Chapter 6
Influences and Radicalization

6.1 Theorizing Radicalization

How and why do individuals become lone wolf terrorists? What are the factors that affect a person's attitudes and behaviour to the extent that violent radicalization and, ultimately, lone wolf terrorism is the outcome? Although the motivational patterns and ideological sources discussed in the previous chapter go some way to answering these questions, in order to attain a deeper understanding of lone wolf terrorism, radicalization should be understood in a broader sense, that is, as a complex, dynamic, multidimensional and phased process.

Violent radicalization can be defined as "the process of adopting or promoting an extremist belief system for the purpose of facilitating ideologically based violence to advance political, religious, or social change" [1, p. 2]. Violent radicalization is only at the far end of a wide repertoire of possible radical expressions, of course, and the number of people who choose violence as their preferred method is extremely low [2]. The key to explaining the socialization of lone wolf terrorists, then, is understanding how these individuals are brought to the point where they see themselves as bearers of the responsibility for, or a vanguard of, violent actions [3].

In recent decades there has been a major upsurge in research into violent radicalization. This literature greatly enhances our knowledge of the factors and influences that shape radicalization into terrorism. It shows, for example, that there is no single explanation or pattern of radicalization and that violent radicalization involves a complex interplay of macro-, meso- and micro-level factors and mechanisms [2, 4–14]. Thus, violent radicalization takes places at the intersection of an enabling environment and individual trajectories towards greater militancy. Although violent radicalization generally "thrives in an enabling environment that is characterized by a more widely shared sense of injustice, exclusion and humiliation (real or perceived) among the constituencies the terrorists claim to represent", not all individuals who share this sense of injustice or are living in the same polarized environment turn to radicalism and even less so to terrorism

[2, p.17]. Concrete personal experiences, kinship and friendship, as well as group dynamics and socialization into the use of violence are "critical in triggering the actual process of radicalization escalating to engagement in acts of terrorism" [2, p. 18]. In this context, Della Porta [15] proposes an analytical model for explaining political violence in which environmental conditions, group dynamics, and individual motivations and circumstances are all taken into account. Most theories of radicalization view feelings of discontent and adversity/deprivation—what can be called the "instrumental motive" which is affected by broader political, economic and social conditions–as a platform for stepping initially onto the path to political radicalization. However, only very few people come to resist a perceived injustice through violent action [5, 6].

One of the most original sociological explanations of how people become radicalized into violent extremism and terrorism has been developed by Michel Wieviorka. Wieviorka [16, p. x] argues that in order to understand terrorism, "one must begin at the bottom with the social and cultural meanings of action as they are transformed, distorted, and also recomposed in the trajectories of the actors". For Wieviorka, the violence which terrorists use is a substitute for the relationship they once shared with the constituencies on whose behalf they claim to be fighting. He shows how terrorism can be understood as the final outcome of a process of inversion concerning three fundamental dimensions of a social movement: identity, opposition and totality. In this paradigm, the principle of identity, which defines the actor and the constituency on whose behalf he or she speaks, ceases to be a reference to any real social entity and instead comes to champion some mythic or abstract entity, essence or symbol (e.g. an abstract notion of justice, morality or freedom). This inversion of identity results in an "aggravated subjectivism" in which the terrorist defines himself or herself primarily through a total commitment to the cause for which he or she is the self-proclaimed vanguard and the consciousness of all who have been alienated or who remain unconscious of the historical role they have to play [16, p. 8]. Thus, the principle of opposition that defines the social adversary undergoes an objectivization of the enemy, in which society and state are fused together into a single, all-consuming threat, and the enemy is transformed into a concrete target to attack or a system to annihilate. The principle of totality then ceases to be a common reference to a given cause and no longer fuels new future-directed actions. Where there had once been a common ground on which political differences could be resolved, now all that remains is a need to overthrow the present system. The principle of totality dissolves into a life-or-death combat that calls for the destruction of the existing order [16].

Like most theories of radicalization into terrorism, Wieviorka focuses predominantly on the group and interpersonal dimensions of violent radicalization as well as the wider political and cultural conditions that affect these dimensions. This raises the question of whether such analytical models can also help explain terrorism carried out by lone individuals who are not part of a terrorist group. The answer to this question should be "yes", as long as the analysis takes into consideration how external conditions and group influences affect *individual* beliefs and behaviours. Moreover, it must account for the specific circumstances

and personal characteristics of the individuals involved and their interaction with significant others, such as family, peers, radical ideologues, extremist movements and virtual communities. Put differently, individual terrorists are "subject to an array of influences related to self-perception, family, community and identity" [17, p. 16].

Whilst lone wolf terrorism results from solitary action during which the direct support or command of others is absent, such action and its justification does not take place in a vacuum. As noted in Chap. 5, exposure to ideologies justifying terrorism is a key ingredient in the mix of personal and vicarious learning experiences leading to a commitment to terrorism [3]. The available evidence indicates that there is a variable degree of interaction with extremist movements among lone wolf terrorists, if only tacitly through the creation of a wider supportive community promoting terrorist violence [18, 19]. The analytical distinction between lone wolf terrorism and group-based terrorism is often problematic in practice because inter-group dynamics typically also influence lone individuals, for example in their framing of grievances and justifications for violence against the enemy. Conversely, lone wolf terrorists can also influence larger movements. The actions of David Copeland and Yigal Amir, for instance, were supported by a section of sympathizers from affiliated ideological milieus that portrayed them as martyrs for their cause. British neo-Nazi Neil Lewington reportedly sought to emulate Copeland and Timothy McVeigh, and kept videos detailing their attacks at his home (see Appendix). As described below, Copeland himself was inspired by Eric Rudolph's bombing attack during the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Let us examine here the key patterns of violent radicalization as they relate to lone wolf terrorism, commencing with personal circumstances and then moving to interpersonal relations and sociocultural and political influences.

6.2 Personal Circumstances and Social Backgrounds

What psychological factors motivate the lone wolf terrorist and influence his or her perceptions and self-identity? As noted, there is no single personality type or profile of the lone wolf terrorist. Furthermore, personality traits alone are not very good predictors of behaviour [20]. Scholars such as Post [21] and Horgan [22] argue that, overall, terrorists should not be regarded as suffering from any identifiable psychopathology. In the same vein, Crenshaw [23, p. 99] notes that "the outstanding common characteristic [of terrorists] is normality. Terrorism often seems to be the connecting link among dissimilar personalities". Similarly, Reinares et al. [2, p. 9] stress that those who engage in terrorist activity "are not mentally disturbed people" and "are essentially unremarkable in psychological terms".

The question then is whether these observations are transferable to lone wolf terrorists. Hewitt [24] argues that although most terrorists are, psychologically speaking, "normal", the rate of psychological disturbance is higher among lone

wolves. Pantucci [25] also notes that mental problems or a general social inability underlie the histories of relatively many lone wolf terrorists. My own research supports the conclusion that, in comparison with group-actor terrorism, lone wolves tend to have a greater propensity to suffer mental health issues [18, 26]. Although precision here is difficult, lone wolf terrorists seem relatively likely to suffer from some form of psychological disturbance. For example, as discussed below, four of the five lone wolf terrorists in the case studies were diagnosed with some form of personality disorder. Four out of five also appear to have experienced depression during at least one stage of their lives (all but Copeland), though this was not systematically assessed in all cases [26]. (Copeland and Kaczynski were also diagnosed with schizophrenia, but this diagnosis is contested.) At least some of the other lone wolf terrorists in the database are also believed to suffer from psychological disturbance (cf. [25]).

Moreover, as described in detail below, lone wolf terrorists often display a degree of social ineffectiveness and social alienation [18] which may also be viewed as symptoms of psychological abnormality. Those individuals who yearned to be a member of a group often found in the end that they had difficulty being accepted, feeling a part of, or succeeding in a group [27]. In some cases lone wolf terrorists even exhibit the desire to withdraw themselves from mainstream society and from wider communities and act completely on their own. Importantly, however, the nature of the psychological disorder or social ineffectiveness typically does not cause lone wolf terrorists to become cognitively disorganized, and in most cases they do not fully lose contact with reality (cf. [28]). Indeed, all five individuals in the case studies planned and executed their attacks in a logical and rational way.

Volkert van der Graaf experienced depression in his mid-twenties, especially after his first girlfriend broke off their relationship. Van der Graaf attempted to commit suicide but failed and, according to the psychiatrist who evaluated him, this was followed by an attempt to buy drugs for a second suicide attempt. He subsequently tried to find self-confidence and self-identity in ideology and moral principles [29]. Van der Graaf was also diagnosed with a personality disorder, although the court ruled that this condition played no part in his assassination of Pim Fortuyn and that van der Graaf was fully "sane" [30]. In a similar vein, in his mid-twenties Franz Fuchs became severely depressed and eventually planned to commit suicide following his failure to find challenging employment or a partner. On 8 August 1976, Fuchs wrote to his parents: "My meaning and existence for mankind is zero" [31]. His father had him admitted into a psychiatric hospital. Fuchs was released after two months and declared recovered. According to Böhmer [32], Fuchs suffered from obsessive–compulsive disorder; however, this was not systematically diagnosed after his arrest.

After his arrest, David Copeland claimed that he had been having sadistic dreams from the age of 12, citing difficulties concentrating and sleeping. A year earlier he was prescribed mild anti-depressants to help him cope with anxiety attacks. Copeland appears to have been suffering from some form of mental illness, but the nature and severity of his condition is contested. Five defense

psychiatrists reportedly concluded that he was suffering from schizophrenia. One of them stated that the visions Copeland spoke of as a teenager were consistent with the first stages of a schizophrenic condition. This diagnosis was challenged by the prosecutors who were unimpressed by his claim of diminished responsibility [33]. Another consultant psychiatrist concluded that Copeland was not suffering from schizophrenia but did have a minor personality disorder that was not serious enough for him to avoid a murder charge [34].

Theodore Kaczynski also had a history of brief contacts with mental health organizations. While studying at the University of Michigan he sought psychiatric contact after he had been experiencing weeks of intense and persistent sexual excitement involving fantasies of being a female. Kaczynski seriously contemplated undergoing a sex-change operation [35], and recounts that he was aware that this would require a psychiatric referral and made an appointment at the university's health center [36]. He later described feeling rage, shame and humiliation over his attempt to seek psychiatric evaluation, noting it as a significant turning point in his life [36]. Kaczynski also indicated that he suffered from severe depression for at least a number of months in the late 1980s, which affected him to some degree until 1994. During his trial Kaczynski insisted that his defense not be based on the claim of mental illness. The official psychiatric evaluation was inconclusive on this matter. While Kaczynski was found competent to stand trial, psychiatrist Dr Sally Johnson [36] stated that he was probably a paranoid schizophrenic preoccupied with two main delusional beliefs: that he was being controlled by modern technology, and that his dysfunction in life (e.g. his inability to establish a relationship with a female) was a direct result of psychological abuse by his parents. Critics contest this assessment by arguing that there is no substantive evidence that Kaczynski was mentally ill or "out of touch with reality" apart from his unconventional social and political views [24].

As noted above, a significant pattern of commonality is that lone wolf terrorists tend to display a (varying) degree of social ineffectiveness and social alienation [18]. Those lone wolves who yearned to be a member of a group often found in the end that they had difficulty being accepted, feeling a part of, or succeeding in a group. Thus, a number of lone wolves developed an isolationist attitude which led them to act on their own. Springer [37] attributes the initial cultivation of an isolationist attitude to the conditions surrounding childhood and adolescent years, asserting that the three terrorists he studied (Kaczynski, Rudolph and McVeigh) spent a lot of time by themselves and struggled to establish and maintain intimate human relationships (e.g. female companionship). They increasingly "isolated themselves, cut off contact with their families and began to stew. Once in isolation, their ideologies would take shape and slowly inch them closer to the line of direct action, violence in the name of their ideologies" [37, p. 79]. Springer [37, p. 72] concludes that "their isolationism, lack of group acceptance or success within a group, and difficulty establishing emotional connections led each of them viewing themselves as the ultimate loners" who became increasingly focused on their ideologies and, eventually, violent action.

Although no single profile exists, the case studies also demonstrate that lone wolf terrorists tend to be social isolates who generally feel more comfortable on their own, albeit with significant variations. Only Volkert van der Graaf was living with a partner (who is also the mother of his daughter) at the time of the attack, while the other four men were not in a relationship over the times of their attacks. Two of them, Franz Fuchs and Theodore Kaczynski, lived in reclusion and shunned most forms of direct contact with the outside world. Whilst living in reclusion, they planned and began to take revenge for the perceived injustices and humiliations they had experienced. After leaving his job at the University of California in 1969, Theodore Kaczynski spent approximately two years attempting to locate a piece of land upon which he could live in isolation from society. In 1971 he built a small cabin on a piece of wilderness land near Lincoln, Montana. From 1971 to his arrest in 1996 he lived a solitary life in the cabin, except for some short periods of time when he travelled and sought temporary employment to earn some money. He made an effort to live off the land and gradually developed the necessary skills in tool making, gardening, food preservation and hunting. Kaczynski wrote in his journal that he did not, nor did he want to, fit into organized society. His move to Lincoln was a way of escaping from modern society [36]. Similarly, Franz Fuchs also increasingly lived in reclusion and had very little or no contact with family and friends. He developed a deep-seated hatred towards the outside world and regarded himself as a failure [31, 38]. Fuchs increasingly formulated his resentment towards immigrants and the immigration policy of the Austrian government and in December 1993, began to put his frustrations into practice through bomb attacks.

With the exception of Volkert van der Graaf, who had been a member of a number of organizations, none of the five lone wolf terrorists studied appear to have felt particularly comfortable in organized groups. These individuals' preference to act alone and their feelings of discomfort regarding membership of an organized extremist group go some way to explain why lone wolves often stay lone wolves. Copeland and Amir did try to engage with like-minded individuals by joining a political party or extremist group for some time. In 1997 Copeland joined the British National Party (BNP) and acted as a steward at some BNP meetings. He soon abandoned the party because of his disappointment that the BNP did not advocate violence. Back in Hampshire, he joined a small neo-Nazi organization, the National Socialist Movement, where he later became a regional unit leader only weeks before the start of his bombing campaign [39]. Copeland's case highlights that even though lone wolf terrorists are not members of a terrorist group, they may identify or sympathize with a larger movement or have previously been a member or affiliate of such a movement. As noted in Chap. 3, there are interesting parallels with the accused Norwegian lone wolf Anders Breivik here, who was a member of Norway's Progress Party but left because in his view the party did not go far enough.

In addition to their diverse personalities, lone wolf terrorists exhibit a variety of social backgrounds. It is possible, however, to identify a fairly common pattern among lone wolf terrorists: with significant variations, they are more often than not

relatively well educated and relatively socially advantaged. This finding is consistent with what we know about terrorists in general, namely that terrorism is more frequently associated with relative affluence and social advantage rather than lack of education, poverty or other indicators of deprivation [3].

The case studies illustrate this point. Four of the five lone wolf terrorists were recognized as intelligent or highly intelligent persons (all but Copeland). Yigal Amir was born in 1970 to a middle-class Israeli family, and attended a highly respected school, the Hesder Yeshiva of Kerem de-Yavneh, which was known for the relative moderation of its instructors and graduates [40]. As discussed below, Amir's political views became more radical during his tenure at Bar Ilan University, where he studied law and computer science and was recognized as a very good student [41]. Franz Fuchs was recognized early in life for his exceptional intelligence, being especially skilled in physics and reportedly outperforming his teachers on many subjects. Fuchs later studied theoretical physics at the University of Graz and had the potential to develop an academic career; however, he decided to abandon his studies because he could "not bear the miserable student life" [31]. He accepted a position at a Mercedes factory in Germany, where he worked as an assembly line employee. Volkert van der Graaf was also described as an intellectually gifted individual, was raised in a middle-class family and considered to be a good student during secondary school. Van der Graaf later moved to Wageningen to study environmental hygiene at the Wageningen agricultural university; however, he failed to complete his studies, opting instead to devote his time to protecting the environment [42]. During this period van der Graaf's beliefs concerning animal rights and environmental protection became more rigid and he developed a pessimistic worldview.

Theodore Kaczynski was born in Chicago in 1942 to lower-middle-class parents. His family moved several times, gradually bettering their housing status. They eventually settled in the middle-class suburb of Evergreen Park, Illinois, in the early 1950s. A highly intelligent student, Kaczynski twice skipped a grade in school. He later described skipping a grade in elementary school as a pivotal event in his life that caused the underdevelopment of his social skills. He recalled not fitting in with the older children and increasingly being the subject of verbal abuse and bullying [36]. At age 16 Kaczynski became a mathematics student at Harvard University, graduating in 1962. By age 25 he had completed his PhD and was highly rated by his academic supervisors. He accepted a position as assistant professor in mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley, a position he held until June 1969.

I should reiterate here that, despite the identified patterns of commonality discussed above, there is no single profile of what "makes" a person become a lone wolf terrorist. Individuals involved in terrorism are influenced by various combinations of motivations and undergo rather different processes of violent radicalization [2]. The radicalization process, then, should be viewed as consisting of a complex and dynamic set of circumstances and mechanisms that shape the individual's "causal story" and is arguably unique for each individual [43, p. 139]. Certain life experiences, such as histories of abuse (real or imagined) during

childhood or damaging home environments, are relatively commonly found in terrorist biographies, and the case studies provide some examples of such experiences. David Copeland, for instance, claimed that his parents psychologically abused him as a child, whereas Theodore Kaczynki's parents put immense academic pressure on him, allegedly causing him to slip into isolation and become a consummate loner [37]. However, as Borum [20] notes, none of these experiences contribute significantly to a causal explanation of terrorism.

6.3 Sociocultural and Political Influences

In Chap. 3, I argue that many of the actions that appear to be lone wolf ventures have broader ideologies of validation and communities of belief behind them (see also [44]). Lone wolf terrorists are more often than not strongly influenced (if only tacitly or vicariously) by wider communities that provide ideologies which cultivate a sustained, alternate sense of morality capable of justifying the destruction of life and property that terrorism entails [19]. They often draw on such ideologies of validation to frame a particular grievance as an injustice and to place blame on a certain group of people, state or government. In the psychological literature this is referred to as the mechanism of externalization: the channeling of personal frustrations and the attribution of responsibility for all perceived problems (e.g. an unfolding crisis or deeply corrupted society) to the Other [21]. The vilification or demonization of the enemy can drive an impetus for aggressive or violent action to defend the aggrieved or remedy the wrong [20]. Social identification with broader political, social or religious struggles (real or imagined) encourages the lone wolf terrorist's dualistic categorization of the world into "us" and "them", thus stereotyping social groups and dehumanizing the enemy, and effectively weakening psychological barriers against violence [45]. As noted earlier, lone wolf terrorists may not only internalize such dualistic categorizations but also, to varying extents, physically withdraw themselves from mainstream society.

The case studies illustrate how communities of support may be engaged with in multiple ways. First of all, this can be achieved through direct contact with like-minded individuals and groups. In cases where lone wolf terrorists strongly identify with an existing movement or have been directly involved in such a movement, their personalized ideologies may closely reflect the political, social or religious aims of these movements. David Copeland, for example, made an attempt to align himself with an extremist milieu that conformed to his expectations of a violent, revolutionary vanguard by connecting with the BNP and the National Socialist Movement. His right-wing connections augmented his personal worldview that "regarded mainstream society as a corrupt and decaying order, in need of violent confrontation" [19]. As noted in Chap. 5, Copeland justified his actions using extreme-right ideology, asserting that his intent was "to spread fear, resentment and hatred throughout this country, it was to cause a racial war" [46].

He went on to assert: "I am a national socialist, or Nazi, whatever you want to call me. I believe in a ruling master race … Aryan domination of the world" [46]. Moreover, the influence of the American far right on his personalized ideology is evident, *inter alia*, in his racist obsessions and his statement that "ZOG", the "Zionist Occupation Government"—a term often used by American White supremacists—was trying to sweep him under the carpet by pumping him full of drugs [39].

The case of Yigal Amir further illustrates how lone wolf terrorists may engage with extremist movements. Amir grew up in a heavily politicized environment characterized by a growing polarization between the more moderate sections of Israeli nationalists and the far right on the issue of how to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Amir's mother was known for extremist views which she expressed, for instance, by making a pilgrimage to the grave of Baruch Goldstein [40]. However, although both his parents supported the idea of Greater Israel, they reportedly "preached brotherhood and unity, and said Jews should not fight one another" [47]. In the years leading up to the attack, Amir's worldview radicalized significantly, including not only a fierce hatred of Muslims but also a growing distrust of the Israeli government. Amir obtained military experience in the Golani Brigade, a combat unit in the Israeli Defense Forces, and it is reported that while in military service he tortured local Palestinians and took pride in his deeds [40]. Amir later returned to Herzliya to study at Bar Ilan University, where he devoted much of his time to the study of Jewish religious law and right-wing political activities [41, 47]. Amir also participated in the events organized by Zo Artzenu, a right-wing movement that was instrumental in intensifying the atmosphere of delegitimation surrounding the Israeli government. During these events participants vented their frustrations and shared struggle experiences. Some of them spoke and chanted freely about the need to execute the "traitors", referring to Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres [40].

Let us also consider the case of Volkert van der Graaf. Most of the organizations in which van der Graaf participated were relatively moderate in their views on animal rights and environmental protection. He engaged with animal rights activists from an early age, for example through his membership of the Dutch WWF youth movement and his employment at a bird sanctuary in Walcheren [48]. Van der Graaf's worldview gradually became more radical after he moved to Wageningen to commence his undergraduate degree. During this period he participated in a number of moderate and more radical environmental and animal protection organizations. Van der Graaf later co-founded the animal rights group Vereniging Milieuoffensief (Environmental Offensive Association; VMO) which conducted more than 2,000 legal procedures primarily against intensive cattle operations. VMO targeted smaller, more vulnerable operations where action would more likely yield success [49]. Stock breeders considered the overwhelming volume of objections to be a form of blackmail and accused van der Graaf of abusing the legal system. Van der Graaf received a number of threats from the cattle breeding industry [42].

Compared to Copeland, Amir and van der Graaf, Theodore Kaczynski and Franz Fuchs were less directly influenced by existing movements, though Kaczynski's views appear to have been shaped in part by Harvard University's counterculture of the 1950s and 1960s [35, 50]. Kaczynski claimed that already during his high school years he had uncomfortable fantasies of violent revenge. In his journal he writes that during high school and college he would often become terribly angry, but could not express that anger openly because he was "too strongly conditioned… against any defiance of authority" [36]. While studying at Harvard he began to recognize and formulate his feelings of loathing toward his personal situation and his anger toward society [37].

As noted earlier, university was also a significant environment in the radicalization of Amir's and van der Graaf's personalized ideologies. Referring to terrorism in general, Taylor [43, p. 127] asserts that "universities certainly have proved to be ideological training grounds for many terrorists", with the experience of university giving rise to the questioning of society's values. As we have seen, universities can also afford opportunities to directly engage with affiliated ideological milieus. However, university life does not seem to have had this effect on Franz Fuchs, whose worldview appears to have evolved largely autonomously and mainly without any direct contact with like-minded others [26].

Radicalization: The Internet and Self-Study

Communities of support for extremist beliefs and terrorist activity may be developed through virtual encounters using new social media. Recent research examines the role of the Internet as an incubator or accelerator of solo actor and small group terrorism [51, 52]. Pantucci [25, p. 34] points out that the Internet provides individuals with "direct access to a community of like-minded individuals around the world with whom they can connect and in some cases can provide them with further instigation and direction to carry out activities". For those individuals who demonstrate some level of social alienation, the community provided by the Internet "can act as a replacement social environment that they are unable to locate in the real world around them". Pantucci [25, p. 34] concludes that the Internet makes it "much easier for any alienated loner to make contact or locate a high level of both radical material, and operational support material". It should be noted, however, that the quality of this operational support material, especially online bomb-making manuals, varies considerably (e.g. [53]).

In Chap. 1, I discussed law enforcement agencies' concern that the Internet enables individuals to be radicalized in their own lounge rooms through reading, communicating extremist messages, and developing terrorist skills and expertise. The 22 July 2011 attacks in Norway illustrate this point. The accused perpetrator, Anders Breivik, was active on Internet fora and websites. He had

built up substantial online connections and seems to have had a significant Facebook network; in his manifesto, Breivik [54, p. 4] speaks of "7,000 patriotic Facebook friends".[8] Breivik sent his 1,517-page manifesto to a variety of mailing lists and posted a 12-minute video on the Internet summarizing his arguments. Breivik closely followed the online statements and blogs of a number of right-wing thinkers and later cited them in his own manifesto. He also attempted to meet with at least one of these right-wing bloggers in order to discuss their ideas and beliefs [55, 56]. Breivik's online activity has reinvigorated the debate on whether lone wolves might radicalize more easily and might be more aware of like-minded others because of increased access to information, even though most of the right-wing bloggers he interacted with have explicitly distanced themselves from his actions. One newspaper goes as far as to assert that "the Internet is full of Breiviks" [57].

The case of David Copeland further illustrates the potential role of the Internet in vicariously engaging with communities of support. Copeland read right-wing texts online and learnt his bomb-making techniques through downloading and studying *The Terrorist Handbook* and *How to Make Bombs: Book Two* after visiting an Internet café [58]. Similar to the public response to the attacks in Norway, after Copeland's arrest the co-editor of the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* asserted that "there are many more potential Copelands in society" and called for a crackdown on the publication of inciteful and racist literature on the Internet [59].

Vicarious engagement with communities of support is clearly not restricted to the Internet. David Copeland, for instance, closely followed the media coverage of the explosion at Centennial Park during the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. As he watched news reports from the scene, Copeland reportedly wondered why nobody had bombed the Notting Hill Carnival. He stated that he gradually became fixated on the idea of carrying out his own bombing and "woke up one day and decided to do it" [60]. Copeland explained: "I had a thought once. It was that Centennial Park bombing. The Notting Hill Carnival was on at the same time, and I just thought why, why, why can't someone blow that place up? That'd be a good'un, you know, that would piss everyone off" [61].

The case of David Copeland points to the important role that self-study often plays in shaping the lone wolf terrorist's personalized ideology. The easy availability of extremist material both online and offline means that individuals can teach themselves the extremist creed and use this material to define and justify their actions and worldview [25]. Indeed, in some cases lone wolf terrorists bear many characteristics of an autodidactic, self-taught person. American anti-abortion activist Paul Ross Evans [79], who in 2007 attempted to bomb an abortion clinic in Austin, Texas, writes how "days were spent at the local library reading

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[8] Two months after the 22 July 2011 attacks, there are numerous anti-Breivik Facebook pages that are visited and/or "liked" by tens of thousands of people, for example the page "We Hate You Anders Behring Breivik".

countless books and accessing the Internet. There is a lot of knowledge out there, just floating around, and if you are courageous enough to obtain it, you can possess the might to torment those who are your enemies". Evans [79] describes his vigorous learning activities as follows:

> As I began to contemplate taking action, I had a lot of free time on my hands…. During this period of intense research I was driven by a great inquisitiveness. I encountered numerous organizations which either directly threatened the future of Christendom, or violently killed innocent children. I grouped these various organizations into categories, and began to realistically contemplate targeting one or several of them with terrorism. I began to be consumed with an overwhelming motivation to attack specific entities with mail bombs.

In Evans' apartment police reportedly found several books, including *Pipe and Fire Bomb Designs*, *Special Forces Demolition Techniques* and William Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* [62].

David Copeland also engaged in vigorous self-study. He read racist and anti-Semitic literature, including Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* (written in 1978 under the pseudonym Andrew Macdonald [80]), and later confessed that this book was important to the construction of his worldview. Similarly, Yigal Amir immersed himself in Israel's maturing right-wing counterculture. Amir avidly read the book *Baruch Hagever* (Baruch, the Man), written and published by Baruch Goldstein admirers [40]. Most of the essays in *Baruch Hagever* address the Jewish-Muslim conflict with a Goldstein-like interpretation of what should be done in a time of unfolding crisis. One essay in the book, written by Benjamin Ze'ev Kahane, the son of the slain rabbi Meir Kahane and the influential young leader of Kahane Chai, also discusses the failure of the Jews to display determination towards the Palestinians. Kahane emphasizes that a cultural war between the real and Hellenized Jews is forcefully being waged, with the secular Hellenized Jews on the winning side. He identifies the delicate passage between targeting Arabs, which was the "virtue" of Goldstein, and targeting Jews, so tragically expressed by Amir [63, p. 113]. Amir later spoke about Rabin's cultural war against the real Jews [64].

Volkert van der Graaf, on the other hand, studied a range of anarchistic literature including books such as *Resistance is Possible: Handbook for Activists*, *The Anarchist Cookbook*, *Handbook Against the Copper*, and *Interrogation Methods*. Finally, Theodore Kaczynski was an avid reader of Joseph Conrad's novels, especially his 1907 book *The Secret Agent* [81]. Kaczynski's targeting of scientists and technological experts and his condemnation of science were reportedly inspired by the novel [65]. Like the bomb-builder in the novel, who is known as "the Professor", Kaczynski had given up a university position to live as a recluse. Kaczynski seems to have used "Conrad" or "Konrad" as an alias on at least three occasions [65]. He confessed that he grew up with a copy of the book and that he read it more than a dozen times. Kaczynski apparently failed to see that Conrad's novels are "ferocious satires of the revolutionary mind-set" [66]. For this reason, Teachout [66] argues that the Unabomber's manifesto is the work of "a mind floating in a cultural vacuum".

6.4 Lone Wolf Terrorism and Inversion

The characterization of Kaczynski's manifesto as the work of "a mind floating in a cultural vacuum" [66] directs our attention to the process of inversion which, as discussed earlier, is central to Michel Wieviorka's [16] theory of terrorism. Wieviorka [16, p. 10] notes that terrorism is:

> unique inasmuch as it is possessed of a dual specificity: on the one hand, it necessarily associates ideology with practice, and its self-image with the bearing of arms; on the other, it is perpetrated by groups which are always relatively external to the movement of which it is the inverted image.

May lone wolf terrorism be so viewed? Although at first glance the focus in Wieviorka's theory on group-actor terrorism seems to invalidate this theory for explaining lone wolf terrorism, I have shown how lone wolf terrorists are more often than not strongly influenced by broader communities of belief. Thus, it becomes possible to explore whether lone wolf terrorists can be viewed as the "inverted image" of the communities in whose name they claim to fight.

In relation to the principle of identity, the key question is whether lone wolf terrorists speak on behalf of any real social entity, as opposed to some mythic or abstract entity or belief. The accused Norwegian lone wolf Anders Behring Breivik is a case in point. As noted in Chap. 4, Breivik's personalized ideology appears to have been strongly inspired by a right-wing intellectual current referred to as counterjihad [67]. In his manifesto, Breivik [54, pp. 388, 610] makes himself out to be the embodied consciousness of all "ethnic Europeans" whose societies are under "the imminent threat of the dark force that is trying to undermine all things civil we believe in". By relying on terrorism to transmit his message that resumes some of the key meanings conveyed by the right-wing currents that oppose the "Islamization" of the West, Breivik gives a distorted image of them—an inversion. Most counterjihad and right-wing thinkers cited in his manifesto have strongly condemned Breivik's actions. Siv Jensen, the leader of Norway's Progress Party, of which Breivik was once a member, described the attacks as "horrible and cowardly". Jensen stated: "The horrible and cowardly attacks we've witnessed are contrary to the principles and values underpinning the Norwegian society. It makes me feel extra sad to know that this person once was a member of our party" [68]. The Dutch right-wing politician Geert Wilders, who is cited several times in the manifesto, stated that his Freedom Party (PVV) "abhors all that Breivik represents and has done". He said that all of those killed or injured had been "innocent victims", and reportedly described the perpetrator as "a violent and sick character" [69]. In response to accusations that his rhetoric and ideas could be stimulating and a breeding ground for radicals such as Breivik (e.g. [70]), Wilders stressed that "in no possible way have I contributed to a climate in which murderers such as Anders Breivik feel called upon to the urge to use violence" [71]. Wilders went on to state:

> The Freedom Party has never, ever called for violence and will never do. We believe in the power of the ballot box and the wisdom of the voter. Not bombs and guns. We fight for a

democratic and nonviolent means against the further Islamisation of society and will continue to do so. The preservation of our freedom and security is our only goal [82].

However, even in the wake of the Norwegian tragedy Wilders refused to shun controversial statements regarding the threat of Islam: "I speak the truth concerning Islam and the enormous dangers of this violent totalitarian ideology. … Truth is that the Islamization of the Netherlands must be stopped. That is not inciting hatred … but standing up for the Netherlands and our own culture and freedom, where Islam does not belong" [71].

The case of Yigal Amir is also indicative of the inversion of the principle of identity. Amir believed that he had a moral duty and a religious commandment to kill the Israeli Prime Minister. However, the vast majority of the organizations and individuals with whom he identified and who spoke the language of delegitimation did not really wish to see Rabin dead, and even the most radical activists were probably not mentally ready to murder him [40]. Amir has always denied that ultranationalist rabbinical authorities had approved the murder of Rabin, insisting that he had decided on the killing alone after careful deliberation:

> If you knew me, I'm an individualist, I always was. I don't feel influenced, I never felt influenced. I think about everything a very great deal, like my faith and like what I did with Rabin. What I did with Rabin was done after a great, great deal of thought and after many, many other attempts I had made to awaken the nation here [72].

Amir told investigators that he had discussed the issue with several rabbis, but none of them were willing to approve the assassination arguing that it is forbidden to murder a Jew, and certainly the Prime Minister. Amir was disappointed with the rabbis, accusing them of being "soft and political" [72]. He stated that he admired no prominent rabbi in this generation. Amir believed he was fully cognizant of the relevant Jewish religious law and had a sufficient understanding of the misery of the Israeli people to act on his own [40, 73].

With regard to the principle of opposition, we have seen how the lone wolf terrorist's vilification or demonization of the enemy can drive an impetus for violent action to defend the aggrieved or remedy the perceived injustice. Wieviorka [16, p. 294] notes that "by objectivizing his enemies, and viewing himself as the hero in a resistance movement carried out in the name of values and principles which he alone is capable of justifying … the terrorist actor exits the political arena with no thought of ever returning". Indeed, all of the lone wolf terrorists in the five case studies felt that they had exhausted all other political means or that such means would be fruitless. In their view, violence was the only way to defeat their enemies and take the blinders off their audiences. As Amir states: "I tried to do everything else, but the Government's method here is to silence demonstrations" [72]. In a similar vein, Kaczynski [74, p. 16] writes that "in order to get our message before the public with some chance of making a lasting impression, we've had to kill people". Furthermore, reflecting on his third bombing attack, David Copeland told police: "I didn't feel joy but I didn't feel sadness. I just didn't feel anything. I just had to do it. It was my destiny" [75]. Similarly, during his trial Volkert van der Graaf stated that he had killed Fortuyn

"guided by my conscience". He argued that although "normally, I find it morally reprehensible to kill someone", at the time he felt it was "justified" [76]. In van der Graaf's mind, his victim was "an ever-increasing danger to society that had to be stopped [77]. Finally, the accused Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik believes that his attacks were "atrocious but necessary" [78]. Breivik [54, p. 1396] states that he had come to the conclusion that "it would be impossible to change the system democratically".

In sum, the above suggests that lone wolf terrorists typically feel that they have the moral authority to counter-attack the morally corrupt force (the enemy) that contradicts their ideology, often regardless of the collateral damage inflicted as long as the "greater good" is achieved [37]. Lone wolf terrorists tend to believe that they are important (if not crucial) to the struggle, and that their actions will help to enlighten their audiences. We see here an aggravated subjectivism in which the lone wolf terrorist defines himself or herself through a total commitment to the cause for which he or she is the self-proclaimed vanguard and the embodied consciousness of all who have been alienated or are under threat. However, I should note here that the degree to which lone wolf terrorists consider collateral damage as morally justified tends to vary. Consider for example anti-abortion activist Paul Ross Evans' [79] confession that even though he set out "to kill those targeted", he was "determined to keep any collateral damage to a bare minimum" and therefore chose his targets "scrupulously". Evans [79] writes:

> As I compiled a list of potential targets, I focused only on those having addresses such that minimum numbers of non-targeted individuals, especially children, would be anywhere nearby. Targets who stood out from the rest and seemed to beg for retribution were those who generated disgrace toward the morally upright, and those who operated with flamboyance, arrogance, and smugness.

The target selection and modus operandi of lone wolf terrorists are the focus of Chap. 7.

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