eye for eye not turn the other cheek. Now it's an all-out

war on America and I'm on the other side. The side of the Muslims Yes! […] We are all brothers under the same banner. Fighting for the same cause which is to rid the Islamic world of Infidel and Apostate Hypocritic regimes and Crusader Invaders and re-establish the Caliphate, the Islamic Empire and Islamic Law as was ended officially in 1924 by the fall of the Ottomans." (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014, p. 118)

It is unclear at what point Abdulhakim accepted the fact that he needed to take violent action. His writings from prison revealed that he did not receive military training in Yemen. Abdulhakim wrote that if he had received military training "My drive-by would have been a drive-in, with no one [sic] escaping the aftermath!!" (Goetz, n.d.). However, Abdulhakim was arrested by the Yemini police in 2008 and the FBI visited him while he was in Yemen, a U.S. counterterrorism official told Gartenstein-Ross in an interview (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). He was suspected of being a militant, especially by his fake Somali passport at the time of his arrest and was placed on the Terrorism Watch List (Dao & Johnston, 2009; Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Abdulhakim would later write to Goetz that he had a Somali passport to travel to Somalia to receive military and weapons training (Goetz, 2010).

In 2009**,** Abdulhakim was deported back to United States where he lived with his family. However, before his return to the United States, Abdulhakim stated that he already had intentions to conduct a terrorist attack in the United States. He planned attacks on the military recruiting centers and Jewish organizations. Abdulhakim would look for possible locations in multiple cities (Gray, 2010). To prepare for his attack, Abdulhakim bought multiple guns and ammunition. Abdulhakim even bought a .22 rifle in Wallmart to examine if the FBI would track him down. This was not the case, giving him the impetus to proceed with his attack (Gray, 2010).

On the day of his attack, his journey to the attack did not go according to plan (Goetz, n.d.). At his first targeted location, the house of a rabbi in Nashville, the Molotov cocktail that he used bounced off the window of the house. After his failed terrorist attack, he fled the scene and went for his next preselected target, an army recruiting center in Florence, Kentucky. However, that center turned out to be closed (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). Abdulhakim was downhearted by his failures, but when he returned to Little Rock, he saw two soldiers standing in front of the recruiting center and saw his (however unplanned) opportunity, he wrote (Goetz, n.d.). Abdulhakim drove his SUV next to William Long and Quinton Ezeagwula around 10:00 a.m. when he rolled down his side window and began shooting with his SKS rifle towards the two soldiers. Long was dead instantly as Ezeagwula was hit and crawled back to the recruiting center to find shelter from the incoming gunfire (Baer, 2009; Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). Abdulhakim continued to fire into the recruitment center where fifteen other personnel remained inside (Nelson, n.d.)**.** When the clip of his rifle was empty, he fled the scene by

driving off. However, when he drove away his tailgate of his car was down, which was a mistake and what made him easier for the police to spot, according to Abdulhakim (Muhammad, n.d.).

Abdulhakim did not resist when he was arrested (Gorbet, 2009). When he was brought in for questioning, Abdulhakim told Detective Matt Nelson and Tommy Hudson that he was Muslim and shot the soldiers because he was angry at the U.S. military (Hudson, 2009). He stated that if there had been more soldiers, he would have shot them too (Nelson, n.d.). Furthermore, Abdulhakim claimed that the film 'Fitna Exposed', an anti-Islam film by Dutch parliamentarian Geert Wilders, was his trigger event, and that he went insane by that particular film (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014). However, Abdulhakim would change his story to what he previously claimed, which was that he already had the intention to carry out an attack when he was in Yemen (Goetz, 2010). He stuck to this story ever since. After his attack Abdulhakim claimed he was associated with al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) based on shared values: "Our goal is to rid the Islamic world of Idols and Idolaters, Paganism and Pagans, Infidelity and Infidels, […], democracy and democrats and relaunch the Islamic caliphate …" (Goetz, n.d.). During Abdulhakim's detention he continued waging the jihad by having multiple violent incidents, still fighting the 'infidels' (Gartenstein-Ross, 2014).

Analysis

At first, Abdulhakim's religious beliefs were non-violent as he wanted to improve his life from his violent adolescence. With regard to his motivations for violent actions, Abdulhakim shows with his statement his anger towards U.S. foreign policy, amongst other in Palestine, and he sees a war against Islam. He describes that his religious obligation is to give rise to or to conduct violent action, which is a form of deagentification. He suggests a defensive Jihad, which is an expansionist warfare for every Muslim to defend the Islamic lands when it is attacked. Abdulhakim goes a step further as he wanted to re-establish the Caliphate by getting rid of non-believers, democrats, idolaters, and Pagans. His reasons for violent action suggest dehumanization of victims by portraying them as non-believers of Islam. Abdulhakim does not indicate that his victims are threats, rather he 'virtue-talks' his killings as a duty for the defensive jihad and that his killings are for better futures when the Caliphate is established. So far, Abdulhakim's ideology suggests a more indiscriminate nature. However, in his letters he denounced what happened to Palestine as Abdulhakim saw the Jews and US foreign policy as the reason for Palestine's suppression. In addition, in his target planning and actions he targeted Jews and U.S. military personnel, which suggests a discriminate target selection. This limited Abdulhakim's number of potential victims and, therefore, the lethality.

Police records and statements of Abdulhakim stated that he had antecedent violent experiences. However, the difference between his antecedent violent behavior and the perceived capability of

killing of a person seems too great to state that his violent history may have helped him, apart from his encounter with Islamic extremism. On the other hand, prosecutor Jegley thought that when looking at Abdulhakim's violent incidents, he eventually would end up having killed someone, without his motivation of Jihad. Jegley's remarks seem more directed towards the media rather than a conscious consideration of the evidence at hand. Therefore, Abdulhakim's case suggests that for Abdulhakim to kill someone could have been a greater struggle, limiting Abdulhakim's psychological freedom of killing people.

While Abdulhakim stated that his attack in Little Rock was not premeditated by a trigger event, this does not seem credible as he previously stated that he was in Yemen for knowledge about Islam and military training. In addition, when he went back to Little Rock, he was planning his attack by assessing multiple targets. Furthermore, Abdulhakim bought a large quantity of ammunition including multiple guns. One of those guns he bought to check if the FBI would make contact with him. This suggests that some form of premeditation was in play, however his planning seems fruitless. This is reflected when Abdulhakim did not enter the recruitment center where 15 other people were during the attack. It suggests that Abdulhakim either didn't know this which suggests unsophisticated pre-attack planning, or he was unwilling to die for his cause as the possibility of a shootout would increase had he gone inside. His suggested unwillingness for self-sacrifice is further reinforced as Abdulhakim did not resist his arrest.

The analysis suggests that Abdulhakim had little weapon experience and expertise. Firearms seems Abdulhakim's choice of weapon, although he also used a Molotov cocktail. However, Abdulhakim's actions regarding the Molotov cocktail, the discharge of his weapon only once and not reloading while he had sufficient ammunition and leaving the tailgate of his car open, suggests unprofessionalism in his actions. His unprofessional practical implementation seemed to extend to his knowledge of target characteristics, as the target was favorable with extent to his killing spree. This is due to the easily accessible center that housed 15 other individuals during the attack. If he had gone inside, his actions could have turned out more deadly.

4.2 Frazier Glenn Miller

Frazier Glenn Miller jr. was born in 1940 with this name. However, he is also known as Frazier Glenn Cross when he testified against white supremacists and entered a federal witness protection program in 1988 (SPLC, n.d.; Thomas, 2015). In this case description he will be called 'Miller'. Miller suspended his high school to join the U.S. Army. He was in active duty for 20 years and did two tours in the Vietnam War and was for 13 years a member of the Green Berets, a special operations group within the U.S. Army. Miller was forced to retire from the Army due to his Klan-related activities

(Martin & Kushner, 2011; SPLC, n.d.). Miller had an extensive violent anti-Semitic background. He was the founder and leader of the Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (CKKKK) and when that was abolished due to para-military activities, he created the White Patriot Party (Miller G. , 1999; SPLC, n.d.). Both were para-military organizations keen on inciting hate and/or violence against what they called 'niggers' and 'Jews' (Miller G. , 1999).

In 1987 he pleaded guilty to weapons charges and intimidation against Morris Dees (Martin & Kushner, 2011). He was further indicted for conspiring to acquire stolen military weapons, explosives, planning of robberies and constructing assassination plans. When he was arrested the police found automatic weapons, grenades, ammunition and C-4 explosives (SPLC, n.d.). Miller was sentenced to three years in prison. In prison Miller wrote a self-published autobiography called "A White Man Speaks Out" where he again mentions anti-Semitic views (Miller G. , 1999). Around 2010, Miller was running for Senate where he expressed his views on his political motives. He stated that: "We've sat back and allowed the Jews to take over our government […] We've allowed tens of millions of mud [black] people to invade our country" (SgtGlennMiller, 2010). On Miller's own website he stated: "… dark people multiply like rats all around us […] Our race is drowning literally in seas of colored mongrels." (Miller G. , n.d.), and: "Our forefathers were absolutely right to be racists and to discriminate in favor of themselves." (Miller G. , 2010).

Miller admired other neo-Nazis like Harpham, who attempted to bomb Martin Luther King, and Paul Franklin, who was convicted of eight racially motivated murders (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Coincidentally, Miller shot and killed three people on racial motivations. Miller shot from the back-parking lot at the Jewish Community Center in Overland Park, Kansas, where a singing contest was taking place. There he shot 69-year-old William Corporon and 14-year-old Reat Griffin Underwood who came for the competition. A couple of minutes later Miller shot and killed 53-year-old Terri LeManno at the Village Shalom retirement center (Hollingsworth, 2015).

On 23 October 2014 Miller gave a telephone interview from prison to James Day because he was concerned that he was not allowed to speak in court. In these recordings he admitted he was the gunman of the shooting in Overland Park (Cross, 2014a). In court he stated that he acted on defense of the white race (Eligon, 2015). On the telephone, he stated that his reason for the shooting was his conscience that compelled him to kill Jews, and that he felt perfectly justified for his killing. He further explained that two weeks prior to the shooting he went to the hospital with emphysema and the doctors said he had not much longer to live. He became frightened that he would not be able to kill any Jews in his life, speeding up his actions (Cross, 2014a; Hollingsworth, 2015). Miller told Judy Thomas that he was unable to get any weapons by himself because he was a convicted felon. He therefore told an acquaintance about his previous crimes as misdemeanors and asked the acquaintance

to buy three long guns at Walmart. This acquaintance was eventually charged for being a 'straw buyer' (Thomas, 2015).

Miller said that he conducted reconnaissance of the Jewish community center several times. The first time he went he did not bring any weapons with him as he was afraid that his vehicle was being tracked by law enforcement. He also expressed fear that he would not be killing Jews as his phone and laptop were being monitored and feared arrest (Cross, 2014a). He realized that this was not the case as he was looking for potential Jewish facilities to conduct an attack. Due to his search he found out about the singing contest the 14th of April and decided that this was the best moment to kill Jews (Cross, 2014a). Miller stated that during his reconnaissance there were never more than three people outside and that the event would probably have more people around the building, but this was not the case. In addition, he thought the community center would have armed guards on the 14th of April due to the event that was taking place in the center. Via depositions he claimed that the community center did in fact had three armed guards (Cross, 2014a). A couple of weeks later, he again walked around the community center to get familiar with the surroundings and to check if he would get arrested. He didn't, and according to Glenn Miller, that told him he was free to go (Cross, 2014a).

When he killed the grandfather, he also shot the little boy that was sitting next to the grandfather. He regrets shooting the boy, but he thought he was a Jew. However, "…because it was a dark and rainy day, and the fact that the boy was sitting in de passenger side of the vehicle and I shot him from the driver side of the vehicle, I did not see clear that he was a young boy." (Cross, 2014a). In addition, he thought as they were at the Jewish community center, they must have been Jews, stating: "You do not expect any Jews at a Christian community center, do you?" (Cross, 2014a). During the shootings he thought he would be shot, as the event in the community center presumably would have armed guards. Eventually, Miller drove to another Jewish location. According to Miller when arrived at the next location, LaManno looked like a 'typical' Jew. When he tried to shoot her his weapon jammed, then he reached for another in his car and eventually shot her (Hollingsworth, 2015). Right after he shot LeManno, a woman passed behind the car of LeManno. He pointed his shotgun towards her, but according to Miller she did not look like a Jew. Miller therefore screamed at her asking if she was a Jew (Cross, 2014a). The woman testified in court stating she said she only heard him asking the second time. She yelled no to Miller and that was Miller's reason not to kill her (Rizzo, 2015b).

Miller expected that he would have been shot by now and therefore left the area. Miller stated that he did not intend to flee the police as he needed his medication, otherwise he would die. He therefore drove a few blocks down the street where he saw an elementary school that was closed (Cross, 2014a). He entered the parking lot, sat on a rock near the school and called the police several times to turn himself in. However, there was no answer from the police. He therefore went back in his car and

drank liquor while waiting for the police. Eventually the police showed up and he was arrested. (Cross, 2014a)

When Miller was arrested his home was searched by the police, he asked how many Jews he killed while he was having a hard time to breath due to his illness (Rizzo, 2015b). It would later be determined that the victims he shot were actually Christians (Thomas, 2015). Inside his home the police found several anti-Semitic publications, including his own autobiography. Although no weapons were seized (Glenn Miller brought his guns to his shooting), multiple boxes of ammunition, a remaining container of a factory gun box, an owner's manual of a Remington 870 shotgun and an advertisement paper for this shotgun were found (Bauer, 2014).

Miller stated about the killings that he felt such overpowering joy, a feeling of total freedom. A feeling that he only felt before in 1967 when he became 'Jew-wise' (Cross, 2014a). In a second telephone interview from prison, Miller stated that a couple of weeks before the shooting he knew he was going to kill some Jews before he would die. Regarding the Christians that he killed at the Jewish fundraising event, he sees them as accomplices of the Jews, and therefore as enemies (Cross, 2014b).

Miller was put on trial for the shooting spree in Overland Park at the Community Jewish Center and Village Shalom retirement community on April 13th, 2014 (Rizzo, 2015a). In Miller's defense he stated: "I had no criminal intent; I had a patriotic intent to stop genocide against my people" (The Kansas City Star, 2015). Ultimately, Glenn Frazier Miller was founded guilty for premeditated murder and sentenced to death (Dubill, 2015; Kansas City Star, 2015).

Analysis

What stands out in Miller's case, is his military career and long anti-Semitic, extreme right-wing, and racial background, which suggest he was particularly lethal. Regarding the former, he had two tours to Vietnam and joined the Green Berets, suggesting that Miller was highly experienced in violence, combat, and shooting. His experience with violence did not stop when leaving the U.S. Army as he created two para-military styled organizations where his violent behavior and experience of combat continued. Regarding the latter, since the 1980's, Miller endorsed white-supremacists organizations including the starting of his own. Furthermore, Miller ran anti-Semitic advertisements during his run for Congress in Missouri (Martin & Kushner, 2011). It shows that Miller was surrounded by his own ideology for almost his entire life. He viewed Jews as the cause of all problems in the U.S., as 'rats' that needed to be cleaned, and that it was his patriotic duty to kill them, referring to virtue-talk. Furthermore, Miller refers to systematic killing of the Jews by Nazi-Germany as legitimate, suggesting a future-bias mechanism, legitimizing the killings by desensitizing his view further.

His ideological views and target selection of Jews suggest that he was discriminate with his killing. This was especially noticeable when he asked the woman who was fleeing the scene if she was a Jew and let her live when she said she was not. However, when he realized he had killed Christians he framed his killing in a way that the victims were also seen also as enemies, legitimizing his killing in relation to his ideological views. He also regrets killing the little boy, suggesting an additional discriminatory level regarding age. In sum, Miller's discriminatory level suggests a decrease in lethality.

It remains unclear to what extent Miller had any funds to acquire weapons. However, an informed guess is that Miller most likely received monthly payments from the military due to his long career in the Army, although it would not be much. Nevertheless, Miller did acquire weapons due to the relatively easy regulations in the United States. He let an accomplice buy them for him because of his record as a convicted felon. It is unclear if he wanted to use other sorts of weapons that would increase his lethality.

Miller carried out multiple reconnaissance in and around the two Jewish Centers to get familiar with the surroundings and to test if he would get arrested due to his own history. In addition, when he understood that the Jewish Community Center would have a singing contest, he thought there would be more people in and around the Jewish community center in Overland Park he could kill. This seemed convenient as Miller understood that he was not going to live long, so Miller sped up his actions for violent action on the day of the singing contest before he would die. This suggests that his pre-attack planning was established hastier than Miller probably would have wanted. On the other hand, his illness could be seen as a trigger-event for violent action where it is likely that if Miller wasn't ill, he would not have taken violent action at that time.

His premeditated planning and target selection of a Jewish center that held a singing contest suggests an intention of killing as many Jews as he could, increasing the lethality. However, Miller would eventually only shoot from the parking lot where it was relatively easy for individuals in the surrounding area to flee the scene. Miller gave no evidence wanting to go inside the building that could have resulted in corralling, resulting in a possible decrease in lethality due to target characteristics. The reason for Miller to stay in the parking lot could be that Miller thought the building itself would be defended by armed guards. It further suggests that something prevented him from leaving the car park, while his military experience and expertise suggest a sufficient weapon capability to conduct a more extensive attack. Perhaps it was his health or the danger of being shot by the alleged armed guards, which could suggest a more complex motivation. After his attack Miller called the police and did not put up a fight with them when he was arrested. In fact, Miller had a hard time breathing as he had emphysema during his arrest, which could be a reason that Miller was unable

to move sufficiently. Nevertheless, Miller's actions of not entering the building and calling the police to be arrested suggest that Miller was unwilling to die for his cause, although he knew he would die from emphysema soon and thought that he would die during his actions.

4.3 Mir Aimal Kansi

Mir Aimal Kansi was born in Quetta, Pakistan and came from a wealthy family. His father inherited land holdings in Quetta and increased their wealth via real estate, and a factory. Kansi's father had four daughters and three sons with his first wife. With his second wife, Mir Aimal Kansi was born and he grew up in Quetta (Stern, 2009). Kansi went to school there and earned a bachelor's in political science and was a member of the Pashtun student association for the rights of the Pashtuns in Pakistan (Stern, 2009). Kansi, who was interviewed by Poppe, said he used to go to refugee camps where they learned to shoot. Kansi also told Stern that he eventually bought an AK-47 rifle for target practice: "I like guns very much. It is part of our culture. We always keep guns at our home. My father, grandfather, had guns. We practiced shooting. There are many tribal conflicts." (Stern, 2009, p. 322)

Kansi moved to the United States on February 27, 1991. Right from the start he sought for help from the Pakistani community. Kansi eventually lived in a friend's apartment in Reston, Virginia. That spring, Kansi was able to go to work at Ace Movers as a courier (O'Harrow, 1993). For his work as a courier he drove regularly past the entrance of the C.I.A. headquarters at Langley, Virginia. The owner of Ace Movers later said to The Washington Post that it was odd that he already bought a Honda of 8.000 dollars, while at the same time he owned a pick-up truck and just arrived in the United States, while he just worked at Ace Movers briefly (O'Harrow, 1993; Stein, 1998). Members of Kansi's family reported that he was given around 100.000 dollars inheritance when his father died (Burns, 1997; O'Harrow, 1993; Stern, 2009). On January 10th, Kansi bought a Colt AR-15 assault rifle at David Condon Guns. On January 16th he returned and bought two pistols. Two days later he returned asking the store employee if he could change his AR-15 for a Chine made AK-47. That same day he bought a bulletproof vest from a company in North-Carolina, paid for by the credit card of Zahed Ahmad Mir, with whom Kansi shared the apartment (Stern, 2009). On January 22nd, accompanied by Mir, Kansi changed his rifle for the AK-47, bought around 150 rounds of ammunition and five unloaded magazines for the AK-47 which Kansi eventually used during his shooting (O'Harrow, 1993).

On the morning of January 25, 1993, multiple vehicles stopped at a red light on the left-turn lane to the entrance of the C.I.A. headquarters. Kansi stopped his vehicle behind of those vehicles that were waiting for the light to turn green (Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998; Stern, 2009). He exited his vehicle and armed with his Chinese made AK-47, Kansi fired opened fire on the vehicles that were

waiting in front of him to turn left for the entrance of the C.I.A. headquarters. During the shooting Frank Darling (with his wife was sitting next to him) and Lansing Bennett were killed, and Nicholas Starr, Calvin Morgan, and Stephen Williams were wounded by gunshots. All of the victims of the shooting were C.I.A. members. (Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998). At first, Kansi seemed to shoot at random, but eventually went back to Darling's car and shot Frank Darling multiple times to make sure he was dead, leaving his wife, who was sitting next to Frank, untouched (Stern, 2009).

After the shooting, Kansi went to a grocery store where he was a regular customer and asked Yousaf, the owner of the store, to buy him a ticket to Pakistan. The next day, Kansi returned to the grocery store and paid 740 dollars for the plane-ticket (Stern, 2009). He then asked if Yousaf could arrange a taxi to the airport at which point the owner said that he would bring him (O'Harrow, 1993). Kansi eventually flew to Pakistan where he hid from law enforcement (Stern, 2009). In the United States, he made a living by renting out rooms to expatriates in a Pakistani community. His acquaintances described Kansi as socially awkward and he had been involved in a militant organization dedicated to creating a new nation-state comprised of Pashtuns. The community in the United States didn't like that, Yousaf said (O'Harrow, 1993). When the police searched his apartment on February 8, 1993, the police found the AK-47 that was used for the shooting. (Becker, 2014; Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998; Stern, 2009)

Four and a half years later he was arrested by American law enforcement agents in Pakistan. During his arrest Special Agent Bradley Garett explained that Kansi stated that he shot CIA employees out of anger of the mistreatment of Muslims in Pakistan and elsewhere in the world (Weiner, 1997; Becker, 2014). He further stated that he was "upset" because of U.S. aircraft attacked parts of Iraq and CIA involvement in Muslim countries (Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998, p. 9). After his arrest Kansi claimed that he was initially planning to attack the Israeli Embassy due to the repression of the Palestinians by Israel. As Kansi went to the embassy for reconnaissance, he concluded that it was not a good location for a one-man rifle attack as the embassy was guarded. He thought he could use bombs, but he admitted that he had no knowledge of making bombs. C.I.A. officials in their cars were easier, Kansi stated (Stern, 2009, p. 325). During his arrest Kansi stated: "several days before the shooting I decided to do the shooting at the CIA or the Israeli Embassy but decided to shoot at the CIA because it was easier because CIA officials are not armed." (Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998, p. 8). When Special Agent Garett asked why he stopped shooting. His answer was "there wasn't anybody else left to shoot." (Commonwealth of Virginia, 1998, p. 9). He supplemented by stating that it is against his religion to shoot females, he therefore only shot males.

In June 1999 Jessica Stern interviewed Kansi at Sussex One State Prison (Stern, 2009). For the question why Kansi did it he replied: "I attacked the CIA for both religious and political reasons. […]

Therefore, it is a religious duty for all Muslims to help the Palestinians. Also, the United States was attacking Iraq. After the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, there was no need to persist in attacking Iraq." (Stern, 2009, p. 316). Kansi explained Stern that the American policies are anti-Islamic and that he was an anti-Americanist (Burns, 1997). During the interview Kansi stated that he wanted to kill not ordinary Americans, only government officials as they were "not normal" (Stern, 2009, p. 316). He further elaborated that no true-Muslim would work for the C.I.A. and therefore he was 100 percent sure that what he did would not kill any Muslim. When asked if Kansi was fighting a jihad he said: "No, this was a religious duty. […]. What I did was between jihad and tribal revenge." (Stern, 2009, p. 318).

It is widely believed that Kansi's father worked for the C.I.A. to transfer weapons to the mujahedeen in the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. At least two of his sons allegedly were working for the C.I.A. and the Pakistani intelligence weapons pipeline, a Pakistani intelligence official stated (Weaver, 1995). It is also believed that Kansi himself was approached by the C.I.A. (Stein, 1998). When asked about it, Kansi denies that he or his father worked for the C.I.A (Stern, 2009). Stern asked Kansi what message he was trying to send by killing C.I.A. officials. Kansi responded by arguing that if the U.S. would keep hurting Palestinians, the U.S. could also get hurt as its consequence. Eventually, Mir Aimal Kansi was sentenced to death and executed by lethal injection on November 13, 2002 (Stern, 2009).

Analysis

Kansi's motives seem complex. Analysis of the case suggests that Kansi's motivation was either revenge towards the organization his father worked for, religious motivation, political motivation as he previously stated, or a mix of all of these. Because Kansi's reasons why he conducted his attack differ between his statements, it remains unclear what his true motives were. Nevertheless, his motivation for the killing seems to lean more to religious beliefs intertwined with political views as Kansi was against the American policy to invade Iraq and the consequent killing of Muslims. Kansi saw U.S. officials as 'not normal' and said that it was the duty of Muslims to help the Palestinians. Regarding the former, it suggests he accused his victims of crimes referring to guilt-attribution and reacted as vengeance. Regarding the latter, helping the Palestinians to kill U.S. officials suggests a form of deagentification, an atrocity-justified ideology as a necessary act to help other Muslims. After the shooting, Kansi fled to Pakistan. This suggests that he was not willing to die for his motivations and it could be the reason that his choice of location was an intersection from which he could flee more easily.

Kansi only wanted to attack government officials of the Israeli embassy or those of the U.S. government. As Kansi was an anti-Americanist, he could have chosen other establishments of the U.S. government, yet, he chose C.I.A. officials. It suggests that Kansi's target selection could be influenced by personal motives, leading to the suggestion that his motivations are more complex than solely ideological. Nevertheless, his motivations indicate that Kansi was discriminate at who he wanted to shoot. Kansi further states that he did not want to kill women because of his Islamic beliefs, which is seen during his actions by not killing the woman in the car when he returned. Being this discriminate towards who he would attack suggests Kansi did not had many potential victims to shoot, suggesting a lower outcome in lethality.

Roughly two weeks before his attack Kansi acquired weapons, ammunition, and a bulletproof vest that he bought from a gun store out of the funds he acquired from work and his inheritance. This suggests it was relatively easy for Kansi to acquire firearms. As he had no knowledge of making bombs, it suggests firearms were favorable instead of bombs. During his childhood he already knew how to shoot weapons and therefore had weapon experience. He also had expertise particularly with an AK-47 rifle. When he changed his initial AR-15 rifle for an AK-47 rifle, it indicates that Kansi would have no difficulties handling an AK-47 rifle during the attack. However, although he had shooting practice, no information came forward that Kansi had antecedent violent behavior that morally disengaged him to make it 'easier' for Kansi to shoot people. Nevertheless, he went back for Mr. Darling and shot him multiple times close range to make sure he was dead, suggesting Kansi had less problem killing individuals whom he considered as "not normal" due to his ideological justifications.

Because Kansi did not have any knowledge of building bombs, he disregarded targeting the Israeli embassy although the embassy was his initial target. He made a rational choice selecting the C.I.A. headquarters as his target because he thought it would not be wise to attack a guarded embassy by his own, suggesting Kansi thought about his planning and where he would be more successful. He therefore chose the intersection in front of the entrance of the C.I.A. headquarters, which does not seem planned well. Regarding the target characteristics, Kansi stated that he had nobody else left to shoot when he attacked the occupants of the waiting cars. His statement suggests that no other persons that he could identify as C.I.A. officials were near his location. The target characteristics therefore seemed not favorable to attack more C.I.A. officials as the location was easy to escape from.

4.4 Ted Kaczynski

Theodore Kaczynski was born on May 22nd, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois. He was to become a highly intelligent man and entered Harvard University in 1958 where he graduated within three years,

following which he enrolled at the University of Michigan in 1962 where he graduated in 1967 with a master's degree and a doctorate as a mathematician (Waits & Shors, 1999). From 1967 until 1969 Kaczynski worked at the University of California as assistant professor. In 1971 Kaczynski moved to Montana and bought (with help of his brother David) 1.4 acres in Florence Gulch, Montana where he built his shed to live in the woods. Kaczynski led a primitive and harsh life in the woods and therefore didn't need a lot of money.

Kaczynski was responsible for planting and mailing 16 bombs across the United States in a period of nearly 18 years. In this period, Kaczynski killed three and injured 23 more (Spaaij, 2012; Waits & Shors, 1999). Kaczynski's ideas of revenge and to carry out terrorist acts fit with Kaczynski's beliefs that it is alright to hate over morality of being conditioned by society not to hate in his early days (Waits & Shors, 1999). According to Kaczynski in his own autobiography[1], it required further 'deprogramming': "The reader must realize by now in high school and college, I often became terribly angry at someone, or hated someone, bus as a matter of prudence, I could not express that anger or hatred openly. […] Therefore, I became more and more determined that someday I would actually take revenge on some of the people I hated." (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 384). Kaczynski's targets for revenge are people that are "those who consciously and willfully promote the technological society, such as scientists, big businessmen, union leaders, politicians, etc., etc. I emphasize that my motivation is personal revenge." (Waits & Shors, 1999, pp. 385-386). In the end his targets were predominantly people at universities and airline companies. Eventually the three that were killed were advertisement executive Thomas Mosser, president of California Forestry Association Gilburry Murray, and computer store owner Hugh Scrutton (Waits & Shors, 1999).

Kaczynski used bombs for his long-lasting terrorist campaign. Kaczynski was a very good shot and owned six rifles (one self-made) during his stay in Montana. One day Kaczynski saw a miner in the woods that he wanted to shoot, however, he didn't because he was afraid he would get killed or caught by law enforcement (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 380). Therefore, he preferred making bombs and living in the woods and make bombs to avoid detection and being killed: "The truth is, I don't want to die!" (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 384). The time Kaczynski was spotted by a woman in Salt Lake City, no bombs were sent by Kaczynski for the next six years (Waits & Shors, 1999).

For his bombing campaign, Kaczynski still needed money that provided him with the materials for making bombs. Most of the money came from his brother David, who looked up to Ted for his reserved living (Brooke & Barboza, 1996; Johnston & Scott, 1996). In addition, although Ted Kaczynski had trouble interacting with society (explained further down), he had at least two (short)

[1] Waits and Shors lived near Kaczynski at the time Kaczynski lived in Montana. They found a secret hut where the autobiographies of Kaczynski's were stashed before the F.B.I. found it.

jobs in Montana to acquire money for his bombing campaign (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 76). Finally, according to Waits & Shors (1999) Kaczynski showed interest in mining for gold using a metal frying pan, which eventually was retrieved by the F.B.I. (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 83).

While producing bombs is highly complex (Burton & Stewart, 2008), Kaczynski was adamant to make his own bombs rather than stealing them, and to prevent any pre-attack detection of law enforcement when sending the bomb or when law enforcement was investigating his bombs (Waits & Shors, 1999). For example, Kaczynski wrote in his notebook: "A while back I obtained 2 human hairs from the bathroom of the Missoula bus depot. I broke one of these hairs into two pieces and I placed one piece between the layers of electrical tape I used to wrap the wire joints inside the package." (Waits & Shors, 1999, pp. 327-328). He also used non-tracible resources for his bombs that made it incredibly hard for bomb-experts of the F.B.I. to trace back to bombs (Douglas & Olshaker, 1999).

Kaczynski's bombs weren't sophisticated in the beginning. In fact, Kaczynski spent a lot of time experimenting in the woods of Montana optimizing his bombs (Waits & Shors, 1999). Some of his bombs did not explode or functioned as designed (Burton & Stewart, 2008). However, Kaczynski's bombs gradually increased in lethality over the years, as FBI bomb experts recognized (Douglas & Olshaker, 1999). His first-generation bombs were crude. Matchheads were used as main explosive. His second-generation bombs were better, made with smokeless powder of rifle and shotgun shells (impossible to trace). His third-generation bombs were very powerful. But the fourth-generation were most lethal, particularly resulted by eliminating the need of a pipe to place explosive mixture in it (Waits & Shors, 1999).

His bombs were essentially made for the person who opened the package that was sent by mail. The first bomb Kaczynski sent was in 1978 which was targeted at professor Buckley Crist at Northwestern University. It eventually injured the security guard of the university Terry Marker (Waits & Shors, 1999). Once Kaczynski created a bomb with an altimeter that exploded in American Airlines 727 cargo hold at Dulles International Airport in 1979. It exploded in flight, injured 12, but it didn't let the aircraft crash as was intended. In his autobiography Kaczynski wrote a particular hateful comment because of his daily struggle with the noise of aircraft over the woods disturbing his peaceful living: "But that solid hour of aircraft noise yesterday, capped by a startling sonic boom, brought up all that anger." (Waits & Shors, 1999, p. 699)

In 1971 Kaczynski wrote in his journal about personal motives: "My motive for doing what I am going to do is simply personal revenge. I do not expect to accomplish anything by it. […] I have no way of knowing whether my action will do more good than harm. I certainly don't claim to be an altruist or to be acting for the "good" of the human race. I act merely from a desire for revenge."

(Waits & Shors, 1999, pp. 685-686). In 1996, shortly before his arrest Kaczynski would again write about personal resentment and revenge. He included that he doesn't 'believe' in something: "I believe in nothing. Whereas I don't even believe in the cult of nature-worshippers or wilderness-worshippers" (Waits & Shors, 1999, pp. 687-688). After his arrest Kaczynski again showed his resentment to technological improvement and explained his reasons why to attack certain technological branches (Kaczynski, 2002).

In September 1995 the Washington Post and the New York Times agreed publishing Kaczynski's manifesto. Kaczynski demanded that it would be published, otherwise he would continue to kill (Kurtz, 1995). Kaczynski's social and political views are being described as closely related to anarchism, and partially on Luddism (Gupta, 2018), due to Kaczynski's protest against technology, modernity and its destruction to the environment (Spaaij, 2012). Kaczynski called his manifesto 'Industrial Society and Its Future' and he started his manifesto by stating:

"Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in 'advanced' countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering… and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. The continued development of technology will worsen the situation." (Kaczynski, 1995, p. 1).

Kaczynski further stated that the industrial-technological society "cannot be reformed in such a way as to prevent it from progressively narrowing the sphere of human freedom." (Kaczynski, 1995, p. 15). Kaczynski opposes leftism as he sees leftism as anti-individualistic and pro-collectivist while Kaczysnki is an advocate for anarchy "able to control the circumstances of their own lives" (Kaczynski, 1995, p. 38). Furthermore, Kaczynski stated that "in order to get our message before the public with some chance of making a lasting impression, we've had to kill people" (Kaczynski, 1995, p. 16). Kaczynski would state a similar message in the media: "people who willfully and knowingly promote economic growth and technical progress, in our eyes they are criminals, and if they get blown up, they deserve it." (Kurtz, 1995, p. A1).

The literature furthermore suggests that Kaczynski also was inspired by the environmentalist movement and that he attended a meeting of environmentalists at the University of Montana (Arnold, 1997; Gus, 2011). However, a former classmate of Kaczynski disputes the claim of a link between the environmentalist movement and Kaczysnki (Chase, 2003). In addition, while he held individuals and organizations responsible for scientific and technological improvement of society and the destruction of individual freedom, he also appears to have had personal dysfunctions in his life and to have been abused by his parents and he attended a psychological experiment that probably damaged him

(Brooke & Barboza, 1996; Johnston & Scott, 1996; Springer, 2009). Kaczynski was diagnosed with schizophrenia, although Kaczynski always has denied his mental illness (Gupta, 2018; Springer, 2009; Waits & Shors, 1999).

Kaczynski's bombing campaign lasted until 1996. Eventually Kaczynski was arrested when his brother recognized his ideas and writing style in the manifesto that was published (Spaaij, 2012). Spaaij (2012) argues that if Kaczynski didn't have his manifesto publicized, he would probably have never been identified as the Unabomber, potentially expanding his bombing campaign (Spaaij, 2012).

Analysis

Kaczynski addressed his motives to be political, ideological and personal. He evolved the hatred he felt in his early days to a bombing campaign that lasted nearly 18 years, although he did not have a violent history that could explain his motivation and preparedness to be lethal. In Kaczynski's manifesto and to the media he presents justifications for his violent actions by stating that he needed to kill people in order to preserve individual liberty from an industrial society. It suggests that Kaczynski was an anarchist who was against technological developments. To whom his revenge was directed at is not exactly clear. However, the case suggests that Kaczynski's political motives seem inseparable from personal resentment as he was feeling frustrated with his urge for physical freedom that he expressed by moving to Montana and living in the woods, and personal autonomy by living for himself.

His withdrawal from society suggests that Kaczynski saw himself as a victim of society and that he wanted to be far away from technology. His withdrawal is especially noticeable when he describes his hatred of airplanes flying over when he was in the woods. His ideology suggests that Kaczynski did not dehumanize his victims, but rather saw them as dangerous threats that he accused of crimes against society that needed to be eliminated to preserve anarchy. Over the years in the woods, it seems that Kaczynski linked his personal frustration with external factors, which led him to a bombing campaign towards modern society in general. In sum, Kaczynski's motivation for his killings suggests a complex linkage between political, ideological, and individual influences that changed over time.

Kaczynski's ideology depicts his target selection as individuals and organizations that he held responsible for scientific and technological progress in society. It could be argued that in that time he was still particularly indiscriminate as technological advancement rose during the years of his campaign, resulting in an increase of technological organizations (such as computer stores) in the United States. Also, when Kaczynski tried to let an airplane explode in midair, he probably did not

know who was on the airplane. However, it is likely that he saw the passengers as users of technology and portrayed them as dangerous threats.

Kaczynski was highly intelligent, efficient and eventually effective which factors gave him the opportunity to make bombs, leading him to be particularly lethal. His weapon choice resulted in that Kaczynski never had to see the results of his bloody actions, suggesting he needed less mental preparation for killing another individual. His focus and dedication in not getting arrested or killed extended his bombing campaign, increasing the lethality purely by the duration and the sophistication of his planning. This was also shown by the fact that his bombs gradually increased in lethality. However, the case describes that Kaczynski had trouble getting funds for his bombing campaign that limited his acquirement of bomb making materials and planning of sending bombs. His personal resentment of society and difficulty in dealing with people limited him in having a steady job. It seems that his only acquirement of funds were donations of his family and possible findings of gold with a pan. This suggests that he was not able to build even greater and more lethal bombs, suggesting a limitation in his lethality. In sum, if Kaczynski had not published his manifesto, his brother would not have been able to recognize his writing which would probably have resulted in Kaczynski extending his bombing campaign, increasing his lethality.

4.5 Nidal Malik Hasan

Before Nidal was born his parents lived on the West Bank in Palestine, and when the family migrated to the United States, Nidal Malik Hasan was born in Arlington County, Virginia, 1970 on September 8th (Poppe, 2018). The Hasan family weren't particularly devout in their faith. According to Hasan's cousin, Nadar Hasan, Hasan was also not so much interested in religion in his youth and did not face any incidents of racial or religious discrimination (Nadar, 2018). After high school Hasan enlisted in the Army (infantry) for financial purposes (Nadar, 2018). Studies argue that on a macro-level it seems that Hasan was harassed by his fellow soldiers and that this intensified his radicalization process (Danzell & Montanez, 2016; Meloy & Yakeley, 2014). However, closer examination suggested that Hasan was not significantly disturbed by racial harassment, but it was rather more due to his bad stamina, so that it is unlikely it contributed to Hasan's future radicalization process (Poppe, 2018). According to his former attorney, Hasan spent three years reenacting combat in California, playing the opposition (Lt. Col. Poppe, 2018)[2]. Hasan was particularly grateful for the opportunities the U.S. military gave him. After his service he studied at Virginia Tech, graduated, and attended a military medical school because he still loved the army. Hasan went on to become a military psychiatrist.

[2] The analysis of Nidal Hasan uses studies of Katharine and Kris Poppe, who are related. To make a distinction between the two, Kris Poppe is distinguished with his related military rank: Lieutenant Colonel (Lt. Col. Poppe)

During this stage the U.S. military had a deficit of medical officers that made it more easy to become an officer (Lt. Col. Poppe, 2018; Webster, 2010).

When Hasan's mother died, he was greatly affected and started to question if he had been a good Muslim (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011; Poppe, 2018). Hasan wrote to Poppe that he was worried if he would have a place in heaven, having seen that his parents owned an alcohol shop, which Hasan believed was forbidden by Islam (Poppe, 2018). During this stage Hasan was not radicalized, but rather exploring his position towards Islam. However, this evolved to a level that Hasan was actively searching for the correct interpretation of Islam allowing him to best serve God, he wrote to Poppe (Poppe, 2018).

During Hasan's exploration to serve God he contacted Anwar al-Awlaki (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Webster, 2010). Awlaki is one of the most influential al-Qaeda recruiters and ideologists and a well-known Muslim leader in Washington, D.C. (Dreazen & Perez, 2010), as well as the Imam of a mosque in Virginia (Poppe, 2018). Hasan wrote in a letter to Poppe that Awlaki's sermons gave him "more insight into what it means to be at war with Islam, and how the US/West wanted a castrated form of Islam" (Poppe, 2018). Hasan contacted Anwar al-Awlaki for guidance in his quest. However, although multiple studies argue that Hasan's contact with Awlaki was an enabler for his violent act (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017), of the 18 messages Hasan send to Awlaki, Awlaki only responded to a couple of Hasan's messages in a matter that didn't strove towards violent acts as seen in the F.B.I. investigation (Poppe, 2018; Webster, 2010). Nevertheless, Hasan's extreme ideology increased, and didn't remain unnoticed by his colleges who described that he always brought up religion and made controversial claims (Thompson, 2009). He also presented multiple presentations, like the 'Koranic World View' (Drum, 2009), about extreme ideology claiming for example that suicide bombings are legitimate against the U.S. and that Islam is actually an aggressive religion (Poppe, 2018; Swaine, 2013). Hasan's extreme ideology grew and eventually affected his relationship with his family (Nadar, 2018).

On August the 1st, 2009, Hasan purchased a FN 5-7- pistol as well as magazines and ammunition and said about the purchases that it felt "something is going to happen" (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 26). Hasan stated he waited to first get used to the weapon, but after that period Hasan went to the shooting range multiple times to practice. There Hasan reported he shot around 2500 rounds with the pistol. Hasan stated regarding the funds for his shooting practice: "I am a single doctor…what am I going to do with all that money?" (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 26). Additionally, he purchased a green laser pointer to shoot more accurate via a "point to shoot" technique which allowed him to shoot without having to aim down the sights. He furthermore possessed a 0.357 revolver that he bought multiple years before (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011).

Hasan thought about his target selection. Hasan initially considered driving to the deployment center at Fort Benning. However, Hasan decided against the idea because he didn't want to get caught (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011). He therefore chose the Soldier Readiness Program (SRP) building at Fort Hood as the building was familiar to Hasan from his frequent visits for pre-deployment medical care of the soldiers. Hasan additionally studied the layout of the SRP building. Inside the building Hasan stated he only wanted to kill military personnel and not civilians as the killing of military personnel would be more accepted by the Muslim community (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011).

On October 30th 2009 Hasan contacted his brother, Anas Hasan, via the internet to send 25.000 dollar he owed him in case anything happened during his overseas deployment (Webster, 2010, p. 69). On November 5th, 2009 Hasan shredded his important documents at home as he stated that he knew he wouldn't return home anymore (i.e. killed or captured) and delivered personal items to his neighbor, Patricia Villa. Then he left, with his pistols and ammunition to Fort Hood (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011). Hasan stated that he wanted to get to the SRP building sooner than later as there would be more people during that time. During the day Hasan gave himself the chance to opt out of his plans but didn't (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011).

When Hasan arrived at the SRP building he put in earplugs and acted as if he was on the phone to avoid suspicion. Because he only wanted to kill military personnel, he told that there was an emergency to civilian Latoya Williams. When she left Hasan shouted "Allah Akbar" and started shooting (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 26). He rationally chose densely populated desks that were operational inside the SRP to get the maximum number of victims (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017; Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011; Stewart, 2009). Hasan stated that his mission was to kill soldiers, but if civilians would stand in the way of his mission, they would be shot too. After 5 to 10 minutes Hasan left his fire position "to find more soldiers." (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 27). Hasan stated that he was careful in open spaces. However, after a while he went outside towards the auditorium building. At the auditorium he discovered that a graduation ceremony was taking place and he couldn't differentiate military personnel from civilian personnel. He therefore chose not to shoot and returned to the SRP building again (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011). Arriving at the SRP building, Hasan saw that there were no soldiers, and said to himself that he had met his mission requirements. When asked why he then didn't leave the building he said: "Where was I going to go? I had no escape route. I had no place to go" (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 28). Hasan stated that he was participating in the Jihad.

When police officers entered the SRP building, Hasan and the police had a shootout where one police officer was wounded, and Hasan was shot down. It became clear later that due to his earplugs, Hasan

didn't hear the police officers coming near him and ordering him to surrender (Poppe, 2018). Because he didn't respond to their demands, Hasan was shot. Hasan's actions eventually lead to the death of 13 individuals, one of which was a civilian, and wounded 32 more (Poppe, 2018).

After the shooting, Hasan stated that his core religious conflict was that "America loves democracy and it conflicts with Islam's Sharia law and it is going to war to eradicate sharia law […] America tries to impose its will on others […] Islam doesn't believe in the separation of church and state" (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 25). Hasan stated that he was searching for ways to help Muslims "brothers". He thought of spreading the words of God, traveling overseas to join the Taliban or "doing something violent." (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 26). Hasan believed that doing something violent would be permissible according to the sharia law (which he consulted with Islamic Scholars) and that his violence was against the United States as the U.S. was engaging in violence against Islam (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011; Poppe, 2018). Hasan denied being mentally ill or having used illicit drugs or alcohol. Hasan stated: "I don't think what I did was wrong because it was for the greater cause of helping my Muslim brothers." (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 28). Furthermore, he stated that his actions were justified as the soldiers that he killed were "going against the Islamic Empire" (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011, p. 28).

Hasan stated that it would have been an honor if he would have died as that would have meant God chose him as his martyr. And if he would die by lethal injection he would still die as a martyr, Hasan stated (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011). In the end, Hasan was convicted and sentenced to death by lethal injection on August 28, 2013 (Fox News, 2013).

Analysis

When Hasan's mother died, he questioned himself to what extent he was a good Muslim. Hasan's motivation to act violently increased, although he had no violent thoughts in the beginning of his turning point. However, he questioned his own position within Islam and wanted to know what he could do to increase his dedication to Islam and to help his Muslim brothers. This evolved violently when he communicated with Islamic Scientists and others. His presentation stating that violent acts against aggressors of Islam are permissible under Sharia law and Hasan's statements that he wanted to become a martyr for god, suggest that he was motivated by extreme religious beliefs. Hasan justified his actions against U.S. soldiers by saying that the soldiers would fight against the Islamic Empire. His motivations indicate Hasan portrayed his victims as dangerous threats that he accused of crimes by harming the Muslim world. Hasan therefore saw his actions an inevitable according to Sharia-law, referring to deagentification. Hasan stated that it would have been an honor to die as a martyr, suggesting a motivation of his killings with sedimented social values.

His motivation and actions suggest Hasan was discriminate in his target selection as he only wanted to kill U.S. soldiers. He held up his discriminate level in such a way, that he told a civilian to leave the SRP building and Hasan didn't shoot at the auditorium because he couldn't differentiate between civilians and military personnel. His focus on military personnel indicates that his lethality was lower than what would have been possible. Still, because Hasan himself was enlisted, he was able to conduct his attack at an army base where more military personnel than non-military personnel were present that his target selection could be seen more indiscriminate. Another perspective worth notifying is that Hasan stated he didn't have any escape plan because he thought he wouldn't survive his lone actor terrorist attack as he was ready to become a martyr. This suggests that Hasan was ready to die for his cause and it helped his target selection as Hasan didn't need to escape out of Fort Hood. It also increased his lethality as data show he fought to the end.

Regarding capacity, the transfer of money to his brother, the fact that he was a single man and his high rank in the military suggest Hasan had no trouble in acquiring funds to finance his attack. His financial situation allowed him to have a comprehensive shooting practice with his expensive pistol. In addition, his military training as an infantryman suggests that he was experienced in combat and shooting in general and that he had knowledge how to conduct close quarter combat. Hasan's weapon choice of a pistol, therefore, seems logic as he stated that his intention was to have his attack take place inside the SRP building.

While he had no antecedent behavior, he probably acquired violent behavior during his combat training. In sum, Hasan's capacity suggests that he was sufficiently experienced with weapons and combat to conduct an attack effectively and efficiently. With regard to his targets, while a military base and the soldiers working there are technically hard targets, the fact that Hasan also worked in Fort Hood and his targets inside weren't armed, it is more logical to see his targets as soft targets. This suggests an increase in lethality as no armed personnel were in the surrounding area to react to his attack immediately.

Hasan had comprehensive knowledge of the SRP building due to his role as a psychiatrist at Fort Hood. In addition, Hasan began to study the layout of the SRP building. Hasan also had prior knowledge on the day of the attack itself of the presence of a greater number of soldiers than usual at that particular time, which suggests corralling. His developments in target planning suggest Hasan was tactically aware of the building benefits and limitations to kill as many as possible, which suggests it increased Hasan's lethality.

4.6 Omar Mateen

Omar Mateen, previously known as Omar Mir Seddique, was born in New York in 1986 (Malkin, Yuhas, & Lyons, 2016; Williams, Connor, Ortiz, & Gosk, 2016). Omar's early days were not without violent instances. During his school years Omar had trouble in controlling himself, and regularly had fights with other students (Weiss & Bynum, 2016; Weiss & Bynum, 2016). In addition, according to his first wife Sitora Yusifiy, Omar physically abused her, and she said that Omar showed mentally unstable characteristics during their relationship (Goldman, Warrick, & Bearak, 2016). During this stage of his life, Omar openly celebrated the terrorist attack of 9/11 which sparked conflicts with his fellow students (Blinder, Robles, & Perez-Pena, 2016). After Omar's high school, he got a degree in criminal justice and was then hired by the Florida Department of Corrections. However, Omar was quickly fired when he suggested bringing guns into the prison yard of the Martin Correctional Institution in regard to what happened at the Virginia Tech university (shooting) (Oppel, 2016).

After his previous work he was hired as a private security guard at Wackenhut Corporation (which would end up being bought by G4S). There he had near-perfect scores for seven years in a row for his firing range tests and was issued a revolver. Omar was also given a concealed carry permit and assigned for guard duty at the St. Lucie County courthouse in Florida (Judicial Watch, 2016b). In 2013, Omar began having arguments with his co-workers at the courthouse as they harassed each other back and forth. During these discussions, Omar claimed to his co-workers that he was related to the Boston Bombing suspects and was connected with al-Qaeda and Hezbollah. He claimed furthermore that he wanted to become a martyr and showed his disapproval of women and Jews, and praised the Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan (Comey, 2016; Judicial Watch, 2016a). When the county sheriff was called to the scene, Omar threatened the sheriff claiming that he could have al-Qaeda kill him. It resulted in that the sheriff reported Omar to the F.B.I. and they started an investigation by monitoring his cell phone conversations, digital traffic, and financial records (Comey, 2016). The F.B.I. also put Omar on the Terrorist Watch List and tried to lure Omar into conducting a terror plot, however, Omar did not take up his suggestion (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017).

After the previous incident the F.B.I. removed him from the Terrorist Watch List and he was reassigned to a security booth at a resort community when he was cleared by a mental stability test that was controversial because an acquaintance of his mosque who was a psychiatrist cleared him (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). However, Omar was investigated again by the F.B.I. when a friend of Omar told the F.B.I. that he had a conversation with Omar where Omar stated that he was listening to Awlaki's sermons on the internet. In addition, as shown in Omar's web history, he searched for Jihad related information for years (U.S. Justice Department, n.d.). Nevertheless, Omar was again cleared by the F.B.I. (Perex-Pena & Lichtblau, 2016). Parallel to his investigation and extreme outbursts,

Omar Mateen was a F.B.I. informant at various points in time between January 2005 and June 2016. During that time, money transfers were conducted to Turkey and Afghanistan. These transactions again placed him under criminal investigation, and according to law enforcement, this placed Omar Mateen's actions at the Pulse nightclub in a different light (Scheller, 2018).

On May 31st, 2016, Omar bought 200 rounds for his revolver of G4S and watched ISIS violent videos. When the detectives asked Noor Salmon, Omar's second wife, about Omar's affiliation with ISIS, she said "I knew that Omar was preparing for jihad when he bought the ammunition" (Cordeiro, 2018; Salmon, 2016). In addition, Omar was buying expensive jewelry and toys for Salmon and his son prior to his attack and they rode towards locations where Omar would say it was a good place to have a terrorist attack (Chan, 2016; U.S. Justice Department, n.d.). On June 4th, 2016 Omar watched a video of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi that called for people to carry out attacks. After a web search, Omar also bought a Sig Sauer MCX assault rifle for 1.837 dollar and thousands of rounds for the rifle. The next day Omar bought a Glock pistol for 550 dollars with ammunition. (Cordeiro, 2018; U.S. Justice Department, n.d.). Omar was able to acquire these weapons while being on the Terrorist Watch List due to a so-called terror-gap in laws and restrictions for purchasing a weapon (Lichtblau, 2016).

On June 12th, 2016 Omar was searching on his phone for Orlando nightclubs and found EVE Orlando nightclub (U.S. Justice Department, n.d.). He then drove to downtown Orlando, passed the Pulse nightclub, towards EVE nightclub. However, Omar eventually turned back towards the Pulse nightclub, which was a gay nightclub, where he stayed the rest of the night. Omar paid at the entrance which allowed him to move past security (that was not armed) going in and out (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Then he walked out of the nightclub for two hours and minutes before the first shots were fired and posted on Facebook: "I pledge my [allegiance] to abu bakr al Baghdadi, may Allah accept me" (U.S. Justice Department, n.d., p. 3). He then entered the nightclub with his assault rifle.

At the time of the shooting around 300 people, of which many of the LGBTQ and Hispanic communities, were inside the nightclub (Straub, et al., 2017). When Omar entered the building he immediately went to the dancefloor and started shooting. Because the music was still on, many believed the sound of gunfire was part of the music (Straub, et al., 2017). Omar systematically moved around the club and shot people corralled inside locked bathroom stalls (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Dozens of people were shot, killed or wounded, while others were trying to flee the scene, with or without help of the police that made holes on the outside of the building (Straub, et al., 2017). Approximately 15 minutes later Omar barricaded himself inside a restroom with hostages for nearly three hours (Straub, et al., 2017). There Omar called 911 and said he did the shooting. When asked what his name was, Omar responded: "My name is, I pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr Al-Bagdadi of the Islamic State." (Kirby, 2016, p. 1). He also referred to the brother of the Boston Bombing as his

"Homeboys" (Kirby, 2016, p. 3). When repeatedly asked for his name, Omar stated: "My name is Islamic soldier okay? […] Cal me Mujahideen, call me the Soldier of God." (Kirby, 2016, p. 3).

According to a witness who was trapped in the restroom with Omar during the 3 hour standoff with the police, Omar said that he was not going to kill them referring to the fact that his hostages were black and that they also suffered as 'his' people in the Middle-East were now suffering (ABC News, 2016). When Omar was not on the phone with the police he searched with his phone for news of the shooting and updated his Facebook comment where he recently posted: "You kill innocent women and children by doing US airstrikes, now taste the Islamic State vengeance" (U.S. Justice Department, n.d.).

When Omar talked to the police again, he stated he was wearing a vest "what they used in France" (Kirby, 2016, p. 4), referring to a bomb-vest (he later claimed it was a regular vest) (Straub, et al., 2017), and had placed bombs in the surrounding area and in cars around the nightclub and was threatening to blow them up. However, this turned out to be only threats (Kirby, 2016; Straub, et al., 2017). Omar did not answer any questions from the negotiator; he was only sending his message (to stop the bombing in the Middle-East). With Omar's claim of bombs in the area and not responding to the negotiator anymore, the police mobilized the S.W.A.T. team and blew a hole in the restroom outside wall. At that moment a shooting between Omar and the police ended when Omar eventually died of gunshot wounds. The attack of Omar killed 49 and wounded 53 (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). The police found no bomb-vest in the area (Straub, et al., 2017).

After the shooting Omar's father suggested that Omar had anti-gay feelings and his actions had nothing to do with religion. This claim was reinforced by students that were taunted in high school for being gay (Weiss & Bynum, 2016). However, law enforcement cannot conclude that his anti-gay stance was the motivation for his actions (Joshi, Keppler, & Monahan, 2011).

Analysis

What stands out in Omar's case is Omar's long history of broadcasting his opinions on terrorism and his intention of committing extremist violence towards students, co-workers and online. This started in high school and went on until the end of his life. For some, one explanation for his behavior is that Omar was mentally unstable. Omar seems to have had trouble at school socializing as he fought a lot, he abused his first wife, and was given a psychology clearance which was controversial. However, according to law enforcement his unstable mental health couldn't be determined, although it is likely that Omar had at least some behavioral issues.

Omar's motivations seem disputed. On the one hand students and his father claimed that he had anti-gay feelings and that this resulted in his attack at the Pulse, which was a gay nightclub. However, this doesn't seem to be the case. Particularly because of the fact that Omar's target selection seemed undetermined and indiscriminate as he was searching for the EVE nightclub while driving past the Pulse nightclub and this made the Pulse an unplanned location. With Omar's extreme Islamic views and his search habits online for ISIS violent actions, it seems more likely that Omar was religiously motivated. This is reinforced by the fact that he posted on Facebook and stated during his 9-11 calls his allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Bagdadi, then the ISIS leader, and called himself a Mujahideen, or Islamic Soldier. Omar said during his calls with the negotiator that the U.S. needed to stop bombing Syria and Iraq. It suggests that Omar was targeting the U.S. government specifically and justified his killings by framing his actions as a moral responsibility. However, his target selection was a nightclub in Orlando, which has a more indiscriminate nature for his seemingly religious motivations. His target could be a reflection of the events in the Middle East where innocent civilians are also victims of American actions. Still, Omar showed a discriminatory level when he did not shoot his hostages as he argued that they also 'suffered'. It therefore is uncertain to what extent Omar thought through what his targets would be, suggesting a more indiscriminate nature.

A couple of weeks prior to his attack, evidence shows Omar began preparing for his attack. Omar already had the advantage that he was a very good shot with firearms. He had no trouble with his expenses, which led to the acquirement of a high-powered rifle and a pistol and sufficient ammunition to train with his newly acquired firearms. This suggests Omar could be particularly lethal with firearms which he probably knew from the shooting exams and therefore chose firearms as his weapon of choice. In addition, while he did not explicitly state that he accepted that he would die for his cause, his actions showed no intent to flee the scene, indicating that Omar accepted self-sacrifice during his shooting. Omar's religious beliefs and possible understanding of the Jihad suggest that Omar justified his martyrdom.

Regarding Omar's pre-attack planning, he began making trips with his family to various locations. His wife claimed that he made remarks about conducting violent acts at certain locations. This suggests that Omar was looking for a possible location to attack. Because Omar didn't drive immediately to the Pulse nightclub on the night of the attack, it suggests that Omar wasn't certain of his location for an attack. This suggests he wasn't prepared sufficiently. Yet, Omar stayed in the nightclub a couple of hours before he began shooting, indicating he was studying his target's characteristics, potentially improving his lethality. The indicator that likely was the most influential for a high lethality rate in Omar's case, was the number of potential soft target victims that were inside the nightclub that probably weren't expecting a shooting, resulting in corralling inside the nightclub. In addition, it took the police a longer period of time to resolve the situation as he was

claiming he had bombs. In the three-hour standoff victims that were wounded probably died because they weren't getting medical aid on time.

4.7 Overview

This chapter was structured by dividing the cases into three cases that have a lower number of lethality, and three cases that have a higher number of lethality, compared to the average of lethality in the United States. This brief overview describes the main findings of the cases.

With regard to the first three cases, what seems to account for their low number of casualties is their motivation which resulted in them being more discriminate, the need of an escape plan due to the unwillingness for self-sacrifice, and therefore their target planning. Their degree to be discriminate seems to influence their target selection. Their target selection were respectively only military personnel and Jews (Abdulhakim), Jews (Miller), and C.I.A. personnel (Kansi). All of the three perpetrators shot from or next to their car from a parking lot or in the street. Because of their seemingly needing an escape route, their target characteristics further limited the number of densely populated areas and made it relatively easy for other potential victims to escape. Furthermore, only Abdulhakim seemed to have low weapon experience while their weapon choices were all firearms. Their pre-attack planning seemed all unsophisticated suggesting a more 'volatile' approach. The case of Miller stands out regarding his weapon expertise and experience. Miller had an exceptionally great knowledge of weapons and combat and was also likely to have some moral disengagement to killing, due to his military career and para-military organizations. However, it didn't account for a higher lethality, which is likely influenced by his motivation.

With regard to the last three cases that had a high lethality rate, the most apparent variable that seems to account for their high lethality rate is that they are more indiscriminate in their motivation. Hasan's case is particular due to the fact that his targets seem discriminate, however, he was himself was enlisted in the military which made his target selection more indiscriminate and to be seen as soft targets. Contrary to Abdulhakim, a civilian where military personnel were seen as hard targets. Nevertheless, Nidal and Mateen were motivated in a way that they were willing to die for their ideology. This resulted in that they did not need an escape plan, this affected their target planning, which seemed to make them particularly deadly. Their attack planning seemed to be influenced by their funds to acquire what they thought they needed, and their target characteristics were corralling was at play. Kaczynski seemed the only case were funds limited his bombing campaign which lowered his lethality rate. However, Kaczynski's case is unique among the six cases as his pre-attack planning was comprehensive and long, which seemed to result in a higher lethality rate. But more interestingly, his effort not to get caught by law enforcement helped him to continue with his terrorist campaign. This carefulness can also be seen in the case of Hasan. Hasan was able to understand the

strengths and weaknesses for close quarter combat that seemed to account for an increase in lethality. Although Mateen did not have an extensive planning, he did stay at his target location for nearly two hours before he began his attack. This most likely contributed to sufficiently knowing his surroundings.

All cases show that it was relatively easy for them to acquire weaponry. All but Kaczynski needed firearms which they acquired easily, even when law enforcement was monitoring their movements. Because of this, their weapon choice seems to be influenced. Kaczynski needed bomb making materials that were easily accessible at that time and his bombs were made of common materials. Finally, of all perpetrators, only Kansi and Kaczynski seemed to have no antecedent violent behavior. Regarding the other cases, it seems that there is a fluctuation in antecedent violent behavior that not always explains if the perpetrator is mentally prepared for killing other people.

5 Conclusion

The findings that emerged from this thesis show that most variables could explain the fluctuations in lethality of lone actor terrorist attacks, and some are biased. Because the variables seem connected and intertwined with each other, an answer to the research question is complex. The first part of this chapter will address the research question, followed by a second part that will take up the limitations of this thesis.

Motivation of the lone actor terrorist seems one of the most important variables in the cause of the fluctuation in lethality between lone actor terrorist attacks in the United States. Ideology appears to justify the use of violence, it defines to whom violence would be applied to, and it ultimately leads to a degree of moral disengagement based on the six mechanisms of the analytical framework. Motivation therefore influences the element target planning. Motivation also seems one of the most complex variables to account for lower or higher lethality. It seems that the cases analyzed show a combined structure of extreme ideology and personal concerns and grievances. The latter was not included in the analytical framework, however when analyzing the cases it became clear that it was intertwined with the lone actor terrorist's ideology. It leads to the fact that it is almost impossible to exactly pinpoint why someone committed a terrorist act and how it affected the capacity and target planning. This is likely because the explanation of their motivation by the lone actor terrorist in the cases after the attack was usually aimed at the public, while the actual explanation of their motivation can be omitted. Perhaps it is better not to question why, but to question how they became motivated to be lethal in order for society to have a chance in preventing their attack. This still could be a long shot as lone actor terrorists operate more autonomously. Nevertheless, it appears that the perpetrator himself makes choices regarding ideology and how far he or she wants to go to realize his or her motivation. For those who are responsible for few casualties, it seems that they were not willing to die for their cause which limited their target planning and lowered their lethality rate.

Next to motivation, the variables that comprise the element capacity show mixed results. Contrary to the literature in the body of knowledge, the variables antecedent violent behavior and availability of firearms, and therefore the choice of weapon regarding target planning, are somewhat biased. Therefore, the variables seem inconsistent with the literature in this study. Regarding the former, it is most likely that the difficulty to learn yourself mentally to be capable of killing innocent people could explain why some are more prepared to kill innocent individuals than others. However, the data collection of this thesis on moral disengagement was aggregated and could, therefore, not indicate if the lone actor terrorist psychologically prepared himself, only by having a violent history. An interesting study could be how a lone actor terrorist prepares himself mentally for killing other people to understand this process. Apart from the above, the variable antecedent violent behavior in this

study appears to be present in both sets of cases, which still limits an explanation on the fluctuations in lethality. Regarding the latter, weapons in the United States are widely available and acquiring them is relatively easy, even when you are on the Terrorist Watch List. This variable, therefore, seems more irrelevant in this thesis as the acquirement of firearms was easy, making less deadly weapons such as knives and sophisticated and more illegal weapons such as bombs illogical to choose above firearms. In addition, the availability of weaponry remains influenced by having funds, but in all cases but the case of Kaczynski the acquirement of funds did not have a constraining effect. Weapon experience also does not seem to fluctuate the lethality between the cases, as every case apart from case of Abdulhakim showed to some extent experience with weapons.

It comes down to the element target planning which is dependent from the lone actor terrorist's motivation and capacity. It shows that when a perpetrator is less discriminate in his or her target selection, the attacks seem to be more deadly. Target characteristics and pre-attack planning also seem amplifiers for the lethality as seen in the cases of Mateen, Hasan and Kaczynski. Their target characteristics were small densely populated locations (Kaczynski's bomb in an airplane) where corralling was at play. In the other cases the target characteristic of corralling was not at play due to either a low number of people in the surrounding area, and/or the relative ease to be able to escape from the terrorist attack. This seems to be influenced by the perpetrator's motivation wanting to escape from his or her attack, possibly due their unwillingness to die for their ideology. This could indicate an interconnection with each element. Their motivation *not* to use self-sacrifice could have influenced their choice of weapon of firearms. However, Kaczynski's case is exceptional because he clearly stated that he did not want to use self-sacrifice, but he was responsible for a high lethality rate. With regard to pre-attack planning, in the cases with a high lethality rate, the planning was more extensive and careful than the planning of the cases with a low lethality rate. It is therefore argued that volatile lone actor terrorists are less lethal than autonomous lone actor terrorists, as the body of knowledge has described.

Although findings which emerged from this thesis do contribute to some extent to the research gap regarding the lethality of lone actor terrorist, the many limitations of this research regarding the topic, which by itself is complex and subject to a variety of indicators, cannot be overlooked. This thesis had to use information from primary sources that was not always relevant for the topic, which complicated the analysis. Future research on the topic should take this limitation into account and should actively search for and retrieve primary sources. Furthermore, this thesis only researched variables related mainly to the perpetrator himself and its direct surroundings. Other external variables not taken into account in this thesis which might have influenced the fluctuation in lethality, are counter-terrorism resources or national attributes. It could be interesting to study to what extent counter-terrorism resources in general could influence the lethality. Regarding the latter, in the literature review a

variety of weapons were described that can potentially be used and chosen for a lone actor attack. This thesis recognizes a potential selection bias in the cases due to the relative ease of acquiring firearms in the United States. The outcome of this indicator could be different when studying other countries were weapon acquisition is more difficult, illegal and/or complex. Therefore, future research into the extent of how the difficulty of weapon acquisition in other countries relates to the fluctuations in lethality of lone actor attacks is advised. In addition, to compare the United States with other Western societies, one should be aware of the United States relative violent culture.

Unfortunately, in academic literature, it remains ambiguous what constitutes to be a lone actor terrorist act and what does not. During this study, violent acts that have not been considered to be terrorist acts were treated as such due to the definition addressed in the body of knowledge. Nevertheless, it is academically necessary to constantly evaluate what should be considered lone actor terrorism, and what should not. But most of all, there should be a clear distinction what defines lone actor terrorism in general.

This exploratory thesis researched only the tip of the iceberg on how the fluctuations in lethality between lone actor terrorist attacks in the United States can be explained. Due to a lack of feasibility, a limitation for this study was the sample size which was too small in comparison to the number of lone actor attacks conducted in the United States. As a result, the outcome of this thesis is not generalizable. This case study showed the complexity of variables which might explain the fluctuations in lethality, which makes generalization even more difficult. To understand the lethality of lone actor terrorism then, it is imperative that it is placed within a broader context of (religious) motivations, social relations and personal history. It seems to indicate these attacks cannot be reduced to figures to understand their lethality, suggesting further qualitative research of the phenomenon as each case seemed unique. Nevertheless, let’s hope that by understanding more about lone actor terrorist attacks, we are able to effectively reduce the number of fatalities.

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