

Journal of Threat Assessment and Management

Using the TRAP-18 to Identify an Incel Lone-Actor Terrorist

Christopher J. Collins and James J. Clark

Online First Publication, September 13, 2021. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tam0000167>

CITATION

Collins, C. J., & Clark, J. J. (2021, September 13). Using the TRAP-18 to Identify an Incel Lone-Actor Terrorist. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tam0000167>

Using the TRAP-18 to Identify an Incel Lone-Actor Terrorist

Christopher J. Collins and James J. Clark

College of Social Work, Florida State University

This study analyzes a case, consistent with a growing number of incidents, where a mass or public shooter or otherwise violent individual identifies as an Incel. The case analysis used the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18) to analyze information from criminal investigative reports, employment records, and personally recorded video diary entries posted on the internet. A 40-year-old white man entered a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida, on November 2, 2018, shot and killed two women, and injured four others. The perpetrator coded affirmatively for 5 of 8 (63%) proximal warning behaviors and 9 of 10 (90%) distal characteristics. Previous studies have indicated that the presence of one proximal warning behavior on the TRAP-18 warrants active threat management and that clusters of distal characteristics merit threat monitoring. However, in this case, in which the perpetrator had years to develop his hatred toward women and had previously been reported by a relative to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for concerning actions, he was never monitored as a threat nor actively threat managed. This case represents an important opportunity to understand the significance of threat reporting, assessment, and monitoring.

Public Significance Statement

Incels represent a growing population of men who hold antifeminist views and rely heavily on the internet as a means of communication. The TRAP-18 threat assessment tool was found to be successful in identifying factors in this case of a violent hate crime and indicates the potential for effective threat assessment and management for future cases.

Keywords: Incel, manosphere, threat assessment, lone-actor terrorism, radicalization

The arrival of the Information Age in the early 1990s brought ubiquitous access to the World Wide Web. Indeed, the internet proliferated online blogs, chatrooms, and forums. These online spaces created a space where antifeminist men could gather to discuss their disapproval of feminism, promote traditional views of masculinity, and share their rage toward women in the form of misogynic rhetoric. Broadly, this collection of men comprise what is known as the “manosphere” (Hodapp, 2019). The manosphere consists of various male-dominated social movement groups,

including *involuntary celibates* or *incels* (Nagle, 2017; Zuckerberg, 2019), and is largely associated with right-wing extremism or the alt-right (Ging, 2019; Nagle, 2017; Zuckerberg, 2019).

The term *involuntary celibate* refers to increases in personal distress as a result of the perception of decreased self-agency because of one’s current state of sexual inactivity or celibacy (Donnelly et al., 2001). Although most Incels are nonviolent, increasing numbers have perpetrated mass gun violence and especially gender-based violence against women (Ging, 2019; Valkenburgh, 2018). This process of

Christopher J. Collins  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6782-8967>

The authors wish to thank T. K. Logan (University of Kentucky) for their editorial service in the development of this manuscript.

No conflicts of interest to be declared.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Christopher J. Collins, College of Social Work, Florida State University, 296 Champions Way, Tallahassee, FL 32304, United States. Email: cjcollins@fsu.edu

radicalization does not happen in isolation. The internet, particularly social networking platforms (Ging, 2019), provides unmoderated forums for men to engage in violent and misogynistic (Dragiewicz, 2011) hate speech that perpetuates patriarchal views and reinforce hegemonic masculinity ideals (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Researchers have recently begun to classify violent Incel offenders as “lone-actor terrorists” (Gill et al., 2019; Hoffman et al., 2020).

This case study examines the violent Incel attack that occurred at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida, on November 2, 2018, in which a 40-year-old man shot and killed two women and injured four others. This case was selected for analysis for two reasons. First, there is no current published study that examines the behaviors of an Incel from a threat assessment and management perspective. Second, there are no validation studies of existing threat assessment instruments that support their effectiveness among an Incel population. For these reasons, the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18) was used to explore whether an assessment instrument could prove valid for an Incel population. The TRAP-18 has been successfully used to study cases of lone-actor terrorists (Böckler et al., 2015; Goodwill & Meloy, 2019; Guldemann & Meloy, 2020), but this case study marks the first time it’s been used to study a case of Incel-perpetrated lone-actor violence. The researchers also sought to identify specific proximal warning behaviors and distal characteristics that may be used to build evidence-informed threat management strategies for use with the Incel population (Meloy & Gill, 2016).

Background on the Incel Movement

Before 2001, only 7.8% of lone-actor terrorist acts were religiously inspired (Gill et al., 2014). The growth over nearly two decades provides evidence that the terror attacks perpetrated on September 11, 2001, were an influential catalyst in the development and motivation of the religiously motivated lone-actor terrorist.

Similarly, before Elliot Rodger’s 2014 Isla Vista attack, widely considered as a turning point in Incel violent extremism (Hoffman et al., 2020), Incel violence accounted for a small percentage of lone-actor terrorism. However, in the years following

the Isla Vista murders, where Rodger murdered 6 people and injured 14 others (Hoffman et al., 2020), Rodger has become an idol among the violent Incel community. It is not uncommon for Rodger to be described in a positive light by Incels, who often refer to him as a “saint” or “supreme gentleman” (Hoffman et al., 2020). Similar to the September 11, 2001 attacks, which gave rise to religiously inspired terrorism (Gill et al., 2014), the Isla Vista attack has become a paradigm that influenced Incels to commit violent extremism, as evidenced by the frequent references to Rodger’s actions as having inspired subsequent violent Incel attacks (Ging, 2019).

The early Incel community consisted mostly of individuals who were “unlucky in love” and the online community was driven by the main purpose of providing emotional and social support to its members. Prior to Rodger’s 2014 attack, there existed only two documented cases of violent Incel extremism (Anti-Defamation League [ADL], 2020). Since Rodger’s attack, there have been 13 confirmed cases of violent Incel extremism (ADL, 2020); these numbers reflect a five-fold increase in violent Incel lone-actor terrorist in a 5-year period. With the recent escalation in lone-actor terrorism perpetrated by violent Incels, it is no surprise that the Southern Poverty Law Center (2019) now includes “male supremacy,” which includes Incels, as an extremist ideology actively being monitored. While the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has found that male supremacy hate groups are beginning to form and gather in the United States, Incels are primarily based in a virtual environment (Ging, 2019). Therefore, they differ in this way from other groups found within in manosphere. However, these historically “hidden,” violent Incel behaviors are now salient and on the rise.

Incel Mentality

Van Brunt and Taylor (2020) describe three central factors that both explain the Incel mentality and contribute to understanding their escalation to targeted violence. The Incel triangle (Van Brunt & Taylor, 2020) includes entitlement, misogyny, and jealousy as the characteristics required for lone-actor terrorism to occur.

Central to the Incel mentality is misogyny, which refers to the objectification and hatred of women. Misogyny is common in online forums

among Incels (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Entitlement refers to the belief that Incels often feel that they deserve privilege, esteem, or recognition that they have not earned. Jealousy is personified by feelings of insecurity and fear. In most cases, Incels are jealous of what “Chads” (i.e., attractive men) have (i.e., attractive women or “Stacys”; Ging, 2019). The jealousy compels an Incel to compete for the affection and attention of “Stacys,” which often fails. The recurring failure to attract “Stacys” creates envy within Incels, which fuels their drive to destroy them (Van Brunt & Taylor, 2020).

While Van Brunt and Taylor (2020) very usefully offer a glimpse into the factors that drive Incels toward violent extremism, it should be noted that this is only one theory of the psychology and motivation of Incel-perpetrated lone-actor terrorism and that additional theories need to be developed to both enhance and expand our understanding of Incel mentality.

Radicalization to Violent Extremism

In studies of group terrorism, Moghaddam (2005) offers one of many theories on the radicalization process toward terrorism. Indeed, Moghaddam (2005) utilizes a stairway metaphor to explain the thought and behavior patterns of those on the path toward radicalization. The staircase to terrorism can be visualized as a building containing five floors and while the floors are fundamental to the metaphor, what is more significant is what the individual perceives as being available to them on each floor (Moghaddam, 2005). In this view, the perception of how many doors or options are open and available is what motivates an individual to climb the stairs. In cases where fewer doors are seen as open, the individual often feels they have no choice but to continue climbing (Moghaddam, 2005). While the route is not identical for all lone-actor terrorism, there are meaningful similarities that assist in the understanding of how an ideologically motivated lone-actor ascends toward violence.

Feelings of injustice (Tyler, 2006) and deprivation (Runciman, 1966) lead individuals to the *ground floor* where they will attempt to locate solutions; however, if solutions are not identified the individual will continue up the staircase

(Moghaddam, 2005). Arrival to the *first floor* is characterized by the continued pursuit of improving their situation and achieving great justice. These initial floors are nearly identical to the process that leads lone-actor terrorists to radicalization.

When the *first floor* yields no solutions, the individual is compelled to continue up the staircase, which becomes increasingly narrow as the climb persists (Moghaddam, 2005). The doors become scarcer the higher one climbs, and the available options appear less realistic. The perceived lack of solution on the *first floor* leads to increasing anger and frustration on the *second floor*. The *second floor* is the first point at which significant differences exist between group and lone-actor terrorists. It is on this floor where group actor terrorists may begin to be influenced by outside leaders that may encourage displacement of aggression on an “enemy” or anyone perceived to be the source of their injustice (Moghaddam, 2005). In cases of lone-actor terrorism, this may be the critical time where individuals begin to search for others that share their views; it may not be a single leader that drives a lone-actor movement, but rather the shared grievances of many that validate their ascension. Despite the differences noted here the path to the *third floor* is the same and often reserved for those individuals more prone to violence (Moghaddam, 2005).

The *third floor* is the most important in the individual’s transformation from disgruntled layperson to lone-actor terrorist. The morality of terrorism is solidified as justifiable (Bandura, 1999) at this stage, further legitimizing the violence imperative, and blurring the lines between right and wrong for the individual (Moghaddam, 2005). Emboldened with a new perception of the world, increasingly rigid thoughts emerge as the individual visits the *fourth floor*, where the individual begins to foster an “us versus them” mentality (Moghaddam, 2005).

The *fifth floor* is where another difference between group and lone-actor terrorists can be observed. The *fifth floor* is the stage when individuals in group terrorist organizations would normally be selected to be trained to ignore their innate inhibitory mechanisms so as to improve their ability to injure or kill others or themselves (Moghaddam, 2005); however, in cases of lone-actor terrorism this final floor often represents the stage where individuals,

feeling as though they have exhausted all available options, are compelled to act on their feelings of injustice.

Social Media, the Internet, and Increasing Radicalization

The internet has facilitated a powerful tool for violent Incel lone-actor terrorists to find one another. The internet offers easy access, minimal regulatory censorship or interference, and relatively inexpensive means to develop content that can be widely distributed (Weimann, 2004). The internet has inadvertently become a vessel for the rapid radicalization and indoctrination of emerging extremists (Ging, 2019; Hoffman et al., 2020).

Terrorist websites, numbering nearly 10,000 (Weimann & Hoffman, 2015), provide resources on topics ranging from building bombs to the illegal procurement of guns. While “in-betweeners,” (Singer & Lalich, 1996) those in stages of life transition, are likely at an increased risk of indoctrination, the relative ease of locating others with similar views is likely to be appealing to anyone looking for a place to belong. Today, it is common practice for young people to use the internet to find identity management platforms where they disseminate information and maintain personal relationships (Cortesi & Gasser, 2015).

While not classified exclusively as terrorist websites, social media forums such as *Incels.me*, *Reddit*, and the now defunct *4chan* provide platforms for extremist propaganda to be spread and consumed by willing participants. According to Gill (2015), the internet and the virtual interactions that they foster have helped increasing numbers of lone-actor terrorists to organize their preattack behaviors, reinforce radical beliefs, and legitimize their violent extremism. In some cases, lone actors have shared the plans of their impending attacks with others online; this behavior is referred to as leakage (Meloy & O’Toole, 2011). “Leakage” is a proximal warning behavior on the TRAP-18 (Meloy, 2017).

The break from traditional organizational structures in lone-actor terrorism has produced countless scenarios, diversity in target selection, and variations in weapon use. Innovations in how lone-actor terrorists are coordinating their attacks is another compelling reason to examine behavioral-oriented approaches to

identify and prevent the process of lone-actor radicalization.

The Rise of Threat Assessment and Management

In the field of violence risk assessment, unstructured professional judgment was the standard practice for many years (Monahan et al., 2001). Realizing a need for reliable and valid approaches to the assessment and management of violence risk, scholars began to develop actuarial risk assessment tools that trained evaluators could administer (Douglas & Kropp, 2002). However, actuarial risk assessments were limited in that they ignored factors not already identified as predictive by those designing the measures.

Recognizing both the expertise of professionals and the utility of existing actuarial risk assessment tools, structured professional judgment (SPJ) approaches emerged around 1994 when the *Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide* was created (Kropp et al., 1994). The process of SPJ utilized the best qualities from unstructured professional judgment and actuarial risk assessments, namely professional judgment, and an organizational framework. SPJ focuses on behavioral indicators that could signify an impending violent attack without seeking or claiming predictive certainty.

The TRAP-18 (Meloy, 2017) is an SPJ tool that aims to prevent targeted violence through the combination of 8 evidence-informed proximal warning behaviors (Meloy et al., 2012; Meloy & Hoffman, 2014) and 10 distal, psychological factors that indicate strong possibilities for future violent behavior (Meloy & Yakeley, 2014). The presence of a single proximal warning behavior merits active threat management, while clusters of distal characteristics warrant threat monitoring. Rather than positing a controlling conceptual framework for violence that then is tested, the approach to validating an instrument such as the TRAP-18 is to retrospectively examine cases where there is confirmed presence of lone-actor terrorism, as Meloy et al. (2015) have done. Once this type of public safety validation occurs, the purpose of the instrument is the identification of subjects (threat assessment) before they perpetrate targeted violence, in order to prevent the completion of violent acts (threat management).

Method

The current investigation utilized case study methodology. Using case study methodology (Yin, 2014) allows for a deep understanding of a single case. In emergent areas of study, such as with Incels, case study research is useful for providing rich descriptions (Yin, 2014). Effective case study research follows stipulated decision rules, analyzes data collected from multiple and various sources, and strives to control for investigator biases (Bromley, 1986; Miles et al., 2020).

The empirical literature on large groups of targeted violence lone actors is still considered a recent development (Gill, 2015; Spaaij, 2011) and research examining violent Incel lone actors is rare (Böckler et al., 2018; Ging, 2019). Since 1989, there have been approximately 20 confirmed cases of violent Incel attacks in the United States, Canada, and Europe (ADL, 2020); more than half of these occurred following the 2014 Isla Vista Incel attack (Ging, 2019). The use of qualitative case study methodology allows for a rich understanding of a single case that can deepen scientific understanding of this phenomenon as this specialty field develops.

Accordingly, this single instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) focused on an individual case of violent Incel lone-actor terrorism. As a way of increasing rigor and trustworthiness, this case study is based on extensive qualitative data triangulation (Denzin, 1978), which stresses the importance of multiple data sources. Criminal investigative reports, employment records, and personally recorded video diary entries posted on the internet were all subject to analysis. Specifically, the analyzed data sets included approximately 70 pages of employment records and disciplinary reports from Leon and Volusia county school districts in Florida and 51 pages of United States Army records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. Additionally, 64 pages of police report data and approximately 40 pages of supplemental investigative material from the Tallahassee Police Department were obtained and analyzed. These included toxicology findings, detailed crime scene analysis, and personal testimonies of the perpetrator, family members, friends, and acquaintances. Finally, over 2 hr of the perpetrator's online video diary entries were transcribed and analyzed for themes. While great efforts were made to obtain the perpetrator's personal medical and mental health

records, the data were unobtainable due to legal issues.

The first author kept a detailed audit trail, as recommended or used by previous case studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), to promote transparency, which also allowed for the reconstruction of detailed timeline for the purpose of this case study. The timeline allowed for a detailed description of the case that grounded the analysis of case history, as well as the chronology of the events. Throughout the coding process, the first author engaged in an ongoing process of reflexivity that encouraged reflection and management of investigator biases (Padgett, 2016).

A deductive approach was taken, where after extensive review and organization, data were coded using codes defined by the TRAP-18.

The following was the focus during the coding process:

1. Timelines of biographical events in the perpetrator's life that would indicate personal crises, grievances, and triggers leading to changes in his thinking, emotions, and behaviors.
2. Testimonies and writings of the perpetrator himself to gain insights into his self-concept and any seeming hostility or explicit bias toward women.
3. The perpetrator's routine and habits were observed by those in his social environment to discern any patterns of escalating warning behaviors in the days and weeks that preceded his attack.
4. Stable or unstable social networks and social reactions that might have been meaningful to the perpetrator to understand exacerbating and mitigating effects on the perpetrator's behavior, thinking, and emotions.

Data were coded by the first author with frequent consultation and peer debriefings between the first and second authors throughout the analysis. The authors were conservative in their approach to affirmatively coding data unless compelling evidence was present.

Use of the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol-18

The analysis was conducted using the TRAP-18, which was selected for its strong reliability and validity across studies performed retrospectively

on groups of confirmed terrorists (Meloy et al., 2015; Meloy & Gill, 2016). The first author deductively coded for the presence or absence of each of the 18 indicators in the TRAP-18 and documented them accordingly for the audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Meloy et al. (2015) analyzed a group of European terrorists and the mean interrater reliability (Cohen's kappa) was 0.895. The range for the proximal warning behaviors was 0.69–1.0 and 0.75–1.0 for the distal characteristics (Meloy et al., 2015). Meloy and Gill (2016) found in their retrospective sample of 111 lone-actor terrorists (1990–2014) that 77% of the sample coded affirmatively for at least half of the TRAP-18 indicators. A study conducted by Challacombe and Lucas (2019) used a nonviolent comparison group to determine the strength of the TRAP-18 in differentiating between groups of violent and nonviolent offenders and found that the TRAP-18 was successful in differentiating the two groups 75.9% of the time.

While never formally used to assess *Incel* violence, the previously mentioned studies indicate that the TRAP-18 was effective at (a) identifying a lone-actor terrorist and (b) differentiating between violent and nonviolent offenders. One purpose of the present study was to determine whether or not the TRAP-18 could serve as a valid instrument for use with a violent *Incel* population.

The Shooting at “Hot Yoga Tallahassee”

On Friday, November 2, 2018, at 5:29 p.m., Scott Paul Beierle (“the perpetrator”), a 40-year-old white man, entered a hot yoga studio located in Tallahassee, Florida. A desk attendant briefly observed the perpetrator opening a new yoga mat that he had purchased 2 days earlier from a Walmart in Live Oak, Florida. According to the yoga instructor, the perpetrator laid out his yoga mat and settled in briefly before rising to stand, while simultaneously pulling out a 9 mm Glock handgun. As quickly as the instructor could ask the perpetrator what he was doing, he opened fire on the students. In total, he fired 14 rounds, killing two women and injuring four others. The sole male student reached for a nearby vacuum cleaner and struck the perpetrator with it before being hit in the face with the handgun. As he attempted to shoot the male student, who had created a distraction that allowed other students to flee, the perpetrator's weapon malfunctioned. Before law

enforcement arrived at 5:54 p.m., the perpetrator turned his gun on himself in an attempt to die by suicide. The weapon functioned properly this time, and the perpetrator ended his life with a single shot to the head. The entire episode from the time he entered the yoga studio until police arrived on scene spanned 25 min.

Results

The perpetrator coded affirmatively for 5 of 8 (63%) proximal warning behaviors and 9 of 10 (90%) distal characteristics. There is no clear explanation for the perpetrator's decision to choose a yoga studio as the site of his shooting, but based on conversations he had online previously, there are reasons to conjecture that he saw an opportunistic connection between women and yoga studios. Table 1 provides a visualization of the perpetrator's TRAP-18 indicators.

Yoga and Femininity

The perpetrator performed his first recorded internet searches for yoga-related content on January 23, 2016. During this period, his web browser history confirms that he was looking for provocative, sexualized content of nude or seminude women engaging in yoga postures.

Table 1
Presence and Absence of TRAP-18 Indicators

TRAP-18 indicators	Present	Absent
Proximal warning behaviors	×	
Pathway	×	
Fixation	×	
Identification	×	
Energy burst	×	
Leakage		×
Directly communicated threat		×
Novel aggression		×
Distal characteristics		
Personal grievance and moral outrage	×	
Framed by an ideology	×	
Failure to affiliate	×	
Dependence on the virtual community	×	
Thwarting of occupational goals	×	
Failure of sexual pair bonding	×	
Presence of a mental disorder	×	
Creative and innovative	×	
Criminal violence	×	
Changes in thinking and emotion		×

Note. TRAP-18 = Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol-18.

On May 19, 2016, the perpetrator searched for “Tallahassee hot yoga” for the first time. While the perpetrator did have connections to Tallahassee, having been a graduate of a major local university located in that city, the only traceable link to yoga was from a woman with whom he communicated to on the internet in 2013, who indicated that she attended hot yoga classes in Tallahassee. This woman would later that year call the perpetrator “crazy,” “weird, and insulting” before terminating contact with him.

After the initial searches in 2016, there are no documented yoga-related searches until 2018. On August 3, 2018, the perpetrator searched the internet for a map of Hot Yoga Tallahassee. On August 15, 2018, and August 17, 2018, the perpetrator performed internet searches to locate a schedule of classes offered by that studio. On August 17, 2018, the perpetrator contacted the yoga studio by phone two separate times but did not reach anyone. The perpetrator continued his online searches for class schedules on August 18, 2018, and August 20, 2018, before twice contacting the yoga studio by phone on August 20, 2018. The perpetrator searched for the yoga studio’s class schedule one final time on October 2, 2018—exactly 1 month before his attack.

Applying the TRAP-18: Proximal Warning Behaviors

The perpetrator coded affirmatively for 5 of 8 (63%) proximal warning behaviors included in the TRAP-18, which are italicized below. The perpetrator exhibited *pathway* warning behavior. He was a former Second Lieutenant in the United States Army with extensive tactical and weapons training and had carefully researched and planned his attack in the months preceding the attack. The perpetrator was intentional and persistent in his attempts to research facts about the yoga studio. Analysis of his online productions revealed that the perpetrator’s reasoning toward violent behavior was further fueled by his hatred toward women, whom he saw as a class of immoral people. He wrote and recorded music with titles such as “I cannot let my boobs get wet,” “locked in my basement,” “hand full of bare ass,” “I don’t fuck fatties for free,” and “tits ahoy.” The perpetrator tested his capability to perpetrate gender-based violence by committing battery on at least

three separate women by grabbing their buttocks. Further, around this same time, the perpetrator purchased range time to refine his shooting ability. While it is unclear why the perpetrator chose November 2, 2018 as the date of his attack, the location selection is easier to understand. It is clear that this target, like many yoga studios, was a “soft” target and thus provided the opportunity for a successful attack against presumably unarmed female targets.

Fixation is present when there is evidence of increasingly pathological preoccupations with a particular person or cause (Meloy, 2017). This perpetrator, like other violent Incels, referenced Elliot Rodger in his online video entries. Due to the videos being removed almost immediately following the perpetrator’s attack, the exact timeframe for his references to Rodger is unclear. In his musical compositions, which he paid to have recorded professionally over the period of a few years despite being unemployed, the perpetrator referenced locking up, and torturing women in a basement. The perpetrator sent cards and letters to his sister-in-law in 2002 that contained themes of rape and gang rape that were so disturbing that she reported him to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The FBI did very little, however, to act on that report. Based on an interview conducted by law enforcement, there is also evidence that the perpetrator sent violent reference materials to an acquaintance in October, 2018 that also contained materials related to the rape and torture of women. The extreme overvalued belief system (Meloy & Rahman, 2021) of the violent Incel movement that the perpetrator identified with may have intensified his development of and fixation on strong justifications for harming women.

The perpetrator coded affirmatively for *identification*. Identification is present when individuals begin to identify themselves as agents to advance a cause or belief system (Meloy, 2017). The perpetrator’s progression toward identification is evident in his online writings and online video recordings, many of which denigrated women. In reference to women, the perpetrator stated, “I will be successful with females . . . if I can’t be successful at being positive, I will be successful at being negative.” Statements such as these indicate a progression toward and psychological desire to be a pseudocommando for the violent Incel movement.

For the proximal warning behavior *energy burst* to be successfully coded, a baseline must exist before any act of targeted violence (Meloy, 2017). The internet and personal interviews conducted by law enforcement help to provide the required baseline. Energy burst is described as the increase in frequency or variety of routine activities in the hours, days, or weeks preceding the attack (Meloy, 2017). The perpetrator, who was unemployed at the time of the attack, generally lived a relatively sedentary lifestyle. Closer to the time of the attack, the perpetrator drove over 4 hr on October 31, 2018, from his home to Tallahassee, stopping to purchase a yoga mat and ear protection. In the months that preceded the attack, cell phone records indicate that the perpetrator had practiced this drive at least once before the attack and, on one occasion, traveled an additional 2 hr where he observed a regional cheerleading camp. Evidence in the perpetrator's writings and videos indicated that he briefly considered this cheerleading camp as a target, but ultimately rejected the idea.

An analysis of Tallahassee Police Department's police report revealed that on November 2, 2018, the perpetrator neatly organized identifying documents that included medical records, psychiatric records, military discharge paperwork, and previous employment records in the trunk of his vehicle and around his hotel room. Presumably, the perpetrator did this because he wanted to be easily identifiable to law enforcement after the attack. Significantly, the perpetrator intentionally left his motel entry card in the motel room, suggesting that he had no intention of returning to gather his belongings. Further, the perpetrator made statements, such as "it has come to this . . . I simply have no choice at this point. It is a moral imperative" and "I have a duty, an obligation, a moral obligation to proceed and act as such." These behaviors and statements are evidence of the *last resort* proximal warning behavior.

The perpetrator did not code for *leakage*, *directly communicated threat*, or *novel aggression*. Leakage could not be coded because the perpetrator never disclosed his plans to anyone else. Similarly, he did not make threatening comments or gestures toward any of his victims nor the yoga studio itself. Further, it should be noted that because the perpetrator coded for criminal violence that the TRAP-18 excludes concurrent coding for novel aggression.

Applying the TRAP-18: Distal Characteristics

The offender coded affirmatively for 9 of 10 (90%) distal characteristics. The perpetrator coded affirmatively for *personal grievance and moral outrage*. For example, he communicated regularly on the internet about the immorality of women. Other forms of negative bias often accompany Incel misogyny (Ging, 2019), and this perpetrator, a white man, was no exception to this. The perpetrator also was biased against homosexuals and people of color, particularly African Americans. He stated in one recorded video that he did not "belong in a society bent on emasculation, mongrelization, and niggerization." The perpetrator felt *personally* victimized by women; vicarious identification as a victim is the key to understanding and coding for *moral outrage* (Meloy, 2017).

The perpetrator identified with the extremist ideology of male supremacy and explicitly identified as an Incel. In his written and recorded work, the perpetrator lauded Elliot Rodger, who, as we have seen earlier, continues to be praised as a saint among the Incel community (Ging, 2019). Due to the perpetrator's belief in the Incel movement and male supremacist ideologies, he felt justified in his actions and therefore coded affirmatively for the distal characteristic *framed by an ideology*.

Despite his identification with the violent Incel community, there is no evidence that the perpetrator was active with online Incel forums and communities specifically created to degrade women. One conjecture for this nonparticipation is that he would not have been accepted by these communities, as he was older than the average participant in these groups. This perpetrator was 40 years old at the time of his attack, and many of the members of the virtual Incel community are typically in their 20s and early-to-mid 30s. Further, despite being a group of men who mostly feel rejected by women and "alpha" men, online Incel participants have proven harshly judgmental, offensive, and exclusionary toward one another as evidenced by observed dialogue presented in these forums (O'Malley et al., 2020). While the evidence for *failure to affiliate* with an extremist group might be uncertain, the perpetrator's inability to affiliate with another group is clear. The perpetrator was honorably discharged from the United States Army on June 9, 2010,

after less than 2 years of active service. There was at least one court-martial in his Army records, which also indicated that the perpetrator had “difficulty assimilating to the Army and demonstrating Army values” and “demonstrated poor judgment.” These military records further showed that the perpetrator “lacked integrity” and was known to “lie.” He was also found guilty under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for “conduct unbecoming of an officer” and “fraternization with an enlisted person.” Coding criteria for the warning behavior *failure to affiliate* with an extremist or other group indicate that the perpetrator must have experienced rejection by a radical, extremist, or other group with whom he initially desired to affiliate (Meloy, 2017). The database provides evidence of the perpetrator’s failure to affiliate with the military and, therefore, is coded affirmatively.

The Incel community thrives on the internet, and this perpetrator was no different, despite his nonparticipation on specific Incel forums. The perpetrator coded affirmatively for *dependence on the virtual community*. There is no evidence that this perpetrator had any real friends outside of the internet, and he depended on the internet to distribute his music and video diary entries. He publicly posted his videos, many of which discussed his hatred of women, on YouTube and received praise from others that likely rewarded and reinforced his extremist beliefs. Further, the perpetrator posted no less than 21 professionally recorded songs to a public SoundCloud account, and many included his novel lyrics written to accompany tunes from popular music. These performances ranged in topic but were all linked by the thread of extremist, racist, and homophobic viewpoints. The internet and virtual community also proved invaluable as the perpetrator sought tactical information to plan his attack. The process of virtual planning and preparation for targeted violence is typical among lone-actor terrorists.

The perpetrator also coded affirmatively for *thwarting of occupational goals*. The perpetrator worked as a substitute teacher for two different Florida school districts and was fired from both positions. While employed by the first Florida school district (April 2015–March 2016), the perpetrator was fired for viewing pornography on the school premises, including viewing while teaching students in class. Approximately 2 years later, the perpetrator was terminated from his

second school district employment (April 2017–June 2018) due to an allegation of unprofessional conduct. More specifically, this referred to an incident where he was alleged to have touched an underage student on her breast under her shirt. Perhaps most significant about this latter incident was the lack of serious intervention or legal action by civil or criminal justice authorities. Between the years 2017 and 2018, the perpetrator was denied employment at 55 separate employment opportunities with the State of Florida. At the time of his attack, he received a monthly allowance from his parents and maintained an average daily checking account balance of less than \$300. In a retrospective interview conducted by law enforcement with an acquaintance, the acquaintance recalled the perpetrator being “frustrated” with his inability to gain employment.

Essential for identification as an Incel is the *failure of sexual pair bonding*. For example, online Incel forums forbid any discussion with or about a member that becomes sexually active. It is generally regarded that when a member of the Incel community ceases active participation online that they have “ascended” in one of two ways—either they have become sexually active and entered into an intimate relationship, or they have died by suicide. In a postevent interview conducted by the Tallahassee Police Department with the perpetrator’s mother, she reported that the perpetrator was “unsuccessful with romantic relationships” and had “abnormally high” standards and expectations for women. In another instance, research analysis of his online videos indicated that when the perpetrator met a woman online and was turned down, he expressed self-loathing by stating that he brings “out the ugliness in people.” In the same video entry, the perpetrator discussed how this woman “crazed” his brain and “boiled” his blood before stating that he would “like to put it to her,” indicating his desire to either rape or murder her. The analyzed data support the affirmative coding of the failure of sexual pair bonding as a distal characteristic.

Despite the researchers being thwarted from accessing mental health and psychiatric records due to strict confidentiality laws, available evidence supported the *presence of a mental disorder* proximal characteristic. The available autopsy report performed on the perpetrator confirmed the presence of Lorazepam in the perpetrator’s system at the time of his attack. Lorazepam is a controlled medication generally

prescribed to treat anxiety and is sometimes prescribed for the control of epilepsy or a seizure disorder. However, considering the strict physical requirements of the United States Army and the absence of any records or reports to indicate the presence of these physical impairments, it is likely that the medication was prescribed to the perpetrator for the treatment of anxiety. Evidence for anxiety was also indicated by the perpetrator's mother, who reported to law enforcement that the perpetrator had "separation anxiety." In another postevent interview conducted by law enforcement, an acquaintance of the perpetrator described him as being "autistic." However, as suggestive as this statement might be, no evidence outside of this statement exists to support this as a possible diagnosis. At the time of the attack, law enforcement records indicate that the perpetrator was under the supervision of a psychiatrist employed by the Veteran's Administration, whom he likely saw for medication management. On October 18, 2018, he rescheduled an upcoming psychiatric appointment, and on October 19, 2020, the perpetrator called a second time to cancel the visit altogether. There is also evidence that the perpetrator was seeing at least one other mental health provider for undisclosed reasons; however, this particular provider specialized in the treatment of substance use, gambling, and sex addictions. At minimum, the available data support that the perpetrator was actively involved in treatment for undisclosed mental health conditions and, as such, is coded affirmatively for the presence of mental disorder.

The attack at the hot yoga studio marks the first time in history that an act of gender-based targeted violence has taken place at a yoga studio. However, a similar attack, in a women's aerobics class, took place in 2009 (Murray, 2016). The attack was innovative and creative not only for this reason, but also for the degree to which the perpetrator engaged in the yoga class. In many acts of targeted violence, particularly those that involve a firearm, the attacks are swift and lack premeditation. However, in this case, the perpetrator pretended to be an actual student in the yoga class, going so far as to purchase a yoga mat and a class pass on the day of the attack. For these reasons, the perpetrator is coded affirmatively for the distal characteristic *creative and innovative*.

The perpetrator coded affirmatively for *criminal violence* due to his history of instrumental criminal violence. While the perpetrator was

accused of stalking at least one woman previously, he also had three different criminal convictions following arrests by campus police and the Tallahassee Police Department. On December 7, 2012, the perpetrator was arrested and charged with battery after he grabbed the buttocks of two women without consent. On July 2, 2014, the perpetrator was convicted of trespassing after he was found to have followed a female university employee in Tallahassee. On July 2, 2014, the perpetrator was convicted of battery a second time after touching a female on the buttocks without consent.

The perpetrator did not code for *changes in thinking and emotion* due to limited evidence of such behavior. The perpetrator lived a solitary life with few friends; therefore, no personal accounts could confirm the presence of data for this distal characteristic. As previously noted, strict confidentiality laws prevented the researchers from accessing psychiatric records from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and precluded the data collection of case notes from other documented mental health providers. It is important to note that, while evidence is absent for coding *changes in thinking and emotion* affirmatively that the absence of evidence does not necessarily mean evidence of absence.

Discussion

This case study addresses a gap in the existing literature on Incel perpetrated targeted gender-based violence by providing context for the origins and evolution of the Incel movement and a case study of the radicalization process and violent actions of a single, violent Incel lone-actor terrorist. Previously identified factors that contribute to the ideological views of Incels were also evident in this case study. While age (e.g., young adult) and race (e.g., Caucasian) appear to be static features of Incels according to popular culture and the media, it is clear that Incels are more accurately defined by their behaviors (e.g., misogynistic gender-based violence) rather than other characteristics.

First, this study found that the TRAP-18 was a useful tool for the retrospective identification of Incel lone actor. The perpetrator coded affirmatively for a majority of the TRAP-18's proximal warning behaviors and distal characteristics (Meloy & Gill, 2016) and is congruent with similar research on the TRAP-18 and its utility

in identifying lone actors broadly (Meloy & Gill, 2016). This fact challenges the longstanding public perception that mental illness is the most powerful cause of lone terror attacks. Despite the TRAP-18 performing as reliably in our study as in other studies the most easily identifiable proximal warning behaviors (e.g., *leakage* and *directly communicated threat*) were not able to be coded affirmatively. While this is not uncommon in cases where a perpetrator is successful in their efforts to perpetrate targeted violence, it does indicate that successful identification of a true threat *prospectively* depends on a well rounded and through assessment of many different risk factors and how they interact with one another. This research suggests the utility of a structured professional judgment tool as a promising approach for the identification of *Incel* lone-actor terrorists. Before conducting this research, the authors were unable to locate any cases where formal threat assessment strategies had been employed in the assessment of Incel lone actors. This might be due to the relatively recent classification of violent Incels as lone-actor terrorists.

The TRAP-18 highlights a number of factors that could be used to prompt interventions. In this and other publicized cases, there were publicly available data that could have prompted more comprehensive law enforcement and other official intervention. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, a recurrent theme emerged. That theme was *uncoordinated official response*. This case study presented the sequential breakdowns and failures in various systems that allowed for the continued radicalization of this perpetrator. For example, in 2012, when the perpetrator experienced his first arrest and conviction on the charge of battery performed on the campus of a major university, only limited official action was taken to punish or reprimand him. The perpetrator was instead rewarded a year later with a college diploma. In 2014, when he was accused of following a woman and charged with trespassing, he again earned only limited sanctions and, in 2015, he was rewarded with a job in a public school. This theme of uncoordinated official response continues when, in 2017, after a second charge of battery and then having been fired for looking at pornography while teaching, the perpetrator was rewarded with yet another offer of employment in a public school where he was provided the opportunity to target a female student. Despite

all of the “red flags” and warning behaviors that were present in this perpetrator’s life history, employment history, and criminal history—much of what would have been publicly available to investigators—only limited action was taken to address his behaviors. The failure to rigorously examine the perpetrator’s history at each of the previously mentioned milestones allowed him to escape consequences that might have limited future antisocial acts. The limited official action taken against this perpetrator might also be indicative of his power and privilege as a white male.

This case study begins to explore the empirical question whether Incels who commit gender-based violence might be driven by a number of co-occurring and synergistic factors. For example, the association among criminality, mental illness, and rigid world views are common among many persons driven to violence. Any of these factors, when isolated, might not reach a level of significance to warrant active threat management, but when present together they might indicate strong risk for targeted violence. The ability to identify interactions among various factors within cases likely holds the key to advancing the science of effective threat identification and management (Calhoun & Weston, 2016).

Today, many states lack adequate protections for women that are victimized by men holding extremist ideologies. In the case under examination in this article, the perpetrator’s biographical data and criminal history, along with his public video diary entries, provided compelling evidence of a pattern of behavior congruent with misogyny and indicated this was an individual at significant risk of perpetrating gender-based violence. In Florida, where the perpetrator resided and committed his terrorist attack, no legislated hate crime protections are currently afforded to women. This is true of at least 10 other states. Gender-based violence against women should lead informed policy leaders to enact legislation that protects women while simultaneously punishing offenders (Lewis et al., 2018).

Future Research

This case study has several implications for future research. First and foremost, more research must be conducted on the Incel population and replicative tests of the utility of threat assessment tools are indicated. The results of this case study

indicate that the TRAP-18 is a strong candidate for further testing across future case studies and group samples. Threat assessment tools used in the context of structured professional judgment are likely to be crucial for the development of public health and legal strategies aimed at identifying and managing potentially violent persons. Currently, the field is still in initial stages of developing and tailoring validated protocols for effective clinical and legal applications (Swanson, 2021).

Second, it is important to note that there is variation *among* violent Incel lone actors and *between* violent and nonviolent Incels. Future research should focus on the similarities and differences among and between varied Incel types in order to construct a testable categorization system. While this article does not discuss treatment for Incels, the fact remains that there are a number of nonviolent Incels who hold unhealthy and potentially unsafe views of women. As a result, future research should also focus on the development and evaluation of therapeutic prevention and interventions for the effective treatment of Incels.

Third, the phenomenon of a person being in a state of transition or an “in-between” (Singer & Lalich, 1996) as discussed earlier, is another important area for exploration. Furthering the idea that Incels may be more readily identified by their behaviors rather than by static and demographic characteristics, this case analyzed a perpetrator who chose to act only after multiple, perceived rejections in personal and professional life domains. It is probable that the perpetrator was vulnerable because of his status as an “in-between” (Singer & Lalich, 1996). According to Erikson’s (1982) model of psychosocial development, individuals navigate a series of developmental tasks throughout the lifespan, with especially demanding psychosocial tasks required during adulthood. When these tasks generate highly stressful challenges, an individual can become increasingly vulnerable to emotional distress (Clark, 2010; Malone et al., 2016). Further, Erikson emphasized the importance of the foundation of successfully negotiated psychosocial developmental crises earlier in the lifespan, suggesting the compounding, deleterious effects that early psychosocial failures can generate later in the life (Erikson, 1982). While the authors have very limited data about his childhood and adolescent years, employing this

developmental framework to understand the adult period of this 40-year-old perpetrator, we note that he routinely complained of multiple failures in the *intimacy versus isolation* stage, where individuals are expected to commit to others in meaningful relationships. Erikson (1982) posited that adolescents and young adults who fail at developing satisfying prosocial relationships may embrace the powerful “negative identity” of belong to a gang or other antisocial group. For some, such experiences can divert persons from eventual pathways toward satisfying developmental achievements into life courses characterized by antisocial and criminal behaviors. As previously noted, the internet has exponentially opened up such opportunities for adults to join alternative virtual communities, and this perpetrator found the online Incel community as a compelling source of affiliation and as a virtual location for quasi-public enactments of his violent fantasies, ideas, and aspirations.

The perpetrator was unemployed at the time of his attack, and his work history indicated multiple failures in developing a career or occupation—another important task of adulthood—and he consistently sabotaged his opportunities with antisocial, sexual offenses. Finally, his military history indicated additional failure experiences that culminated in a court-martial, but not before he attained expertise in firearms and tactics. Belew (2018) analyzed cases of domestic terrorists with military experiences who return to civilian life, disgruntled and intent on perpetrating violence, and noted the risks that military training can pose for some vulnerable young adults and for civilian society.

Future research on Incel-perpetrated violence should pay close attention to patterns of transitionary, stressful stagnation, or dissatisfaction, and carefully consider cases where persons find themselves “in-between” crucial developmental periods or processes. Researchers can examine the relation between psychosocial developmental failures, the development of “negative identities,” and subsequent enactments of targeted violence. Attentive investigation of life histories can help build the database necessary for eventual generalization and classification.

Future research should strive to examine mental health histories across violent Incels to begin the process of understanding whether there are unique features or diagnoses among the Incel population. Additionally, investigators should

not only continue to explore the utility of threat assessment and management strategies in identifying violent Incel lone actors, but also seek to develop frameworks for professionals that outlines the processes and thresholds for interventions. While Incel-related violent attacks are becoming more prevalent, this should not detract from the fact that the vast majority of Incels are nonviolent, and that research into the best interventions would prove invaluable to the development of prevention strategies and processes required to stop or interrupt radicalization.

Limitations

As in all case study research studies, there are limitations to the generalizability of these findings. This study was in-depth case study of a single violent lone-actor terrorist and, as such, there is no claim that it is applicable to all Incels, especially those who are nonviolent. Thus, the need for additional empirical research on this group of lone actors has never been greater. Additionally, the data have the limitation of being coded by a single author, and despite the authors' successful endeavors to resolve issues through frequent peer debriefings, this must be seen as a limitation. Additionally, this research was conducted retrospectively and is subject to hindsight bias. In threat assessment the goal is prospective analysis in an effort to thwart violence from occurring in the future. While prospective analysis can be difficult, the TRAP-18 has been shown to have predictive ability and validity, making it suitable for this use in prospective analysis (Böckler et al., 2020; Goodwill & Meloy, 2019).

Further, there is limited research on the differences and similarities between Incel lone actors and in fact, no measures or metrics for categorizing Incels outside the violent/ nonviolent continuum. Future research should focus on constructing categorizations of offenders that threat assessment professionals can use to manage and monitor cases effectively (Douglas et al., 2013). This research is also limited in its interpretation of mental health and psychiatric factors due to strict confidentiality laws prohibiting access to such records of violent offenders even after their deaths. The information in those undisclosed records could have strengthened inferential power in the present study.

Conclusion

The case under analysis in this study is similar in some ways to other acts of lone-actor terrorism in North America and Europe (Gill, 2015; Meloy et al., 2015). For example, the perpetrator was a white male that followed a pathway to radicalization as a result of a perceived injustice. However, given that this perpetrator was a violent Incel lone actor, the motivations that prompted this attack might have been inherently unique from other acts of lone-actor terrorism. An important aim of this study was to assess whether the TRAP-18 could serve as a valid threat assessment tool for use with a violent Incel and to help identify proximal warning behaviors and distal characteristics. The findings suggest that the TRAP-18 is a promising threat assessment tool for use with this population based on the high rates of affirmative coding in both the proximal warning behaviors and distal characteristics.

References

- Anti-Defamation League. (2020). *Incels (involuntary celibates)*. <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/incels-involuntary-celibates>
- Bandura, A. (1999). Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 3(3), 193–209. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0303_3
- Belew, K. (2018). *Bring the war home*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674984943>
- Böckler, N., Allwinn, M., Metwaly, C., Wypych, B., Hoffmann, J., & Zick, A. (2020). Islamist terrorists in Germany and their warning behaviors: A comparative assessment of attackers and other convicts using the TRAP-18. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 7(3–4), 157–172. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000150>
- Böckler, N., Hoffmann, J., & Zick, A. (2015). The Frankfurt airport attack: A case study on the radicalization of a lone-actor terrorist. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2(3–4), 153–163. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000045>
- Böckler, N., Leuschner, V., Roth, V., Zick, A., & Scheithauer, H. (2018). Blurred boundaries of lone-actor targeted violence: Similarities in the genesis and performance of terrorist attacks and school shootings. *Violence and Gender*, 5(2), 70–80. <https://doi.org/10.1089/vio.2018.0002>
- Bromley, D. B. (1986). *The case-study method in psychology and related-disciplines*. Wiley.
- Calhoun, F. S., & Weston, S. W. (2016). *Threat assessment and management strategies: Identifying the howlers and hunters* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

- Challacombe, D. J., & Lucas, P. A. (2019). Postdicting violence with sovereign citizen actors: An exploratory test of the TRAP-18. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 6(1), 51–59. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000105>
- Clark, J. J. (2010). Erik H. Erikson: Transitions, contributions, & marginalities. In T. Miller (Ed.), *Life stress and transitions in the life span* (pp. 59–83). International Universities Press.
- Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639>
- Cortesi, S., & Gasser, U. (2015). *Digitally connected: Global perspectives on youth and digital media*. Berman Center Research. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2585686>
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *Sociological methods: A sourcebook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Donnelly, D., Burgess, E., Anderson, S., Davis, R., & Dillard, J. (2001). Involuntary celibacy: A life course analysis. *Journal of Sex Research*, 38(2), 159–169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490109552083>
- Douglas, J. E., Burgess, A. W., Burgess, A. G., & Ressler, R. K. (2013). *Crime classification manual: A standard system for investigating and classifying violent crime* (3rd ed.). Wiley.
- Douglas, K. S., & Kropp, P. R. (2002). A prevention-based paradigm for violence risk assessment: Clinical and research applications. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 29(5), 617–658. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009385402236735>
- Dragiewicz, M. (2011). *Equality with a vengeance: Men's rights groups, battered women, and antifeminist backlash*. University Press of New England.
- Erikson, E. H. (1982). *The life cycle completed: A review*. W. W. Norton.
- Gill, P. (2015). *Lone-actor terrorists: A behavioral analysis*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315766348>
- Gill, P., Corner, E., Mckee, A., Hitchen, P., & Betley, P. (2019). What do closed source data tell us about lone actor terrorist behavior? A research note. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2019.1668781>
- Gill, P., Horgan, J., & Deckert, P. (2014). Bombing alone: Tracing the motivations and antecedent behaviors of lone-actor terrorists. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 59(2), 425–435. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.12312>
- Ging, D. (2019). Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4), 638–657. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X17706401>
- Goodwill, A., & Meloy, J. R. (2019). Visualizing the relationship among indicators for lone actor terrorist attacks: Multidimensional scaling and the TRAP-18. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 37(5), 522–539. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2434>
- Guldimann, A., & Meloy, J. R. (2020). Assessing the threat of lone-actor terrorism: The reliability and validity of the TRAP-18. *Forensische Psychiatrie, Psychologie, Kriminologie*, 14(2), 158–166. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11757-020-00596-y>
- Hodapp, C. (2019). *Men's rights, gender, and social media*. Lexington Books.
- Hoffman, B., Ware, J., & Shapiro, E. (2020). Assessing the threat of incel violence. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 43(7), 565–587. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2020.1751459>
- Kropp, P. R., Hart, S. D., Webster, C. D., & Eaves, D. (1994). *Manual for the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide*. British Columbia Institute on Family Violence.
- Lewis, R., Rowe, M., & Wiper, C. (2018). Misogyny online: Extending the boundaries of hate crime. *Journal of Gender-Based Violence*, 2(3), 519–536. <https://doi.org/10.1332/239868018X15375304472635>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(85\)90062-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(85)90062-8)
- Malone, J. C., Liu, S. R., Vaillant, G. E., Rentz, D. M., & Waldinger, R. J. (2016). Midlife Eriksonian psychosocial development: Setting the stage for late-life cognitive and emotional health. *Developmental Psychology*, 52(3), 496–508. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039875>
- Meloy, J. R. (2017). *Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol user manual*. Global Institute of Forensic Research.
- Meloy, J. R., & Gill, P. (2016). The lone-actor terrorist and the TRAP-18. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 3(1), 37–52. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000061>
- Meloy, J. R., & Hoffmann, J. (Eds.). (2014). *International handbook of threat assessment*. Oxford University Press.
- Meloy, J. R., Hoffmann, J., Guldimann, A., & James, D. (2012). The role of warning behaviors in threat assessment: An exploration and suggested typology. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 30(3), 256–279. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.999>
- Meloy, J. R., & O'Toole, M. E. (2011). The concept of leakage in threat assessment. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 29(4), 513–527. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.986>
- Meloy, J. R., & Rahman, T. (2021). Cognitive-affective drivers of fixation in threat assessment. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 39(2), 170–189. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2486>
- Meloy, J. R., Roshdi, K., Glaz-Ocik, J., & Hoffmann, J. (2015). Investigating the individual terrorist in Europe. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2(3–4), 140–152. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000036>

- Meloy, J. R., & Yakeley, J. (2014). The violent true believer as a "lone wolf"—Psychoanalytic perspectives on terrorism. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 32(3), 347–365. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2109>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Sage Publications.
- Moghaddam, F. M. (2005). Psychological processes and "the staircase to terrorism." *American Psychologist*, 60(9), 1039–1041. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.9.1039>
- Monahan, J., Steadman, H. J., Silver, E., Appelbaum, P. S., Robbins, P. C., Mulvey, E. P., Roth, L., Grisso, T., & Banks, S. (2001). *Rethinking risk assessment: The MacArthur study of mental disorder and violence*. Oxford University Press.
- Murray, J. L. (2016). The role of sexual, sadistic, and misogynistic fantasy in mass and serial killing. *Deviant Behavior*, 38(7), 735–743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2016.1197669>
- Nagle, A. (2017). *Kill all normies: Online culture wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the alt-right*. Zero Books.
- O'Malley, R. L., Holt, K., & Holt, T. J. (2020). An exploration of the involuntary celibate (incel) subculture online. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520959625>
- Padgett, D. K. (2016). *Qualitative methods in social work research (SAGE sourcebooks for the human services)* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Runciman, W. G. (1966). *Relative deprivation and social justice: A study of attitudes to social inequality in twentieth century England*. Routledge/Kegan Paul.
- Singer, M. T., & Lalich, J. (1996). *Cults in our midst*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (2019). *Male supremacy*. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/male-supremacy>
- Spaaij, R. (2011). *Understanding lone wolf terrorism: Global patterns, motivations and prevention*. Springer.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage Publications.
- Swanson, J. W. (2021). Introduction: Violence and mental illness. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, 29(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1097/HRP.0000000000000281>
- Tyler, T. R. (2006). *Why people obey the law*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400828609>
- Valkenburgh, S. P. V. (2018). Digesting the red pill: Masculinity and neoliberalism in the manosphere. *Men and Masculinities*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X18816118>
- Van Brunt, B., & Taylor, C. (2020). *Understanding and treating incels*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367824396>
- Weimann, G. (2004). *www.terror.net: How modern terrorism uses the internet* (Special report no. 116). United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved August 13, 2020, from <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr116.pdf>
- Weimann, G., & Hoffman, B. (2015). *Terrorism in cyberspace: The next generation*. Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Columbia University Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and method* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Zuckerberg, D. (2019). *Not all dead white men: Classics and misogyny in the digital age*. Harvard University Press.

Received March 24, 2021

Revision received August 12, 2021

Accepted August 16, 2021 ■