

The “Pseudocommando” Mass Murderer: Part I, The Psychology of Revenge and Obliteration

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The pseudocommando is a type of mass murderer who kills in public during the daytime, plans his offense well in advance, and comes prepared with a powerful arsenal of weapons. He has no escape planned and expects to be killed during the incident. Research suggests that the pseudocommando is driven by strong feelings of anger and resentment, flowing from beliefs about being persecuted or grossly mistreated. He views himself as carrying out a highly personal agenda of payback. Some mass murderers take special steps to send a final communication to the public or news media; these communications, to date, have received little detailed analysis. An offender's use of language may reveal important data about his state of mind, motivation, and psychopathology. Part I of this article reviews the research on the pseudocommando, as well as the psychology of revenge, with special attention to revenge fantasies. It is argued that revenge fantasies become the last refuge for the pseudocommando's mortally wounded self-esteem and ultimately enable him to commit mass murder-suicide.

J Am Acad Psychiatry Law 38:87–94, 2010

... to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake, I spit my last breath at thee. . . . Thus, I give up the spear!—Herman Melville [Ref. 1, p 154]

... All the [expletive] you've given me. Right back at you with hollow points.—Seung-Hui Cho²

The term pseudocommando was used by Dietz in 1986 to describe a type of mass murderer who plans his actions “after long deliberation” (Ref. 3, p 482). The pseudocommando often kills indiscriminately in public during the daytime, but may also kill family members and a “pseudo-community” he believes has mistreated him.³ He comes prepared with a powerful arsenal of weapons and has no escape planned. He appears to be driven by strong feelings of anger and resentment, in addition to having a paranoid character. Such persons are “collectors of injustice”³ who nurture their wounded narcissism and retreat into a

fantasy life of violence and revenge. Mullen⁴ described the results of his detailed personal evaluations of five pseudocommando mass murderers who were caught before they could kill themselves or be killed. He noted that the massacres were often well planned (i.e., the offender did not “snap”), with the offenders arriving at the crime scene heavily armed, often in camouflage or warrior gear, and that they appeared to be pursuing a highly personal agenda of payback to an uncaring, rejecting world. Both Mullen and Dietz have described this type of offender as a suspicious grudge holder who is preoccupied with firearms.

Mass killings by such individuals are not new, nor did they begin in the 1960s with Charles Whitman. The news media tend to suggest that the era of mass public killings was ushered in by Whitman atop the tower at the University of Texas at Austin and have become “a part of American life in recent decades.”⁵ Research indicates that the news media have heavily influenced the public perception of mass murder, particularly the erroneous assertion that its incidence is increasing.⁶ Furthermore, it is typically the high-profile cases that represent the most widely publicized, yet least representative mass killings. As an

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Disclosures of financial or other potential conflicts of interest: None.

Table 1 Homicide–Suicide

Classification	Relationship + motive Relationship between victim and perpetrator (spousal, familial, etc.) Motivation of perpetrator (jealousy, altruism, revenge, etc.)
Major patterns	
Consortial-possessive	Most common type, accounting for 50% to 75% of all homicide-suicides. Involves a male recently estranged from his partner. Relationship often characterized by domestic abuse, multiple separations, and reunions.
Consortial-physically ailing	The perpetrator is usually an elderly man in poor health, an ailing spouse, or both. Health problems have typically resulted in financial difficulties. Depression is frequent. The motive may involve altruism or despair about the future. Suicide notes are often left describing an inability to cope with poor health and finances.
Filicide-suicide	About 40% to 60% of fathers and 16% to 29% of mothers commit suicide immediately after murdering their children. An infant is more likely to be killed by the mother. A mother who kills a neonate is unlikely to commit suicide. Further subtypes of filicide-suicide are based on motives such as psychosis, altruism, and revenge.
Familicide-suicide	Committed by a depressed senior man of the household. Associated precipitating stressors include marital problems, finances, or work-related problems. He may view his action as an altruistic “delivery” of his family from continued hardships. He may also suspect marital infidelity and be misusing substances.
Adversarial Homicide-Suicide (extrafamilial)	Involves a disgruntled ex-employee, a bullied student, or a resentful, paranoid loner. He externalizes blame onto others and feels wronged in some way. He is likely to have depression and exhibit paranoid and/or narcissistic traits. Occasionally, he may experience actual persecutory delusions. He uses a powerful arsenal of weapons and has no escape planned.

Adapted from Marzuk *et al.*¹²

example that such mass murderers have existed long before Whitman, consider a notorious case, the Bath School disaster of 1927, now long forgotten by most.⁷ Andrew Kehoe lived in Michigan in the late 1920s. He struggled with serious financial problems, and his wife suffered from tuberculosis. He appeared to focus his unhappiness and resentment on a local town conflict having to do with a property tax being levied on a school building. After becoming utterly overwhelmed with resentment and hatred, Kehoe killed his wife, set his farm ablaze, and killed some 45 individuals by setting off a bomb in the school building. Kehoe himself was killed in the blast, but he left a final communication on a wooden sign outside his property that read: “Criminals are made, not born”—a statement suggestive of externalization of blame and long-held grievance.

Mass Murder: A Subtype of Homicide-Suicide

Homicide-suicide (H-S) is the phenomenon in which an individual commits a homicide and subsequently (usually within 24 hours) commits suicide.^{8–10} H-S is a distinct category of homicide with features that differ from those of other forms of killing. It is a rare event, estimated to occur at a rate of

between 0.2 and 0.38 per 100,000 persons annually.^{9,11} Most homicide-suicides are carefully planned by the perpetrator as a two-stage, sequential act. Marzuk *et al.*¹² proposed classifying H-S by the relationship the perpetrator had to the victim (e.g., spousal, familial), along with the perpetrator’s motive (e.g., jealousy, altruism, revenge). Table 1 lists the major H-S patterns discussed in the research literature, along with brief descriptions.

Of the five major H-S types, the consortial-possessive type is the most common, accounting for 50 to 75 percent of all homicide-suicides. Less common is the adversarial (also called extrafamilial) type of H-S. The pseudocommando mass murderer described by Dietz³ and the perpetrator of the analogous autogenic massacre described by Mullen⁴ would best fit into this category. Variants of this type of H-S include disgruntled (ex-)employees, students, patients, and litigants. The pseudocommando subtype of mass murder may be considered a H-S, as the perpetrator goes to the offense expecting not only to kill, but also to be killed, sometimes by his own hand. Since he has no escape planned and may also force police to kill him, certain cases may culminate in so-called suicide by cop.¹³ Technically, an adversarial H-S following the pseudocommando pattern is only

considered a mass murder if the perpetrator kills four or more victims at one location, within one event.¹⁴ For mass murderers in general, the literature does not reflect a strong link with serious mental illness.¹⁵ Rather, retrospective analyses of cases suggest that, while mass murderers may have illnesses such as depression, it is rare for them to have psychosis.¹⁶

In his case studies of five pseudocommando-type mass murderers who were apprehended alive, Mullen⁴ described several traits and historical factors that these individuals had in common. In particular, they were bullied or isolated as children, turning into loners who felt despair over being socially excluded. They were generally suspicious, resentful grudge holders who demonstrated obsessional or rigid traits. Narcissistic, grandiose traits were also present, along with heavy use of externalization. They held a worldview of others being generally rejecting and uncaring. As a result, they spent a great deal of time feeling resentful and ruminating over past humiliations. Such ruminations invariably evolved into fantasies about violent revenge. Mullen noted that the offenders seemed to “welcome death,” even perceiving it as bringing them fame with an aura of power. Since most of the literature on the pseudocommando heavily references the offender’s motivation of revenge, a more in-depth analysis of the psychology of revenge may be helpful.

The Psychology of Revenge

He piled upon the whale’s hump the sum of all the general rage and hate . . . and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart’s shell upon it.—Herman Melville [Ref. 1, p 154]

The desire for revenge “is a ubiquitous response to narcissistic injury” (Ref. 17, p 447). It should be of interest that an emotion so intense and pervasive has received little study relative to other emotions. Both psychoanalysis¹⁸ and forensic psychiatry have merely skimmed the psychological surface of this destructive cognition. Yet consider how revenge hides in plain sight. For example, Greek mythology is awash in revenge themes.¹⁸ Revenge is the central motive in at least 20 of Shakespeare’s plays and is a main theme in many of today’s Hollywood movies. The success of movies such as the *Death Wish* series, and more recently the *Kill Bill* series, speaks to the public’s fascination with, and indeed their delight in, “the sweet taste of payback.”¹⁹ That there is a strong, primal universality of the revenge theme hardly requires in-

depth socioanthropological study. Across almost every culture, the taking of revenge, when “justified,” has assumed “the status of a sacred obligation” (Ref. 20, p 199). In many cultures, since biblical times and before, there has always been the principle of retributive functional symmetry, such as the admonition of an eye for an eye in the Hebrew Bible.

Human aggression, as an expression of revenge, may be traced back to a psychophysiological response designed to enhance survival.²¹ At this stage of our evolution, affronts to our self-esteem or narcissism are responded to “as though they were a threat to our survival” (Ref. 22, p 123). We have maintained the physiological hard-wiring that is available for excessive use in situations that do not involve survival of the body, but survival of the ego. The ego’s survival instinct may become transformed into a “striving for an enduring sense of self which is an object of value in a field of social meanings” (Ref. 23, p 23). Because the self or ego must be defined in the social-meaning field, it is the Other on whom we depend for our highly valued identity. The individual whose ego is fragile or damaged may nurture destructive rage toward the Other that eventually transforms him into an avenger. Indeed, it is the frustration of the need to “preserve a solid sense of self,” that is often “the source of the most fanatical human violence [as well as] the everyday anger that all of us suffer” (Ref. 23, p 85).

Yet vengeful rage provides only pseudopower, as it is merely a reaction to intolerable feelings of powerlessness and humiliation. Nevertheless, there comes a point when this pseudopower is the only defense the avenger has left to ward off the annihilation of his identity. For this reason, when the potential avenger’s ego is threatened or hurt “in such a devastating way . . . the only thing that remains is to persist in the ‘unremitting denunciation of injustice’ ” (Ref. 24, p 189). For certain individuals, there is no turning back or giving up on the “crusade,” because there is a perverse “honor” in refusing to normalize the perceived injustice. Herein lies the “hidden logic of the . . . avenger” (Ref. 23, pp 83–4): to sustain a perversely heroic “refusal to compromise, an insistence ‘against all odds,’ ” lest his heroic fantasy surrender to the reality of a self (or lack thereof) that he finds intolerable (Ref. 24, p 190).

The psychotherapy literature on revenge suggests that fantasized revenge is a familiar cognition in daily life. In the treatment of various stress response syn-

dromes, “clinicians may encounter intrusive and persistent thoughts of vengeance associated with feelings of rage at perpetrators” (Ref. 25, p 24). While the revenge fantasies often have the emotional content of hate and fear, the fear may easily devolve into frank paranoia. Of relevance to the pseudocommando is the research evidence suggesting that strong anger can serve as an attention-focusing emotion, making it difficult to think about other things.²⁶ Angry thoughts thus generate a vicious cycle; “the more he thinks about them the angrier he gets, and the angrier he gets, the harder it is to think about anything else” (Ref. 26, p 1317). Thus, a pseudocommando’s revenge fantasy may prevent him from “engaging other strategies (e.g., trivialization) that would have allowed [him] to move on and think about something else” (Ref. 26, p 1323).

For the pseudocommando, revenge fantasies are inflexible and persistent because they provide desperately needed sustenance to his self-esteem. He is able to feel better by gaining a sense of (pseudo) power and control by ruminating on, and finally planning out his vengeance. Consider the pictures of Seung-Hui Cho (Virginia Tech) released by the media in which he is dressed in various warrior outfits (e.g., flack jacket, black clothing, ammo belts). Next, consider the fact that he had to shop for and purchase these items and possibly try them on—all the while imagining how he would use them and how he would look in them. These fantasies may lead the avenger to “experience pleasure at imagining the suffering of the target and pride at being on the side of some spiritual primal justice” (Ref. 25, p 25). Thus, the revenge fantasy falsely promises a powerful “remedy” to the pseudocommando’s shattered ego. It gives the “illusion of strength,” and a temporary, though false, sense of restored control and self-coherence.²⁵

The type of severe narcissistic rage experienced by the pseudocommando “serves the purpose of the preservation of the self” (Ref. 22, p 124) that has exceeded its limit of shame, rejection, and aversive self-awareness. This pain and rage cannot be contained, and he ultimately embarks “on a course of self-destruction that transfers [his] pain to others” (Ref. 22, p 128). It may ultimately be the intensity and quality of the revenge fantasies, acting in concert with other risk variables, that contribute to “whether vengefulness will be a passing concern or a lifelong quest” (Ref. 17, p 449). Dietz³ has described these

individuals as “collectors of injustice” who hold onto every perceived insult, amassing a pile of “evidence” that they have been grossly mistreated. Why might they so faithfully stockpile this collection? I argue that it serves the purpose of sustaining their revenge romance. The collection is reassembled into the form of an “enemy” who deserves to be the target of a merciless, incendiary rage. Thus, the pseudocommando maintains object relations with others that are based heavily on envy and splitting, as their collection is likely to consist of the unwanted, hated, or feared aspects of themselves. A more intense desire for revenge may signal a more intense idealization of the hated object(s). Targets of a very intense desire for revenge must be made out to be worthy of their fate, which is why we may see the pseudocommando portray his victims as barely worthy of being considered human, much as Mr. Cho portrayed other students (whom he hardly knew) as “hedonistic” “brats” who had “raped” his soul. Yet at the same time, he must view himself as blame free, thereby completing the other half of the splitting and projection dynamic.

We are now at a point where we can summarize some of the main psychic functions that the pseudocommando’s fantasy of revenge serves:

It “provides sadistic gratification, and perhaps has an evolutionary basis” (Ref. 18, p 608).

It helps the pseudocommando obliterate an intolerable reality and aversive self-awareness. His rumination “dominates thought and impels action much as an addiction or erotomania does” (Ref. 18, p 605). He could be said to have “fallen” into romantic/idealized hate. When Captain Ahab believed he had been “dismasted” by the whale, he reached the final stages of narcissistic inaccessibility and plunged irretrievably into a romanticized downward spiral of reality-destroying nihilism and death. The revenge fantasy serves as a defense against feelings of shame, loss, and powerlessness. In this way, revenge “is an attempt to restore the grandiose self” (Ref. 18, p 605). It allows the pseudocommando’s omnipotence to rise triumphantly (in his fantasy) from the ashes of shame and vulnerability.

It maintains the *status quo* of the pseudocommando’s primitive object relations, which are based heavily on envy and splitting.

The peril associated with these revenge dynamics is that they inexorably collide with reality in such a way as to render the defenses ineffectual. Reality ultimately creeps into his life in various ways, threatening him with aversive self-awareness and requiring him to feed the monster—that is, to cultivate stronger, more intense feelings of persecution and hostility toward his victims. Once this process becomes well entrenched, the pseudocommando begins to tread down the path of cognitive deconstruction, nihilism, and death.

Pseudocommando Psychodynamics: Persecution, Envy, and Nihilism

They do me wrong, and I will not endure it. . . . I must be held a rancorous enemy.—Richard III²⁷

Having discussed how the pseudocommando's wish for revenge represents his struggle to restore a "damaged" identity, I now focus on the developmental psychodynamics observed in many offenders who also have strong paranoid and narcissistic traits—in particular, those who cling to the position of the aggrieved "victim," despite overwhelming evidence that their own actions have placed them in their unpleasant situation. These offenders may become stagnated in their own self-pity, anger, and persecutory ruminations. It is possible that the harsh early childhoods that some of these offenders endured contributed to their impaired ability to trust others as an adult, leaving them with a strongly self-centered, paranoid character.²⁸ According to developmental theory, a healthier developmental course necessitates the transition away from what Klein²⁹ called the "persecutory position," toward the "depressive position." The study of violent offenders suggests, according to this theory, that impediments to psychological development cause the offender to become relatively fixed in a persecutory developmental stage, or what Klein called the paranoid-schizoid position.³⁰ In this stage, most of the individual's worldview is based on feelings of mistreatment and frustration at what is perceived as intentional harm or purposeful withholding of gratification. Fixation at this stage is associated with the use of more primitive defense mechanisms, such as splitting, externalization, and projective identification. In contrast, the offender who has reached the depressive position has developed the capacity for feelings of concern that he has injured or destroyed some aspect of society (e.g., his fellow human beings). Cognitions associated

with the depressive position include regret, empathy with the victim, and interest in making reconciliation with society.

The persecutory cognitions of the offender in the paranoid-schizoid position are experienced as threatening, undeserved attacks on his self. This response is of interest, in that Dietz noted that most men in the United States who have killed 10 or more victims in a single incident have demonstrated "paranoid symptoms of some kind" (Ref. 3, p 480). Consistent with their feelings of being persecuted, such offenders may also have strong feelings of destructive envy. As regards envy, it is important to note that the offender at the paranoid-schizoid stage is not necessarily envious of the Other's possessions or social status, but the way in which the Other appears to be able to enjoy these things. Thus, the offender's true goal is "to destroy the Other's ability/capacity to enjoy the prized object or status" (Ref. 24, p 90). For example, in his manifesto, Mr. Cho chides other students in keeping with his perception that they possessed "everything" they ever wanted, such as "Mercedes . . . , golden necklaces . . . , trust fund[s] . . . , vodka and cognac."³¹ Yet in the same manifesto, he reveals his powerful envy, stating: "Oh the happiness I could have had mingling among you hedonists, being counted as one of you, if only you didn't [expletive] the living [expletive] out of me."³¹ Via projection, such individuals perceive others as persecutory, as well as withholding the goodness and happiness to which they are entitled. Similar cognitions were reported by the pseudocommandos evaluated by Mullen.⁴ They were described as suspicious individuals with strong feelings of persecution and mistreatment, who harbored resentment over past social rejections.

Alternatively, the depressive position allows the individual to confront reality more smoothly. It involves the capacity for feelings of responsibility, guilt, and concern over harm done to others. During long-term incarceration, some offenders may eventually take up pursuits suggestive of attempts to negotiate the depressive phase. For example, a man sentenced to life for murder may become involved in running the prison "lifers group," or take up creative pursuits such as art, music, or poetry—all examples of reparative activities.³⁰ Unfortunately, some offenders may be unable to achieve an attitude embracing personal accountability and reconciliation. In particular, some go on to develop remarkably fixed, chronic

feelings of persecution. Clinical observations suggest that some of these offenders ultimately develop an entrenched nihilistic attitude. Nihilism then pervades their cognitions about treatment and life in general. The risk here is that their failure to find meaning in life may result in feelings of hopelessness, self-defeating actions, and suicidality.³² Thus, it may be hypothesized that once the offender reaches some individual-specific level of nihilism, he will demonstrate a significantly reduced ability to benefit from efforts designed to extend help and will have little motivation to self-regulate his behavior. These empirical observations of the adverse effects of social rejection and nihilistic beliefs in incarcerated offenders are consistent with research findings in nonincarcerated populations. For example, social rejection has been found in normal subjects to increase feelings of meaninglessness, decrease self-awareness, and impair behavioral self-regulation.^{33,34}

Social science research has shown that when nihilism and the drive to avoid painful self-awareness become strong enough, there is a significantly increased risk of suicide and self-destructive behavior.³⁵ This theory has been called the “escape theory” of suicide, to denote the suicidal individual’s motivation to escape aversive self-awareness. According to the escape theory, when the individual is unable to avoid negative affect and painful self-awareness, a process of “cognitive deconstruction” occurs in which he rejects meaning and descends into hopelessness, irrationality, and disinhibition. Suicide then becomes the ultimate step in the effort to escape awareness and its implications about the self. Applying this theory to the psychology of the pseudocommando, the stage of cognitive deconstruction seems to signal a potentially deadly turning point. Having tried and failed to place his painful self-awareness outside himself, he redoubles his efforts to externalize. These efforts merely return to him as even more powerful persecutory attacks from outside. In select individuals, this reaction may culminate in a real-life physical attack directed outward to avoid what is within. For the pseudocommando laboring under a heavy burden of persecutory ideas and negative affect, consciousness of his true predicament is self-torment. Because he is a conscious being, reality will eventually permeate the fault lines of his defenses. Clear contemplation of his predicament is the equivalent of an unending suicide—a painful assault by reality, combined with his own persecutory attacks. His existence has be-

come the progressive self-destruction of a subject given over to a condition of catastrophic fear, rage, and despair.

The Obliterative State of Mind

Shakespeare’s *Richard III* is a classic illustration of a mind committed to revenge and driven by powerful grievance. His state of mind may be regarded as obliterative, in that it functions to spread more grievance, destruction, and ultimately, annihilation.³⁶ Such individuals may come to embrace a self-styled image based on low self-esteem or negative self-perceptions that may be tinged with an ominous or threatening undertone. That is, they embrace their dark, negative cognitions and fashion them into a recognizable suit of black armor. Just as Richard III defined himself by his own deformity, so Mr. Cho defined himself by his outcast status—even calling himself the “question mark kid.” Thus, persons driven by envy and destruction tend to see others “as in the light and [choose] to stay in the dark . . .” (Ref. 36, p 702). In the case of Richard III, envy and destructive narcissism led him to the conscious adoption of the role of reprobate:

And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.²⁷

Toxic levels of “envy and narcissism . . . can fracture the personality, hold it hostage and in thrall, by being fuelled by triumph and contempt . . .” (Ref. 36, p 703). The developing pseudocommando must hold fast to his “hatred of anything such as growth, beauty, or humanity which is an advance over a bleak, static interior landscape” (Ref. 36, p 710). Note, however, that there is still another important psychological motive behind Richard’s decision to “prove a villain.” Specifically, it is his belief that “Nature has done me a grievous wrong Life owes me reparation for this I have a right to be an exception, to disregard the scruples by which others let themselves be held back. I may do wrong myself, since wrong has been done to me” (Ref. 37, pp 314–15). It is this feeling of being an exception to the rule, of being entitled to harm others or break societal laws, that fuels the pseudocommando’s obliterative state of mind. Once he has embraced this mindset, he condemns himself to a mental space in which “he cannot envision rescue from this commitment to a killing field externally or internally” (Ref. 36, p 709).

The narcissistic injury, which is utterly intolerable, is “essentially nihilistic: nothing matters, all is despair . . . all goodness and substance are obliterated, so that nothingness defines the domain” (Ref. 36, p 710). This is the oblitative mindset—destroy everything, embrace nothingness.

Such an individual needs a mental “sanctuary” from the oppressive, relentless nihilism that assails him. It is only from such a sanctuary that he has hope of achieving greater mental clarity and freedom from persecution, reclaiming the notion of the Other’s potential “goodness,” and relinquishing his pseudoempowering revenge fantasies. Sadly, it is the case that some individuals may never be able to relinquish the Ahab-Richard III state of mind, as all attempts at empathy may be met with suspicion, defensiveness, and contempt. At this point, the individual is unable or unwilling to re-emerge from his “heroic” fantasy of justified, “honorable” revenge. As the pseudocommando comes closer to turning fantasy into reality, he must undergo a process by which he comes to accept that he will be sacrificing his own life. It may be that this obstacle is easier for him to overcome when his catastrophic thinking leads him to believe violent homicide-suicide is his only option, and his oblitative mindset causes him to feel that his self is already dead. The death of his physical body is simply an inevitability of little consequence. These cognitions will eliminate his capacity for undistorted judgment, finding meaning in life, and sublimating aggression. Now he is able to override his survival instinct and reach the point of “willingness to sacrifice one’s body” (Ref. 38, p 73).

Once the pseudocommando reaches the stage of genuine willingness to sacrifice himself, he becomes a vortex into which all data are taken and reconfigured to substantiate the grounds of the revenge fantasy. At some individualized point, the pseudocommando makes the decision to bring his revenge fantasies into the daylight of reality. He also begins to formulate his final communications. These communications have great meaning to him, as he realizes that they will be the only living testament to his motivations, struggle, and heroic sacrifice. He pulls the words from deep within his shattered psyche and carefully spreads them out for all to see. Like a poker player who lays down his royal flush, he reveals his hate-filled, oblitative hand to the shock and lament of all who bare witness.

Conclusions

Mass murders have occurred since well before the Whitman shooting in 1966. What constitutes a more modern twist on mass murder is the pseudocommando-style shootings, as first described by Dietz³ and more recently by Mullen.⁴ Present day access to powerful automatic firearms, as well as glorification of the phenomenon by the media are two factors making modern mass murders unique.

This article has presented a discussion of the psychology of revenge, focusing on revenge fantasies in pseudocommando mass murderers. These individuals nurture feelings of persecution, resentment, and destructive envy. When the pseudocommando has reached the limit of his ability to avoid painful self-awareness, his revenge fantasy becomes his last refuge until he achieves a willingness to sacrifice himself. Part II will demonstrate how the final communications of pseudocommandos are rich sources of data regarding their individual motives and psychopathology.

Editor’s Note

Part II of this article will be published in Volume 38, Issue 2 of the *Journal*. It will explore and analyze the final communications of two recent pseudocommandos: Seung-Hui Cho (Virginia Tech) and Jiverly Wong (Binghamton, NY).

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The “Pseudocommando” Mass Murderer: Part I

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