A person wearing a dark hoodie and pants is walking away from the camera in a hallway. The scene is lit with a strong red light, creating a dramatic and somewhat ominous atmosphere. The person's shadow is cast on the floor. The background shows a stone wall and a doorway.

Threat Assessment and Management Strategies

Identifying
the
Howlers
and
Hunters

Frederick S. Calhoun and Stephen W. Weston

With a Summary of the Research on the *Intimacy Effect* by Debra M. Jenkins



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Dedication

*To Austin James Calhoun (1918–2006) and
John Wayne Weston (1926–1992)*

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Preface

Robert L. Burke settled his disputes with bombs. At work, Burke frequently threatened his fellow employees in the air traffic control tower at Walker Field Airport in Grand Junction, CO. Several of his colleagues complained that talking with Burke often left them in fear for their lives. During one conversation with Gary Mueller, his supervisor, Burke bragged about owning two guns, including a .357 Magnum. When Mueller asked why Burke needed two pistols, Burke replied that two guns increased his killing power. “Why a .357?” Mueller asked. “You’ll find out,” Burke told him. During this same conversation, Burke demanded that Mueller do things Burke’s way because Burke was the only person who knew how to do things right. If Mueller did not follow Burke’s instructions, “something big was going to happen” and “Mueller would be sorry” since Burke “had nothing to lose.” After nearly a year of such conversations, threats, and references to violence, in March 2004 Serco Management Services terminated Burke’s employment.*

Burke took up a nomadic existence, moving frequently with his belongings packed into a maroon van. In July 2005 he bought a used ambulance from a couple in Derby, KS, but then failed to take possession of it. When the owners sold it to another buyer, Burke rejected the check they sent him for reimbursement. He e-mailed them on July 19 saying, “If/when it comes time to get ‘the information’ I will . . . and then My Farewell Tour will begin.” The tour began on February 1, 2006.†

Burke left his first bomb on the roof of Serco Management Services headquarters in Murfreesboro, TN. It exploded around 4 p.m., but did little damage and resulted in no injuries. Twenty-seven days later, on February 28, Burke arrived in Derby, KS, and left a bomb on the porch of a house belonging to a neighbor of the ambulance sellers. Its explosion also did little damage. A month later, Burke returned to Grand Junction and, early in the morning of March 25, planted five bombs at the homes of his former coworkers, all of whom had testified against him during his dismissal proceedings from Serco Management. Three of the bombs went off; the other two were disarmed by police. The three that exploded caused minor damage, primarily from the fire resulting from the incendiary accelerant Burke had added to the explosives. When police searched a storage shed used by Burke, they

* *Grand Junction (CO) Daily Sentinel*, March 25 and 27, 2006.

† *Grand Junction (CO) Daily Sentinel*, April 6, 2006.

found a piece of paper containing the addresses and phone numbers of several of his targets.*

On April 3, a man claiming to know Burke called a Grand Junction *Daily Sentinel* reporter to arrange a meeting. The man claimed that Burke had stored information on a computer that “would affect every contract [air traffic control] tower in the country.” The reporter, however, suspected the caller was actually Burke, so he alerted police. When the “informant” called back April 5, the reporter agreed to meet him at a motel in Orem, UT. A police surveillance team caught Burke hiding behind the Orem Wal-Mart, his van parked in such a way as to hide the rear Colorado license plate.† At trial, Burke pled guilty to the Colorado bombings and received a prison sentence of 10 years. “This was personal,” the judge noted in handing down the sentence.‡

Burke qualifies as what we call a *hunter*. Simply defined, hunters intentionally use lethal violence. Their behaviors in carrying out the violent act follow a defined trail which we call the *path to intended violence*. Burke developed a grievance against his employer and coworkers, decided to act violently against them, then researched their locations, built his bombs, delivered them, and set the timers for detonating them. That the bombs did not do as much damage as intended does not detract from the hunting process in which Burke engaged. Like all hunters, Burke intended to act violently, then engaged in all the requisite behaviors necessary to consummate that lethal violence, including, ultimately, exploding the bombs.

Around the time Burke was planning his hunt, again according to press reports, Suffolk County, New York policeman Michael Valentine met a woman on Match.com, an Internet dating service. Beginning in November 2005, they dated about 6 weeks before she broke up with him. Unwilling to let her go, Valentine hacked into her e-mail account and essentially stole her online identity. He began sending himself and some 70 other men e-mails in which he pretended to be her. These e-mails expressed romantic interest toward each recipient. On at least two occasions, men showed up at her house believing they had arranged a date with her. Suffolk County computer-crime detectives believed Valentine used several computers, one belonging to the police department. In April 2006, the district attorney obtained a 197-count indictment against Valentine, charging him with stalking, computer trespassing, official misconduct, and tampering with evidence. Valentine’s lawyer promised a vigorous defense.§

If the charges prove true, Valentine would be what we call a *howler*. Simply defined, howlers engage in problematic behavior toward their targets,

* *Grand Junction (CO) Daily Sentinel*, March 25, 27, and April 6, 2006.

† *Salt Lake City Tribune*, April 7, 2006.

‡ *Grand Junction (CO) Sentinel*, February 3, 2007.

§ Associated Press, April 4, 2006.

but that behavior does not result in lethal violence. Valentine developed a brief relationship with a woman, then targeted her after she rejected him. However, at no time did he appear to entertain thoughts of committing violence against her. Nor did he take any of the steps along the path to intended violence. Instead, he embarked on a high-tech harassment campaign to embarrass, inconvenience, and, perhaps even frighten her. By stealing her online identity, Valentine could wreak havoc with her social life and seriously embarrass her by attributing messages and emotions to her through the forged e-mails. As despicable as these actions were, at no time did he put her in physical danger.

Herein lies the distinction between hunters and howlers. Burke wanted to kill his targets by blowing up their residences or burning down their houses. He measured his success in terms of death or destruction. Valentine wanted to harass and embarrass his target. The injuries he sought were emotional and mental, not physical. He measured his success in terms of inconveniencing, embarrassing, or frightening his former dating partner. Hunters deal in lethal violence; howlers cause stress.

This book explores in detail the differences between those who hunt and those who howl. Its intended audience goes beyond law enforcement or security specialists. Rather, anyone involved in managing potentially violent situations or problem individuals, such as human resource staff, mental health professionals, staff attorneys, employee assistance professionals, school administrators, teachers, and guidance counselors—even potential targets—might gain from reading it. Our approach avoids theory in favor of practical concepts that can be readily applied by anyone involved in managing threatening situations or individuals. We are pragmatists who recognize that at workplaces, schools, homes, courts, and all the other venues of intended violence, threat management requires a multidisciplinary team approach. We write for every member of that team and use the generic term *threat manager* to address them all.

Taken together, hunters and howlers represent problem individuals. More precisely, they are individuals who purposefully intend to cause problems. At one end of the spectrum, the problems involve lethal violence. At the other end, the problems entail establishing harassing or binding attachments. In between are threats, intimidations, stalking, vandalism, physical abuse, and other forms of disruption. Threat managers must manage both ends of the spectrum and everything in between, though clearly the killing end takes precedence. But that precedence in no way means that howlers can be ignored. By their very nature, problem individuals of every stripe insist on having their problems addressed. That insistence requires responses from threat managers.

This book, we believe, offers threat managers several benefits. First, it arms them with ways to identify problem behaviors and associate those

behaviors with either hunters or howlers. Knowing with whom one is dealing is a crucial first step in any threat management process. Second, unlike any other study on threat management, we focus as much on problem individuals who intend to harass or intimidate (the howlers) as we do on individuals who intend lethality (the hunters). No other study gives as detailed a definition of howlers, yet howlers comprise the vast majority of problem individuals in any social setting. Third, through actual case studies and case analyses, we offer the best practices for assessing problem individuals and recommending the best protective response and management strategy.

Implementing an Effective Threat-Management Process

A successful threat-management process does not necessarily depend on large staffs or huge resource commitments, but instead on attention to detail and a thoughtful approach. It consists of ten elements, each integral to the others, and they constitute the golden rules of contemporary threat management. Following them will allow the threat manager to implement an effective threat management program. We present them here by way of introducing the approach to understanding hunters and howlers.

Rule 1. Recognize the Need for a Threat-Management Process Why do organizations need threat-management programs? Because the angry and the outraged necessitate it. Problem individuals may turn to violence or harassment for exoneration, vengeance, even salvation. They direct their anger, their revenge, and their fears at the individuals or organizations who they perceive wronged them. Without a competent threat management process to identify, assess, and manage those who intend to create problems, organizations chance missing an opportunity to intervene and defuse the risk.

Rule 2. Assign Responsibility of Managing Cases to Trained Threat Managers We emphasize establishing a threat-management *process*, rather than a threat management *unit* or *program*, because we do not want to imply any particular size or composition of resources needed to address threat-management concerns in any organization. Depending on the size of the organization and the potential number of inappropriate communications and contacts (IC&Cs) that might be reported and the number of cases that might be opened, the threat-management process can be handled by a fully staffed unit of threat managers or as a part-time collateral responsibility for one person. Workload is all. It should be the primary criterion for determining the number of personnel and resources dedicated to the process. Whatever the size or composition of the unit, whoever is assigned threat management responsibilities should be trained, and the training should be periodically refreshed.

Rule 3. Provide Training and Liaison with Protectees and Administrative Staff The next step in establishing an effective threat management process is to train the organization's staff in what and how to report IC&Cs. Training the staff helps the threat manager get the initial facts, unembellished by exaggeration or worry, as quickly as possible. The key staff members do not correspond to the usual organizational hierarchy. Although chief executive officers, school principals, victims of domestic violence, and public officials should be well briefed, the majority of reports the threat manager receives come from receptionists, mail handlers, perimeter security officers, parking lot attendants, telephone operators, cafeteria staff, gardeners, and others who are in a position to observe what is going on. These people deal most with the public. They are more likely to see, hear, or receive IC&Cs, no matter who is targeted. Training them on what and how to report information will ensure that the IC&Cs the threat manager gets will be timely and accurate.

Rule 4. Create an Incident-Tracking System with Well-Documented Files Controlling the flow of information requires information management. Again, depending on workload, managing the information can be as simple as an index card system or as sophisticated as a computer database. The system needs to be designed to retrieve information quickly and efficiently. It should include not only demographics on the subject, but also key words or topics used by, or of known interest to, the subject. The latter may prove crucial in identifying anonymous subjects. At a minimum, the following variables should be captured for each IC&C:

- IC&C synopsis
- IC&C specifics
- Method of delivery of the IC&C
- Content and exact quotes from the IC&C
- Suspect demographics
- Target demographics
- Motive or issue

With information on these variables, the threat manager can manage current cases, cross-reference previous cases, share information on problem individuals, and create an institutional memory for that organization. Whatever system is created, it should be designed for easy sharing with other agencies and jurisdictions, ideally as part of regional and national information-sharing networks.

Rule 5. Establish Liaison with Other Agencies, Neighboring Organizations, and Institutions with Shared Interests It is vital for the threat manager to reach out beyond the organization to make contact with law enforcement agencies, private security firms that provide protective services, and other

entities. Keeping lines of communication open with these agencies will provide intelligence information on problem individuals. The threat manager must have information flowing from all sources, both inside and outside the organization. Threat assessments and protective investigations feed on facts; both are voracious eaters. But only through information can the threat manager fill in pieces of the puzzle. Information from disparate sources can link one IC&C to another and reveal relationships, motives, past behaviors, and previous actions of the subject.

Rule 6. Use Consistent and Valid Threat-Assessment Methods After receiving the initial report of an IC&C and gathering as many facts as are immediately available, the threat manager next must make an initial assessment from which to design the immediate protective response, set a course of fact finding, and begin identifying the most appropriate threat-management strategies. A number of experts have developed some facile assessment tools to help the manager think through the case. Threat managers should use these tools consistently so that one assessment can be compared with all previous assessments. Answering the questions below allows the threat manager to examine what is known from a different angle. In combination, the assessment questions provide a thorough assessment of the entire situation. Employing all these tools helps the threat manager identify what is *not* known, thus giving direction to the protective fact finding.

The four assessment tools address four broad but related questions. In each case, the threat manager should always ask:

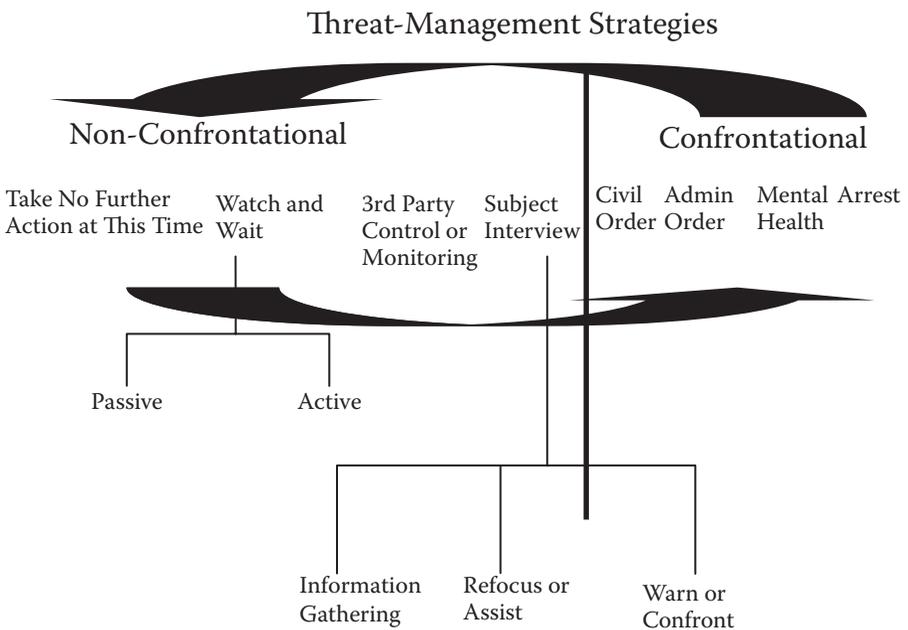
- What are the circumstances and context of the IC&C?
- What are the stakes involved from the subject's point of view?
- Is the subject acting like a hunter?
- Is the subject acting like a howler?

Each of these questions focuses on different aspects of the subject's behaviors, motives, and intentions. The first question simply requires the threat manager to describe the IC&C, how it was delivered, to whom it was delivered, what message it conveys, and what may have prompted it. The second question deals with what may be at stake for the subject. It addresses how desperate or driven toward violence the subject feels. The third question seeks to determine whether the subject has engaged in attack-related behaviors or behaviors common to assassins. The fourth question takes the direct opposite tack. It asks whether the subject's behaviors are similar to the way howlers behave.

Rule 7. Conduct Thorough Fact Finding Protective fact finding focuses on collecting facts concerning the circumstances of the IC&C and what prompted it, the subject, the target's relation to the subject, and the subject's

past and current behaviors. The purpose is to gather enough information and evidence to support an accurate and complete reassessment of the risks and the best way to defuse them.

Rule 8. Apply Threat-Management Strategies Flexibly and Intelligently The strategies for defusing the risk are best conceptualized as different options arrayed along a spectrum.* Where each option falls within that range is determined by its effect on the subject. The spectrum reaches from discrete and passive defensive measures at one end to intrusive, confrontational acts at the opposite end. The options run the gamut from doing nothing that directly affects the subject to using the authority of the law to restrain the suspect. The figure below illustrates the range of threat-management strategies available for defusing the risk to judicial officials.



The threat manager should consider all the strategies, weighing the effectiveness of each based on the particular and unique aspects of the case at hand. Each one has specific advantages and disadvantages, and each should be used only when certain conditions apply. The threat manager must determine which offers the best chance for defusing the risk in the case at hand at that particular moment. Once a strategy is played, the threat manager should immediately recognize that the situation has changed *precisely because a*

* A synopsis and definition of each management strategy are provided in Chapter 1.

strategy has been employed. The change requires reevaluating the case, the assessment, and the strategy. This may result in using other strategies. That process is not endless, but often it seems to be.

Rule 9. Communicate with Protectees Professionally, Confidently, and Competently The threat manager should take care, by word and deed, to reassure the target and his or her staff that the threat manager is a professional problem solver and that the responses to the incidents are under control. In implementing the appropriate protective responses, the threat manager should never increase the protectee's or the protectee's staff's fears by projecting the wrong attitude or sharing information that they might misinterpret. Frequent updates and open lines of communication with the protectees and their staff will help the threat manager keep them calm, attentive to instructions, and willing to follow the threat manager's lead.

The threat manager should always provide some protective response every time an IC&C is reported. This does not mean putting a protective detail around a target every time his or her phone rings. Protective responses range from providing a security briefing at a minimum to a full-fledged protective detail or target relocation at the maximum. The selection of the appropriate protective response should be directly proportioned to the assessment and to the findings of any protective investigation.

Always providing some level of protective response serves two purposes. First, it enhances the protectee's security. Even a security briefing helps remind the protectee to take simple precautions and to be aware of—and immediately report—any suspicious incidents. Obviously, going up the scale of protective responses adds even more security. Provided each response is in proportion to the threat assessment, to the findings of the protective fact-finding, and to the success of the threat-management strategies, then the threat manager will maintain a balance between needed security and limited resources.

Second, always implementing some degree of protective response sends a positive signal to the protectee. It helps underscore the threat manager's professionalism, competence, and concern. That signal will help allay the protectee's fears and give him or her the reassurance that everything necessary is being done.

Rule 10. Manage Cases Appropriately Threat-management cases are seldom open and shut. They begin when an IC&C, not necessarily a crime, has been directed toward a protectee. But they have no climactic point of closing as criminal cases do. Even the most blatant and direct threatener can be arrested and convicted, but continue threatening—or worse—plotting from jail. An anonymous subject may direct an IC&C toward a target, then never be heard from again. When can either case be closed? Neither arrest and conviction nor time's cooling effects seem enough to support case closure.

Threat management cases are not about investigating or solving crimes; they are about managing the behavior of an individual. Threat managers do not have a caseload of crimes assigned to them. Rather, threat managers manage problem individuals. Consequently, a threat manager's caseload is a hybrid between a criminal caseload and a parole or probation officer's caseload.

Hence, we shy from such traditional terminology as opening or closing a threat-management case. Rather, we find the following designations best suited for managing threat-management cases: active, inactive, chronic or habitual, or long term.

Contemporary threat management seeks to avert violence altogether. Organizations must expand their security from simply fortifying physical security countermeasures and reacting to violent attacks. They need to incorporate an effective threat-management process for defusing the risks of violence before the violence erupts. We are not talking about *predicting* violence. Predictions are the provinces of angels and fools. We advocate establishing procedures to enable the threat manager to identify potential problem individuals, assess the seriousness of the risk, investigate the circumstances, and then devise the appropriate strategies for managing the subject. Implementing an effective threat-management process requires organizations to follow the ten golden rules. Doing so will further enhance their security.

Because hunters and howlers have entirely different purposes, they behave in very different ways. This book explores those behaviors in order to make each more recognizable. In between those explorations, we offer detailed case analyses to show how being able to distinguish hunters as hunters and howlers as howlers can offer profound benefits to identifying, assessing, and managing both situations. Because hunters and howlers behave differently, threat managers need to deal with them in different ways. That requires being able to separate those who hunt from those who howl. This book discusses how to do exactly that.

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Frederick S. Calhoun, Ph.D., was the lead researcher and principal architect in developing the threat-assessment process used by the U.S. Marshal Service for analyzing risks to federal judicial officials. He also developed the service's policies and procedures for conducting protective investigations. At the request of the National Sheriffs' Association, Dr. Calhoun coordinated the curriculum and led a nationwide training program on contemporary threat management for local law enforcement. He also wrote the curriculum and led the training of deputy U.S. Marshal Service threat Investigators and their supervisors. Dr. Calhoun earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and is the author of ten books, including *Hunters and Howlers: Threats and Violence against Judicial Officials, 1789–1993*, and *Defusing the Risk to Judicial Officials: The Contemporary Threat Management Process* (with Stephen Weston). In 2003, he and Mr. Weston released their newest book, *Contemporary Threat Management: A Practical Guide for Identifying, Assessing and Managing Individuals of Violent Intent*. Currently, Dr. Calhoun is the program manager overseeing a national workplace violence prevention program for a large federal agency.

Dr. Calhoun also teaches a periodic 2-day seminar titled “Managing Threats: Reducing the Risk of Violence.” This seminar is designed to train law enforcement officers, mental health professionals, and private security officials to identify, assess, and manage individuals of violent intent. Instruction includes defining inappropriate communications and contacts, assessing problem individuals, and employing effective threat management strategies.

Stephen W. Weston, J.D.

Steve Weston is a 32-year veteran of the California Highway Patrol. From 1991 to 2006 he managed the unit responsible for the investigation of threats against California state officials.

Mr. Weston has been on the staff of the Los Rios College District since 1978 as an instructor in dignitary protection, threat assessment, and major event planning. He was an instructor in the nationwide contemporary threat-

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Steve Weston is the coauthor, with Frederick S. Calhoun, of *Defusing the Risk to Judicial Officials: The Contemporary Threat Management Process* and *Contemporary Threat Management: A Practical Guide for Identifying, Assessing and Managing Individuals of Violent Intent*. Mr. Weston consults with government and private organizations in the management of threatening situations and lectures throughout the country on public official threat management. He has served as president of the Northern California Chapter of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP).

Mr. Weston is currently on the staff of the federal receiver providing court oversight of the California state prison health-care system.

Introducing Hunters versus Howlers

1

We live in a time of heightened security concerns. Magnetometers, x-ray machines, surveillance cameras, bomb dogs, explosive trace detection machines, security guards, specially treated windows, vehicle barricades, vehicle searches, and countless other physical security countermeasures have become so commonplace that they now fit seamlessly into our environment and our daily lives. Corporations have been forced to accept liability for providing their employees a secure workplace. Police officers routinely patrol public schools while school staffs conduct not just fire drills, but also emergency drills to prepare students in the event of a shooting incident.¹ Public figures and public officials surround themselves with security details. Having a bodyguard is no longer a status symbol, but a protective necessity. The emphasis on security even reaches into people's intimate lives. Nowadays, most jurisdictions no longer tolerate spousal abuse. The police response to domestic disturbance calls now requires arresting at least one of the spouses if the responding officers detect any evidence of physical injury to either spouse. Security concerns touch everyone where they live, work, and play.

The United States, indeed the entire world, reached this state of affairs partly in response to attacks from terrorists, both foreign and domestic. However, policymakers began recognizing the need for increased security more than 3 decades ago, long before the threat of terrorism reached its current level. Violence serves many masters, not just those who use it for political, religious, or ideological goals. Indeed, the increased need for good security was a direct result of the increased use of violence by all sorts of individuals seeking different purposes. During just 10 days in November 2005 selected randomly, several incidents occurred that illustrate the scope of the problem:

On November 12, Christopher Millis, despondent over the breakup of his marriage, first tried to set fire to several police cars parked at a Salem, OR, police station, then drove to the home of a neighbor with whom he had had a long-running dispute. Arriving at the neighbor's house, Millis shot at the neighbor's car. Millis drove back into town and crashed his pickup through

¹ During fire drills, the students leave the school. During emergency drills, they take cover in their classrooms.

the front entrance of the county courthouse. He held police officers at bay for several hours before they shot him.²

On November 13, 18-year-old David Ludwig killed the parents of his 14-year-old girlfriend, then fled the scene with her. They drove from her home in Lancaster, PA, to Indiana before police identified the car and forced them to stop. He confessed to intentionally killing the parents because they forbade him from seeing their daughter. She confessed to willingly going with him.³

On November 20, Dominick Maldonado sent a text message to his former girlfriend announcing, "Today is the day that the world will know my anger." As he entered the Tacoma, WA, shopping mall, he telephoned police and told them to "just follow the screams" to find him. Then he opened fire, wounding six shoppers and holding four people hostage for 4 hours before surrendering. The ex-girlfriend thought he had been on Ecstasy.⁴

On November 21, school officials at Northern Valley Regional High School in Old Tappan, NJ, closed the school for a day in response to an instant message one of their students had received over the previous weekend. The message, sent from an ex-student now living in the former Soviet Union, said, "I just bought my new Glock handgun and you better watch out." The instant messenger added, "Everybody at [the high school] ought to be careful." The message also mentioned attacking the high school. Despite the vast distance between Kazakhstan and New York, officials refused to take any chances.⁵

On November 23, Joseph Cobb returned to H&M Wagner and Sons in Anne Arundel County, MD. He had been fired from there a couple of weeks earlier. Upon entering the building, he ran into Raymond Himes, whom he immediately shot in the arm. Cobb then went directly to his former supervisor's office. He shouted a profanity at the supervisor, then shot him twice in the stomach. After that, Cobb left the building. Once outside, he killed himself. His two victims survived. "The incident appeared to highlight the issue of workplace violence, which began to attract national attention about 20 years ago," the *Washington Post* report of the incident noted, "It has become a major concern for advocates of worker safety."⁶

Neither time nor season lessened the violence. Five months later, we took another 10-day period during which various newspapers reported the following acts of violence:

² *Salem (OR) Statesman Journal*, November 13, 2005.

³ Associated Press, November 22, 2005.

⁴ *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, November 21 and 22, 2005.

⁵ Associated Press, November 22, 2005.

⁶ *Washington Post*, November 24, 2005.

On April 9, 2006, Brian L. Patterson scaled the iron fence surrounding the White House and ran toward the mansion, screaming, "I am a victim of terrorism." Secret Service agents and uniformed guards gave chase with guns drawn, finally cornering him near the row of cameras set up for the daily White House news reports. "I have intelligence information for the president," Patterson told his pursuers, "I'm not afraid of you." The April 9 incident was the fourth time Patterson had gotten onto the White House grounds.⁷

On April 14, in Buffalo, NY, Craig Lynch, a convicted car thief living at a halfway house for recently released prisoners, killed Sister Klimczak, the nun who had run the halfway house for 16 years. Lynch had been paroled 3 months earlier. When Sister Klimczak caught Lynch in her room, he strangled and hit her. Once she was dead, Lynch borrowed a car from a relative and took the body to a shed behind a vacant house near his mother's home. He buried her there in a shallow grave.⁸

On April 14 in Purcell, OK, police arrested Kevin Underwood for the first-degree murder of a 10-year-old girl. Underwood led police to a closet in his apartment where he had stuffed the body in a plastic tub sealed with duct tape. Authorities accused Underwood of killing the girl, then sexually assaulting her. Finding meat tenderizer and barbecue skewers in his apartment, the police believed he intended to eat the corpse.⁹

On April 16, in Corinth, ME, Stephen A. Marshall went to the homes of two of Maine's registered sex offenders and killed both men. Marshall got their home addresses from the Maine Web site listing the names and addresses of registered sex offenders living in the state. He also visited four other addresses where offenders lived, but did not find them home. Later that day, armed with three pistols, Marshall boarded a bus for Boston. Police stopped the bus just outside the city. When officers went on board looking for Marshall, he shot himself in the head. He died several hours later.¹⁰

On April 17 in Platte City, MO, police arrested two teenagers for threatening to carry out a school shooting on the seventh anniversary of the Columbine attack. The two students had told at least five classmates they intended to assault the Platte County R-3 High School. Their plan included planting explosives and bringing firearms to the school.¹¹

⁷ Associated Press, April 9, 2006.

⁸ *New York Times*, April 18, 2006

⁹ Associated Press, April 18, 2006.

¹⁰ *Boston Globe*, April 17 and 18, 2006.

¹¹ Associated Press, April 18, 2006.

On April 18 in St. Louis, MO, Herbert L. Chalmers killed his girlfriend at her apartment, then drove to the local Wal-Mart to replenish his ammunition. While reloading the pistol, he told a sales clerk he had just killed his girlfriend and was on his way to shoot his employer. The clerk alerted police, but they were too late. Chalmers arrived at Finninger's Catering Service, from which he had been fired the day before, looking for the owner. Instead, he ran into the owner's wife and daughter. After shooting them, Chalmers killed himself.¹²

Acts of violence are not the province of jihadists alone. Violence affects every social venue, from domestic settings to schools and workplaces to government facilities to public figures and officials. No social venue seems safe.

Nor is any geographic location immune. The November and April incidents occurred in small towns and big cities, on both coasts and in between. They took place in people's homes and at workplaces, schools, even shopping malls. None had anything to do with a political, religious, or ideological agenda, but all inspired terror in their targets.

Over the last several decades, increases in security countermeasures were a direct response to increases in this type of violence, both in terms of the number of incidents and in the spread of violence to different social venues. Those responsible for maintaining security at any social venue need to understand how problem individuals behave. That includes those who intend to engage in violence. It also includes how howlers behave. The need for understanding both arises from simple necessity. Anyone who provides security will encounter both hunters and howlers. It's the nature of the beast.

Violence between individuals or groups can be either intended or impromptu. This work examines the concept of intended violence, defined as premeditated, planned violence. The perpetrator decides that violence will resolve whatever his or her problem is, then plans, prepares, and launches the attack. Impromptu violence is unplanned and spontaneous. It usually springs from the heat of passion and is as much a surprise to the perpetrator as it is to the target. Since intended and impromptu violence entail different behaviors from the subject engaging in either form, both also require different security approaches and different responses to management. The distinction between them is crucial to understand. This study deals only with those who plan to create a problem, either by committing lethal violence or by threatening or harassing a particular target. It does not address impromptu violence.

Although thieves commit acts of intended violence, we do not include violence related to armed robbery or thefts in our sample. Our hunters can be as greedy as any thief, but their motivations derive from other reasons, usually related to their personal needs and the social venue in which they operate. Thus, when we discuss workplace violence, we do not include armed

¹²*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 18, 2006.

robberies of convenience store clerks or taxi drivers. Rather, our definition focuses on acts of violence by current or former employees, vendors, customers, patients, clients, or by someone personally involved with a current or former employee, such as a spouse or intimate. The motives of these individuals, though infinitely varied, can be generalized in that the subject sees him- or herself as a victim of some real or perceived injustice or insult. That injustice may be that the subject lacks money, such as in a dispute over an inheritance, alimony, or child support, but the purpose of the violence goes beyond lifting the target's wallet or grabbing the Rolex watch. The hunters we study may well want personal gain, but they want even more that the gain be at the expense of their target. These hunters seek to right a perceived wrong.

Balancing Physical Security and Threat Management

Adequately securing against acts of intended violence cannot depend solely on physical security countermeasures. They provide only half the defense because they do little to *prevent* attacks. Instead, physical security is designed to discourage or mitigate assaults at a specific location. Magnetometers, for example, do not prohibit an individual from carrying a firearm; the machine simply alerts its operator that the person has something metallic on his or her person. Good bodyguards try to intercept suspicious individuals, but they rely on taking action in the last few seconds before an attack which the hunter may have spent months planning and preparing. Surveillance cameras record what is happening, but they do not stop it. Physical security measures are like the castle walls the assailant must breach, imposing but immobile and useless once scaled.

On July 28, 2000, Aaron A. Commey, with pistol drawn, darted through the passenger security screening checkpoint at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York. The contract screeners all saw him and his pistol. They raised the alarm, but made no effort to stop him. He had a gun; they did not. Police responded within the required 3 minutes, but by then Commey had boarded a plane at Gate 33 and calmly walked into the cockpit. He held the pilot and copilot hostage for 2 hours before surrendering.¹³ Then, as now, security screening only alerts on prohibited items such as pistols. It was never designed to prevent weapons going through it. As the *New York Times* pointed out:

Airport security checkpoints, with their squads of guards and phalanxes of metal detectors, are considered by many passengers to be a kind of firewall, designed to stop weapons from getting anywhere near airplanes. But airline

¹³*New York Times*, July 29, 2000.

security officials have long acknowledged that the checkpoints are really meant to do only part of that job: they are supposed to detect hidden guns or bombs and provide a system for alerting armed police officers. If someone brandishes a gun and tries to force his way past, the officials said, the unarmed security officers at the checkpoints are not only unable to stop him, they are not supposed to.¹⁴

The best that physical security countermeasures can do is raise the alarm and perhaps make it more difficult for someone to bring a weapon into a secure area. But as Aaron Commey demonstrated, the level of difficulty is usually not set very high.

Armed security guards help, but even they have limitations. On February 5, 2001, Willie Dan Baker approached the guard shack protecting the entrance to the Navistar engineering plant outside Chicago. The company had fired Baker 6 years earlier for theft. He was due to report to prison the next day to begin serving a 5-month sentence for the crime. Carrying a golf bag loaded with an assault rifle, a shotgun, and a hunting rifle, he told the guard that he had some personal belongings he wanted to return to a friend. The guard recognized him and refused to let him in, offering instead to call the friend out. Baker pulled a .38 caliber pistol and forced her to unlock the gate, which she did. Inside the plant, Baker began firing, killing four and wounding four of his former colleagues.¹⁵ The guard chose to remain outside the plant.

Security checkpoints manned with armed guards essentially force the hunter to start the gunfight at that location. When Jack Gary McKnight attacked the federal court facilities in Topeka, KS, on August 5, 1993, his first shot killed the court security officer manning the checkpoint.¹⁶ Similarly, Robert L. House also began, and ended, his October 1996 assault on the Mobile, AL, local courthouse by shooting at the guards manning the checkpoint at the front entrance. He killed one guard and wounded another before the guards and police returned fire and killed him.¹⁷ Russell Weston circumvented security at the nation's Capitol by shooting his way through the magnetometer in July 1998. Capitol police responded, but they could not prevent Weston from getting well into the building and killing two of their

¹⁴*New York Times*, July 29, 2000.

¹⁵*New York Times*, February 6, 2001; *Washington Post*, February 6 and 7, 2001.

¹⁶Calhoun, F. S. (1998). *Hunters and Howlers: Threats and Violence against Federal Judicial Officials in the United States, 1979-1993*. (pp. 1–3). Washington, D.C.: United States Marshal Service.

¹⁷*Mobile (Ala.) Register*, October 4, 1996; *Mobile Press*, September 27, 1996. Curiously, the security officers at the Mobile courthouse were a kind of Barney Fife hybrid between armed and unarmed guards. The chief judge, who had responsibility for courthouse security, allowed the officers to have pistols and bullets, but no bullets in the pistols. Their response to House was delayed while they loaded their weapons.

own.¹⁸ More recently, on June 20, 2005, Perry L. Manley used an inert hand grenade to try and bluff his way past the magnetometers guarding the Seattle, WA, federal courthouse. Court security officers contained him just at the fringes of the secure area. Police negotiated with him for 25 minutes. When Manley made “a furtive movement,” police officers opened fire.¹⁹ In planning where to position security checkpoints, one question to always answer is, “Where do we want the gunfight to begin?”

Allowing armed officers inside a secure area presents its own risks. On March 11, 2005, Brian Nichols, on trial and in custody for rape, overpowered the Fulton County, GA, deputy sheriff who was escorting him back to court. Nichols took the key to the gun locker where the deputy had stored her weapon. Armed with it, Nichols escorted himself to the courtroom. He killed the presiding judge and the court reporter. Nichols killed another deputy sheriff outside the courthouse as he escaped. The next day, Nichols killed an unsuspecting federal agent. Hours later, he surrendered to police.²⁰

Physical security countermeasures constitute only half of a complete security program. A sound threat-management process composes the other half. It consists of identifying, assessing, and managing problem individuals, including those of violent intent. In effect, threat management attempts to defuse the risk of violence *before* it becomes an actual attack, before, that is, the physical security countermeasures need come into play. It does so by first identifying problem individuals, assessing the risk they pose, then managing them away from violence and their problem behaviors. A sound threat management process complements and enhances physical security countermeasures. Both need be used in tandem.

Who Needs Managing?

Threat management involves managing two very different types of individuals. One group consists of hunters. They truly intend to use lethal violence to aggrieve some perceived injustice. Hunters develop a reason for committing violence, come up with the idea to do so, research and plan their attack, prepare for it, then breach their target’s security and actually attack. Whatever their reason, those who intend to act violently go through the process of intended violence.

The other group that threat managers must manage are howlers. They like to threaten and frighten with words or to express some unrequited emotional attachment, but they never follow through with any actions. In effect,

¹⁸*Washington Post*, January 23, 2001.

¹⁹*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 21, 2005.

²⁰*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, March 27, 2005; Associated Press, March 20, 2005.

howlers intend to cause fear or gain attention to themselves through threats, alarming statements, or some expression of a need to be recognized by the target. Howlers are best understood within the context of their relationship with their targets combined with what they seek to accomplish through their inappropriate communications. Those relationships are either *personal* or *impersonal*. That is, either the howler personally knows his or her target or the howler and the target are strangers to one another.

Personal howlers seek to control or intimidate their targets. They use threats, confrontations, gestures, messages, symbolic acts, and loaded references as a way of getting the target to do what they want. Frequently, personal howlers communicate in person to the target. That physical presence becomes part of the intimidation, but it ends there, with words and empty gestures, not lethal physical attacks.

Impersonal howlers usually seek to gain some kind of attention to themselves or they seek a reaction from their target. They almost always communicate from a distance. That is, howlers who focus on celebrities or public figures or individuals they have never met rarely confront their targets up close and in person. They prefer to keep their distance writing letters, sending e-mails, making telephone calls, or using some other method that maintains a safe distance between howler and target. Since their purpose is to frighten, disturb, or get attention, they have no need to be close to their targets. Whatever their motive or social venue, personal and impersonal howlers *make* threats or other inappropriate communications, but they never actually *pose* a threat.

Both personal and impersonal howlers seek one of two outcomes with their inappropriate communications. Either they want to inspire fear and unease in their target or they want to establish or bind some relationship with the target, even if that means doing so by intimidation. We call the former *sinister* howlers and the latter *binder* howlers. Sinister howlers use threats, intimidations, and ominous communications as psychological warfare against their targets. Binder howlers express their infatuations and obsessions toward their targets. For both sinister and binder howlers, the nature of the relationships with their targets largely controls how, when, and where they make their inappropriate communications.

We use the terms *hunters* and *howlers* as shorthand for much more complex concepts. The concept of hunter refers to individuals who engage in *attack-related* behaviors. The concept of howler refers to individuals who engage in behaviors designed to unnerve or prompt emotional reactions or gain attention to themselves, but which do not culminate in violence. Throughout this study, we consistently focus on what individuals do, the actions or inactions they deliberately take. We do not offer psychological analyses, nor do we speculate about motives or driving forces. Rather, our interest focuses on the behaviors that threat managers can look for in identifying individuals who act like hunters and those who act like howlers.

Behaviors are noticeable only if the observer is knowledgeable and in a position to notice them. For that reason, how the individual acts offers the best window into his or her intent.

Fortunately, a very simple rule distinguishes hunters from howlers. Hunters hunt and rarely howl; howlers howl and rarely hunt.²¹ This simple analogy expresses a fundamental maxim of threat management: hunters and howlers behave differently. What individuals do is the best indicator for determining whether they plan violence or inappropriate communications. Actions distinguish hunters and howlers. Focusing on that distinction enables us to identify, assess, and manage those who hunt and those who howl.

The twin concepts apply to all venues where intended violence occurs. These include domestic situations, workplaces and schools, judicial settings, public figure assaults, hate crimes, even acts of terrorism. Think of the most notorious hunters, political murderers like Lee Harvey Oswald, random killers like Son of Sam, school shooters like Eric Harris and Dylan Kliebold, terrorists like Muhammad Atta and his gang, or employees who “go postal.”²² Each of these hunters and their cohorts engaged in intended violence. This brief list alone amply illustrates the cross-venue nature of intended violence and those who perpetrate it.

Howlers, too, harass or cause fear or trouble in every venue. Sinister howlers communicate their anger and frustration in schools, on the job, and against public figures and public institutions. Binder howlers delude themselves into believing they have or should have some emotional attachment to a school- or workmate or a public figure. Although howlers do not pose a risk of physical violence, they nonetheless represent a significant challenge both for their targets, who must endure their intimidations, harassments, and obsessions, and for security personnel, who must find appropriate and effective ways to manage them.

This cross-venue nature of both hunters and howlers strongly suggests that neither the target nor the setting defines who hunts and who howls. Both operate in every setting, choosing their targets for their own reasons. Threat managers need to understand that neither hunters nor howlers face restrictions within any social venue. Still, regardless of venue, howlers act like howlers; hunters act like hunters.

Consequently, threat managers must look at behaviors as the best means of identifying and assessing problem individuals, whether hunters or howlers. Managing entails controlling or manipulating the subject’s future behav-

²¹Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers* p. xix.

²²According to a study on workplace violence within the postal service, “going postal” is a myth. See Califano, J. A. Jr. et al. (2000). *Report of the United States Postal Service Commission on a Safe and Secure Workplace* (p. 1). New York: National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. 1.

iors. Decades of research confirm that intended violence culminates a series of *attack-related* behaviors, specific actions that an individual (or group) must take to launch a physical assault. Years of experience with howlers show that they, too, exhibit their own unique traits and behaviors. Both hunters and howlers can be readily identified by analyzing what they do in terms of what is known about the distinguishing behaviors of each group. Recognizing them for who they are guides the threat-management response.

Both hunters and howlers present problems for security, though in very different ways. Hunters represent serious physical risks; howlers cause mental and emotional distress. By seeing the differences between them, threat managers can better allocate limited resources while pinpointing their efforts directly on the more serious security problems raised by hunters. Although threat managers cannot ignore howlers, the problems they cause are frustrating and disruptive, not menacing. Howlers who threaten intend to instill fear in their targets. Too often, they succeed. To the extent they succeed, they compel the threat manager to expend time and resources reassuring the targets and investigating the howler. Other howlers communicate their feelings or improbable demands, sometimes romantic, toward their targets. The problem they pose grows out of the feeling of unease and distress they cause their targets. The communications of both types of howlers must be monitored in case they change. Great care, too, must be taken to ensure that no action or inaction on the part of either the target or the threat manager unintentionally turns the howler into a hunter. Consequently, successful threat management of problem individuals, whether hunters or howlers, requires flexible responses, intelligent assessments, and the intuitive ability to distinguish between those who *pose* threats from those who act on them.

Threat Management Concepts

In the following discussion and case analyses, we will refer to a number of different ways threat managers can manage hunters and howlers. It should be helpful, then, to provide a brief definition of each management strategy. Since every case contains its own unique aspects, we cannot offer general prescriptions for when to apply any one strategy. However, we can learn from previous cases and examples how well particular strategies have worked. These we present throughout the remaining chapters and in each of the case analyses.

- *Taking no further action at this time* requires a deliberate, justified decision to assign a case to inactive status. That decision must rest on a clear assessment that both the subject and the situation pose no risk to the target at that time. Choosing this strategy must be a deliberate decision based on assessment and investigation. It is not an alternative to not knowing

what to do or throwing one's hands up in frustration. Nor is it an option for threat managers who are busy, distracted, or about to go on vacation. Taking no further action at this time is only justified if the threat manager consciously determines that no further action is required.

- *Watch and wait* means unobtrusively monitoring the subject while waiting to see whether he or she will take additional actions in relation to the target. This strategy does not involve any intervention with the subject. In fact, when used as the initial strategy, watching and waiting depending entirely on the subject's *not* knowing that he or she has now come to the attention of a threat manager. Threat managers usually employ this strategy with the assessed expectation that nothing further will happen or as a way to monitor the effectiveness of some other strategy. Often, individuals initiate an IC&C toward their targets as a way of blowing off steam. Watch and wait involves two modes: passive and active. Threat managers adopt the passive mode after completing their protective investigation. This mode requires the threat manager to wait and see whether the subject attempts to contact the target again. Active watch and wait requires more assertive measures. It combines an ongoing protective investigation with frequent contacts with the target and other concerned individuals to ensure immediate notification if subsequent communications or contacts are received. The active mode also entails more aggressive measures by the threat manager to find out as much as possible about the subject and the subject's issue with the target. Active watch and wait might also warrant surveillance activity on the subject to monitor his or her activities and movements.
- *Third party control or monitoring* requires identifying a *reliable* third party. That individual or organization must have the ability to either control the subject or monitor the subject's activities. Usually, reliable third parties are parole or probation officers, correctional or jail personnel, mental health providers, board and home care providers, physicians, or close relatives of the subject. Third-party control works especially well if the subject perceives the control or monitoring as a natural outgrowth of his or her relationship with the third party. The threat manager needs to always keep in mind the difference between third party *control* and third party *monitoring*. Control works best in institutional settings, such as prisons or mental health facilities. The monitoring side of the strategy simply ensures that the third party keeps the threat manager informed about the subject's activities, especially those related to the target. Monitoring, after all, is simply watching.
- *Subject interviews to gather information* seek to gain as much information as possible from the subject. And not just what the subject may reveal about his or her involvement with the IC&C. The threat manager should also probe the subject about his or her current situation, life

experiences, outlook on the future, recent experiences, living arrangements, finances, employment, mental competency, issues grievances, and feelings about the target. Any information gleaned from the interview should then be factored into a new threat assessment to produce a fresh understanding of how much of a risk the subject poses at the time of the new assessment. The threat manager can then use the new assessment and the information gained from the interview to intelligently choose the most appropriate threat management strategy.

- *Subject interviews to refocus or assist* entail using a personal interview with the subject to explore ways the threat manager can help the subject resolve his or her problems. The dynamic created by the interaction between subject and threat manager creates its own momentum. The threat manager needs to be ever sensitive to that impetus in order to take advantage of it. Frequently, simply hearing the issues from the subject's point of view helps the threat manager find ways to resolve the problems. The strategies of refocus or assist are subject interventions, but positive ones. They require the threat manager to empathize with the subject's concerns and, if possible, help the subject resolve them. By *refocus*, we mean that the threat manager should present himself or herself as the government or security official with whom the subject should henceforth deal. By *assist*, we mean actually helping the subject resolve his or her problem. Although this no doubt sounds more like social work than threat management, helping the subject can be one of the most effective ways of defusing the risk and inactivating the case.
- *Subject interviews to warn or confront* the subject lie at the most confrontational end of the interview approach. The threat manager may plan to use a warning or confrontation prior to the subject interview. Or the threat manager may spontaneously take advantage of any opportunities that develop during the course of the interview to warn or confront the subject. Warnings apply best to individuals engaged in behaviors that have not yet crossed the border into illegality. Confronting the subject works best in situations where the threat manager has collected sufficient evidence against the subject to support criminal charges.
- *Civil process* works in a limited number of cases defined by precise and specific conditions. This strategy requires the threat manager, or the target acting on the advice of the threat manager, to request the court to issue civil process ordering the subject to cease and desist his or her threatening behaviors and stay away from the target. These orders are known by different names in different jurisdictions: restraining orders, stay-away orders, or protective orders.
- *Administrative orders or actions* are used by organizations to discipline those within the organizational structure or withhold services from problem individuals. The orders entail terminating or otherwise disci-

- plining employees, expelling or suspending problem students, or denying or restricting professional services to a client or customer.
- *Mental health commitments* can be used with subjects who display signs of mental illness and engage in dangerous behaviors. This strategy requires the threat manager to present to a mental health professional sufficient evidence that the subject requires immediate treatment. Every state has set its own legal requirements regulating commitments. Generally speaking, most states expect proof of probable cause showing that the subject, because of a mental disorder, is a danger to self or to others, or is gravely disabled.
 - *Arrest and prosecution* can be used only when the subject has actually committed a crime. Assessing this consideration requires the threat manager to have a sound understanding of his or her jurisdiction's criminal definition of threatening or stalking. This places the subject at the crossroads between criminal acts and First Amendment rights.

Purpose of the Book

This book offers threat managers an in-depth, practical description of how hunters behave compared with how howlers behave. That knowledge can then be applied to the threat management process for identifying, assessing, and managing problem individuals or threatening situations. The book will help threat managers identify key behaviors, improve their assessments, and enhance their threat-management skills.

The book focuses on recognizable behaviors because only through recognizing the different ways hunters and howlers behave can threat managers identify those individuals posing the greatest threat and those simply making threats. The concept of hunters versus howlers is understandable enough and potent enough to equip threat managers with a way to distinguish among individuals who intend violence and those who intend only to voice their outrage or demand recognition. Making that distinction will help focus resources on those who pose the most danger, not simply those who make the most threats.

Furthermore, we go to great lengths to acknowledge differences among the different venues for intended violence. Indeed, in the Appendix, we publish an essay by Debra M. Jenkins describing in detail how the *intimacy effect* affects the value of threatening statements in the different venues of intended violence. Jenkins decided to test a proposal we originally made in *Contemporary Threat Management*.²³ In that book, we hypothesized that the value of threats as preincident indicators of violence increased in proportion to the

²³Calhoun, F. S., & Weston, S.W. (2003). *Contemporary Threat Management: A Practical Guide to Identifying, Assessing, and Managing Individuals of Violent Intent*. (pp. 41-49). San Diego, CA: Specialized Training Services.

degree of intimacy or interpersonal relationship between the threatener and the target. Jenkins reviewed a vast number of research studies on the various venues of intended violence and concluded that our hypothesis had the support of actual research. The intimacy effect is real.

That reality means that threat managers cannot simply dismiss reports of threatening language. Rather, the threat manager must assess every inappropriate communication. Part of that assessment has to include understanding the social relationship between the threatener and the target. Do they have an interpersonal or intimate relationship? Are they strangers to each other? How does the subject perceive his or her relationship with the target? Factoring these questions into the assessment allows the threat manager to measure the influence of the intimacy effect.

Our concept of hunters and howlers rests firmly on the premise that regardless of target or setting, individuals who intend violence must engage in attack-related behaviors. The intimacy effect means only that in certain social venues, making threats can be an attack-related behavior. In other venues, it is not. In all venues, howlers merely howl. When they direct their howls at a stranger or public figure, they almost always do so from a distance. In interpersonal relationships, such as domestic settings, workplaces, or schools, sinister howlers frequently threaten or intimidate in person. However, doing so ultimately puts them at risk of carrying out the threat lest their target conclude the howler is bluffing. For this reason, the intimacy effect enhances the value of threats as preincident indicators of violence in interpersonal relationships. Fortunately, the disparate behaviors between hunters and howlers are recognizable. Once recognized and reported, the threat manager can assess them, then he or she can select the most appropriate threat-management strategies to defuse the risk and deal with the subject.

In this chapter, we introduce the concept of hunters and howlers and explain the purpose of the book. Our emphasis is on providing practical, real-world concepts and strategies threat managers can use to identify, assess, and manage both hunters and howlers.

In Chapter 2, we define precisely what we mean by the terms *hunter* and *howler*. The chapter also addresses the significant difference between merely communicating inappropriately compared with taking action in furtherance of acting violently. The chapter concludes with a discussion about howlers versus hunters.

Chapter 3 focuses on how hunters behave. Relying on actual case examples, it plots out the path hunters must take to consummate their intent to turn to violence. The chapter reviews the process of intended violence, which we call *the path to intended violence*. It starts with grievance, then ideation, research and planning, preparations, breach of security, and attack. For each step along the path, we describe specific types of behaviors related to that step. The descriptions are not meant to be exhaustive. Human behavior is too infi-

nately varied to allow for that. Rather, the purpose of the chapter is to provide real-life examples illustrating what attack-related behaviors look and feel like. In addition, Chapter 3 discusses the importance of weighing the impact of the intimacy effect on hunters in the different venues. In other words, any identification of a hunter must take into account not only the individual under evaluation, but also the social setting in which he or she is acting.

Chapter 4 develops a typology for understanding howlers and then defines various types of howlers and how they behave. The chapter identifies two distinct species of howlers. Some howlers know their targets. We label these *personal* howlers. Other howlers have never met their targets. We call them *impersonal* howlers. Both personal and impersonal howlers can be further subdivided according to what they seek to accomplish through their inappropriate communications. Some howlers communicate in threatening, ominous, and disturbing ways. Others become emotionally obsessed with their targets. *Sinister* howlers want to unnerve their targets. *Binder* howlers demand recognition and attachment, however clumsily. Unlike hunters, both types of howlers have no set course they must follow. Consequently, they behave in more diffuse ways, though none of their actions, save their threats, are attack-related.

Chapter 5 provides a kind of executive summary of the research conducted by Debra Jenkins on the intimacy effect. It quotes a number of observations she reached on the several venues of intended violence and shows how the intimacy effect works, depending on the interpersonal relationship between subject and target. Further, the chapter discusses the disconnect between the laws punishing threats and the current research on threats as preincident indicators of violence.

Chapter 6 assimilates the lessons from the previous chapters to explore such issues as identifying the rare but important instances when a howler becomes a hunter. It also describes several general principles for managing both hunters and howlers.

In support of Chapter 5's discussion of threats and the intimacy effect, the Appendix contains an essay by Debra M. Jenkins that reviews the research bearing on the intimacy effect. We publish it here to emphasize that the threat manager must always keep the effects of interpersonal relationships in mind when assessing threatening situations. Hunters and howlers who personally know their targets have certain advantages and disadvantages from hunters and howlers whose targets are strangers. Research shows that knowing the target personally has profound effects on such behaviors as threats, time and place of attack, and vehemence of the assault. Threats to public figures have entirely different outcomes from threats to intimates. Consequently, threat assessments must measure the interpersonal and social relationship between subject and target.

In each chapter, we present actual case analyses to illustrate how the hunter and howler concepts apply to real-life threat-management cases. Each

analysis begins with a synopsis of the relevant facts. These facts form the basis for the threat assessment. Based on that assessment, the analysis recommends a range of protective responses. It also suggests the most appropriate threat-management strategies to deploy. The analysis concludes with a description of what happened once the protective response and management strategy took effect. We believe that the synopsis, assessment, protective response, and threat-management strategy serve as a useful, practical template for documenting each threat-management case.

Throughout the book, we strive to offer practical concepts, practical methods, and practical tools threat managers can use daily starting immediately. To be clear, we do not offer any quick fixes or easy solutions for the complex problems of managing both hunters and howlers. Instead, we present a specific approach and concise way of thinking about a very difficult and tangled issue. We believe that following this way of thinking about the issues will better equip threat managers to do their jobs, but that is not to say our ideas make that job any easier. Threats and threatening situations are never managed easily. They require much care and attention, creative responses, quick thinking, and infinite flexibility.

Summary

In this chapter, we introduced the concepts of intended violence and the various venues in which it can occur. Through numerous examples, we illustrated the widespread, cross-venue nature of intended violence and its potential impact on anyone responsible for providing security. Next, we discussed the crucial need to balance physical security countermeasures with a sound threat-management process. Both are needed equally; neither fully works alone.

In addition, we broached the idea of an individual *acting like a hunter* and an individual *acting like a howler*. We further explained the importance of focusing on behaviors and subject actions as the best way for the threat manager to assess whether or not the subject at hand should be managed as a hunter or as a howler. We also presented a synopsis of the various strategies available to threat managers. The chapter concluded with a brief overview and synopsis of each chapter and the Appendix. Our theme has been to provide threat managers with practical ideas and approaches that they can invest in their threat-management processes.

Case Analysis: The Poacher

The Facts

In the spring, a California Fish and Game warden caught Charles and his friend Terry poaching salmon near a fish hatchery in Northern California.

At their court appearance 3 months later, a local judge fined each \$1,600. The judge lectured the two men about the nature of their offense and warned them not to repeat the crime.

According to Terry, on the ride home Charles described how offended he was by the fine and the lecture. He began talking to Terry about getting even. Over the next 2 days, Charles outlined to Terry several violent scenarios such as killing the judge by shooting him or placing an explosive device under his car. Charles also suggested burning down the courthouse, blowing up the fish hatchery dam, and poisoning the hatchery water.

On the third day, Charles sketched out a plan for building an explosive device made of pipe, gunpowder, and a thermostat as the trigger. He and Terry tested a thermostat to determine whether it generated enough voltage to set off the device. Charles again sketched out on a piece of paper the components of an explosive device, then burned the paper in the fireplace. He explained to Terry that he intended to pick up materials from construction sites where he worked and buy gunpowder discreetly in small amounts. Further, Charles talked with Terry about the steps Timothy McVeigh took to create a large explosion. Charles asked Terry to help him on this project by going back to the courthouse to scout out the location of the power and gas entry points and to determine the best place to put an incendiary device. Charles described for Terry how they could make a crude napalm-like substance mixing gasoline, diesel fuel, and liquid detergent.

Terry contacted the FBI. He had been a paid informant in another part of the country, so he was familiar with how the bureau worked. Terry told the agent to whom he talked about Charles' plans. The agent also learned that Charles had a criminal history including felony convictions for armed robbery, assault with a deadly weapon, and shooting into an inhabited dwelling. The FBI agent quickly arranged to polygraph Terry. Terry's answers indicated no deception.

The Threat Analysis

In cases involving informants, the first assessment to be made is the informant's credibility. Terry had been a credible informant in the past; he passed the polygraph test, and nothing in his current information casts doubt on that credibility. His information is assessed as credible. Therefore, based on the information provided by Terry to date, this assessment concludes that Charles has reached the planning and research stage on the path to intended violence. He is now ready to begin making preparations. He has a grievance against the judge for the fine and the embarrassing lecture, has decided some kind of violence will avenge him, and has begun planning his attack. His criminal history further enhances his risk because it shows he is capable of

violence. Charles should be assessed as at high risk of committing some act of violence against the judge or the courthouse.

Recommended Protective Response

The judge should be located and provided a security briefing. Plans should be drawn up to put the judge under physical protection or remove him from the locality in case Charles shifts his attention back to the judge. Security countermeasures should be installed at the courthouse and evacuation plans formulated. As Charles advances farther down the path to intended violence, other security measures should be planned and available to implement.

Recommended Threat Management Strategy

The first threat management-strategy to be employed is third party monitoring through Terry as informant wearing a body wire so law enforcement agents can maintain close surveillance on Charles' planning and preparations. Once sufficient evidence exists as to Charles' final plan and preparations, but before he can implement them, Charles should be arrested. The prosecutor should then seek to keep Charles incarcerated without bail until his trial and conviction. A long prison sentence will defuse the risk Charles poses to the judge and the courthouse.

The Outcome

The FBI agents and California law enforcement accepted the recommended protective responses and threat-management strategies. Terry agreed to continue as informant and to wear a body wire. During subsequent recorded conversations, Charles made it clear that burning down the courthouse would be "payback one thousand-fold" for the grievance he had suffered from the judicial system. With Terry's help, Charles began buying road flares and gunpowder. He also finalized his plan to burn the courthouse with a napalm-like mixture of gasoline, gunpowder, and laundry detergent. On their way to the courthouse, they would stop at a gas station to purchase fuel to pour into used antifreeze containers already packed with liquid detergent. The road flares would be the igniters.

Charles set the date for Saturday night. He sheepishly explained to Terry that his live-in girlfriend would be at the hairdresser at that time, thus sparing him from dealing with her jealousy. He did not want to explain where he was going and what he was doing. Since Charles estimated that it would take nearly 3 hours to drive to the courthouse, set the fire, and drive back, he could sneak away only when his girlfriend was busy somewhere else. Her

jealous reaction to his leaving the house without her caused Charles great and near-constant anxiety.

On Saturday evening, Charles and Terry left for the courthouse under both electronic and visual law enforcement surveillance. Charles announced, "Kangaroo court, here we come," as they embarked. During the drive, Charles again went over the plan with Terry. At a gas station, they bought fuel, then drove around back to pour it into the antifreeze containers already holding the liquid detergent. As they left the station, Charles said, "We're ready to rock."

The two would-be arsonists arrived at the courthouse just after dark. After circling the building a couple of times, they parked the car about 75 yards from their target. After donning latex gloves, they wiped the antifreeze jugs free of fingerprints and put open pocketknives in their pockets. Charles intended to walk to the back of the courthouse, poke holes in the plastic containers, and throw them onto the roof of the one-story building. After letting the gasoline vaporize for a few minutes, they would light the road flares and throw them onto the roof, then run to the car and hurry back to Charles' place before his girlfriend returned.

The two men carried their incendiary devices toward the courthouse. They walked about 50 yards before the waiting law enforcement team intercepted and arrested them. The combination of Terry's testimony, the taped conversations, and the production of the incendiary devices ensured that prosecutors would have no problem keeping Charles in jail without bail. The evidence also easily secured his conviction and a long prison sentence.

Issues of Interest

The events that transpired in this case raise a number of fascinating insights into how this particular hunter behaved.

1. Like many hunters, Charles leaked his intentions to a third party. Fortunately, Terry was able to play his role as FBI informant successfully and Charles never knew until the end that law enforcement was on to him.
2. Without Terry's assistance to law enforcement, Charles' plan would most likely have succeeded. Charles would have had a strong chance of getting away with it.
3. Like many hunters, Charles did not act out in court or make any direct or veiled threats to the judge or the courthouse.
4. Like many hunters, Charles' plans began big and complicated but soon whittled down to simple and effective steps he could take based on his resources and limitations and on the vulnerability of the target.
5. Like many hunters, Charles did not want to get caught. He did many things to prevent detection and not leave evidence.

6. Like many hunters, Charles adjusted his plan to accommodate other factors from his daily life, such as scheduling the arson so as to avoid any suspicious inquiries from his jealous girlfriend.
7. Like many hunters, Charles' grievance was very personal. In similar situations, other individuals would not have been so offended or mortified as to seek vengeance through violence just because a judge fined and lectured them. Grievances, however, are hunter-specific.
8. In making the threat assessment, the assessors first had to assess the credibility of the informant. In this case, the informant told the truth, but that is a rarity in threat-management cases.
9. In recommending the appropriate protective responses, the assessors had to assume that Charles' focus could shift back to the judge or even to some other target, such as a fish hatchery. In addition to providing security countermeasures for the courthouse, the assessors had to be flexible enough to account for the judge or some other change in plans.
10. In recommending the appropriate threat-management strategies, the assessors took full advantage of Terry's cooperation to gather sufficient evidence of criminal misconduct by Charles to ensure a conviction and lengthy prison sentence.

In many ways, Charles typified the way hunters behave. Like all hunters, Charles followed the path to intended violence. He developed a grievance, came up with the idea of acting violently, researched how to use the violence, made his preparations, and tried to breach the target's security. And like most hunters, he made mistakes along the way. Too often, threat managers fall prey to the belief that everything goes the way the hunter planned for it to go. Clearly, that is rarely, if ever, the case, so threat managers should be prepared to exploit the mistakes hunters make. Charles mistakenly trusted Terry, and law enforcement took advantage of that trust. That may be the most valuable lesson the case of the poacher can offer.

Defining Hunters and Howlers

2

At the outset, allow us to confess that our definitions of hunters and howlers constitute something of a tautology. By definition, howlers howl and hunters hunt. Howlers never hunt because to do so would transform them into hunters. They would no longer behave the way howlers do but, instead, they would behave the way hunters do. Similarly, hunters who suddenly start howling no longer qualify as hunters; they have become howlers. Thus, the chasm separating hunters from howlers is unbridgeable precisely because crossing the bridge transforms each into the other. Hunters hunt and howlers howl because, again by definition, to behave like the other makes one the other.

Nonetheless, we find the distinction and the definition useful at a practical level because it focuses the threat manager's attention on how the subject behaves. We avoid trying to plumb the minds and motives of either group, preferring to leave that chore to forensic psychologists and psychiatrists. Rather, our approach fits the facts threat managers confront in the order in which they confront them. The threat manager makes the determination that the subject under assessment is a howler or a hunter based on observable behaviors, not guesswork, profiles, or assumptions about what the subject is thinking or planning. The assessment derives solely from what is known about the subject's behavior and specific actions. The fundamental question the threat manager always asks is whether this subject is *acting* like a hunter or *acting* like a howler.

Hunters usually show themselves by conducting research or engaging in surveillance or stalking or confiding their plans to someone or, worse yet, at the moment they breach security, by attacking. The threat manager must first manage those inappropriate behaviors away from violence or the risk of violence. In doing so, it may help to determine what motivates or drives the subject, but that knowledge is certainly not necessary to manage the subject nor is it always practically available. Indeed, in many cases the subject's motive may be incomprehensible to everyone except the subject. Nonetheless, the subject's behaviors are both noticeable and comprehensible to the threat manager.

Howlers reveal their hand by expressing themselves to their targets or to others. In impersonal venues, the inappropriate communication is usually at a physical distance from the target, such as by mail, e-mail, or telephone.

In interpersonal venues where the howler knows the target or lives, works, or studies in proximity to the target, the howler's communications are frequently made in person. Howlers' motives can be every bit as obtuse as a deluded hunter's, but because they communicate inappropriately, howlers, too, require managing.

In this chapter, we define the twin concepts *acting like a hunter* and *acting like a howler*. We illustrate each concept with numerous examples taken from experience, research, and real events. We focus on practical, observable traits and behaviors that threat managers can use to help them identify whether a subject under assessment acts like a howler or like a hunter. Chapter 3 delves deeper into the characteristics of hunters. Chapter 4 mines the behaviors associated with howling.

Take, for example, the spate of anthrax hoaxes over the past few years involving individuals who mailed envelopes filled with harmless white powder. At first blush, the threat manager might conclude that these subjects were acting like hunters. But deeper reflection suggests that, since their purpose was to frighten and alarm, not injure or kill, they actually fall within the category of howlers. Of course, as a practical matter, these howlers know that until a laboratory tests the powder, authorities cannot take the chance that the powder might be anthrax bacteria. As a result, with very little effort, the howler achieves the disruption and fear he or she sought by sending the powder. Still, once the lab concludes its analysis, the threat manager can recognize the behavior of a howler. Recognizing hunters from howlers will help the threat manager choose the most appropriate management strategy for each subject, whether hunter or howler.

Our purpose in this and the two following chapters is not to craft a finite checklist of identifiable behaviors, but to paint a broad picture of the ways hunters must behave and the way howlers tend to behave. The infinite variety of human behaviors prevents the creation of effective checklists, profiles, or ready snapshots. Rather, by taking the twin concepts of hunter and howler writ large, threat managers can better assess behaviors and avoid any distractions based on guesses, fears, or generalities. In confronting hunters or howlers, threat managers need to think broadly, to put quirky behaviors within the context of hunting or howling.

Hunters Defined and Exemplified

The concept of behaving like a hunter applies to those individuals who act in furtherance of committing intended violence. By the term *intended violence*, we do not mean crimes of either passion or profit. Rather, intended violence involves individuals who resort to violence to resolve grievances they feel they have. It is a calculated and premeditated attempt by the hunter to

achieve justice for him- or herself over some perceived injustice. That pursuit of justice, of course, is not based on the standards and mores of justice crafted by society. It is a very personal, event-specific, individually sensitive status defined by the hunter. In other words, justice in these situations is in the eye of the beholder. The grievance inspires the intention to resolve the issue through a violent act.¹

Some hunters have old-fashioned motives prompting their attacks, such as a desire for revenge or for some personal gain or advantage. In February 2002, Charles Ott went to a mediation meeting at a lawyer's office in Boca Raton, FL, armed with a pistol. He and his sister had been disputing who got the most from their parents' estate. Ott killed her, then fled. He went to his parents' former home and killed himself.² In June 2003 in Newburgh, NY, a mother and her two sons purposefully went to a third son's school so they could severely beat the teacher who had suspended him for spitting in the teacher's face.³ In June 2004, Carl Coleman returned to the Arcadia, LA, chicken plant from which he had recently been fired. A colleague saw Coleman and asked him why he had returned. Coleman replied, "I've worked hard for these people and I am going to take care of somebody." That somebody turned out to be the plant manager, whom Coleman killed before wounding himself.⁴ However inexcusable these assaults were, most people can detect a stream of logic in each hunter's actions, whether it be fighting over an inheritance or paying back a teacher or a supervisor for some perceived insult or injustice.

For other hunters, their grievance makes sense only to them. In September 2000, Ronald Gay opened fire at a gay bar in Roanoke, VA, killing one and wounding six. He told police he was fed up with people making fun of his last name.⁵ Gay did not explain how shooting homosexuals mitigated the teasing. Jose Luis Nieto of Mexico City complained for months that a preschool's daily flag raising blocked access to his house. In May 2002, Nieto's patience ran out. He drove his pickup truck into a crowd of toddlers, killing two and injuring twenty.⁶ Nieto did not explain how killing preschoolers opened street access to his house. A year later, James T. Williams, consumed with hate against anyone different from himself, burned down three synagogues and an abortion clinic in Redding, CA, before murdering a gay cou-

¹ Calhoun, F. S., & Weston, S.W. (2003). *Contemporary Threat Management: A Practical Guide to Identifying, Assessing, and Managing Individuals of Violent Intent*. (pp. 16-17). San Diego, CA: Specialized Training Services.

² Associated Press, February 20, 2002.

³ Associated Press, June 6, 2003.

⁴ Associated Press, June 9, 2004.

⁵ *Washington Post*, September 24 and 26, 2000.

⁶ Associated Press, May 7, 2002.

ple.⁷ Williams did not explain how such violence relieved his hatred. Colin Fisk, Martin Garcia, and Paul Chait of Phoenix, AZ, had been friends since high school. Garcia and Chait started a business together while Fisk increasingly fed his drug habit. When Garcia tried to help him become sober, Fisk began showing up at Garcia's house armed with a weapon and threatening to shoot Garcia and his family. The Garcias obtained a temporary restraining order against him in December 2003. Five months later, Fisk killed Garcia and Chait at their office. He told police he was angry at his old friends because they had severed their ties with him.⁸ Fisk did not explain how killing his former friends restored their friendship. These incidents of violence seem as incomprehensible as they are inexcusable.

In some situations, the incident precipitating the violence makes sense only by inquiring into the relationship, rather real or perceived, that the hunter has with the target. In March 2002, Brian Harrison of Monroeville, AL, fired at his girlfriend as she fled in her car because she had not toasted his bread that morning.⁹ Harrison's problem, of course, had less to do with the untoasted bread than it did with his need to bend his girlfriend to his will. He wanted to dominate her and overcome her defiance. When she further challenged him by fleeing in her car, he escalated the confrontation by shooting at her. In effect, the incident boiled down to breakfast on whose terms, his or hers?

Hunting involves a process of incremental attack-related behaviors. The hunter must first decide on the prey, then research the prey's habits and habitat in order to plan the best way to consummate the attack. Once the hunter settles on a plan, the next step requires assembling the necessary weapons and equipment for carrying it out. Finally, the hunter needs to take up the hunt, culminating in the actual attack on the prey. Each of these steps in the process requires certain behaviors that can be noticeable if the people in position to notice them are trained in what to look for, what to report, and to whom to make the report.

Take, for instance, the four individuals who simultaneously detonated four homemade bombs in different parts of London's subway and bus system on July 7, 2005. For whatever their personal or ideological grievances, once they had determined to attack London commuters, the bombers began their hunting preparations. Three weeks before their attacks, three of the men explored the route they intended to take the day of the attacks. They took a practice run. One or more of them made the peroxide-based improvised explosives. They obtained ice chests and backpacks to cool, then carry, the bombs

⁷ Associated Press, March 1, 2003.

⁸ Associated Press, April 27, 28, 29, and 30, 2004; *Arizona Republic* April 28, 29, and 30, 2004.

⁹ Associated Press, March 13, 2002.

onto three trains and one bus. At the agreed-upon time, they detonated the devices.¹⁰ In other words, they picked their targets, researched them, prepared their bombs, then launched their attacks, all behaviors of a hunter.

Hunters do not suddenly turn to violence. Their behavior can be motivated by intense, strongly held emotions, but their attacks are not spur-of-the-moment actions. For example, Colin Fisk, who killed his two Phoenix high school buddies, had repeatedly threatened one of them over several months.¹¹ Many hunters, like the Unabomber, make meticulous plans based on detailed, time-consuming research. Walter L. Moody, for example, assassinated federal judge Robert S. Vance in December 1989. Moody researched the judge to obtain his home address. Further, Moody identified a friend of Judge Vance's, a fellow jurist, and found his home address. Moody constructed four sophisticated mail bombs. One he sent to Judge Vance's home, using the other judge for the return address. Judge Vance's last words to his wife were to the effect that his friend had sent him some law journals.¹² Moody's detailed research and elaborate planning enabled him to succeed in this part of his plan.¹³

Some hunters move quickly down the path. For example, when Clara Harris of Houston, TX, began to suspect her husband was having an affair, she hired a detective to follow him. As the detective videotaped her husband and his consort at a local hotel, Clara unexpectedly showed up and confronted the couple. After a brief scuffle with the other woman in the hotel lobby, Clara returned to her car and deliberately drove it toward her husband as he left the hotel. While her stepdaughter tried frantically to stop her, Clara ran over her husband, circled the parking lot and ran over him twice more.¹⁴ This hunter needed little research or preparation and used the weapon she had at hand. Doing so allowed her to move quickly down the path. She stepped onto the path as soon as she went back to her car intending to use it as a weapon.

In sum, hunters consciously decide that violence is their only redress. They act deliberately with malice aforethought. Their violence is premeditated and planned. Further, they prepare themselves, carefully selecting their weapons, route of attack, timing, and place. They account for whatever security stands in their way and take steps to circumvent it. Finally, they move to implement their plans by launching their assaults. Although their attacks do not always go as planned, the fact that they make plans marks them as hunters.

¹⁰ Associated Press, September 20, 2005.

¹¹ Associated Press, April 27, 28, 29, and 30, 2004; *Arizona Republic* April 28, 29, and 30, 2004.

¹² Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, pp. 2–3.

¹³ Moody mailed his other bombs to the NAACP in Jacksonville, FL, a civil rights attorney in Savannah, GA, and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals courthouse. The civil rights attorney was killed; the other two bombs were intercepted.

¹⁴ Associated Press, August 2, 2002.

Hunters sometimes inspire other hunters. For example, Dylan Kliebold and Eric Harris planned their 1999 attack on Columbine High School for months. Six weeks out, they practiced firing the weapons they would use.¹⁵ Although their homemade bombs failed to detonate, the pair created considerable havoc and mayhem. That horrendous event continues to inspire other students to make their own plans and preparations. Jeremy Getman actually smuggled guns and bombs into Southside High School in Elmira, NY, on Valentine's Day, 2001. He confessed to police that he planned a Columbine-style attack to shoot students and teachers and toss bombs into crowds, but at the last moment realized he could not bring himself to kill innocent people.¹⁶ In March 2004, an alert teacher in Malcolm, NE, saw Josh Magee take a drink from a liquor flask while sitting in his car in the school parking lot. Police found him armed with a bolt-action rifle, ammunition, and 20 homemade bombs. Other students reported that Magee frequently talked about Columbine.¹⁷ In December 2005, police arrested two teenagers who confessed they were planning to attack their former high school in Lancaster, CA. According to the *Los Angeles Times*:

The teenagers described themselves as goths, deputies said. They commonly wore black trench coats, in apparent imitation of Eric Harris and Dylan Kliebold. The 15-year-old had the word "hate" carved into his forearm, deputies said.

A search of their homes uncovered knives, ammunition, a gas mask, carbon dioxide canisters, and a large volume of instructions on bombmaking printed from the Internet. The two boys also had photographs of Harris, Kliebold, Timothy McVeigh, Charles Manson, and Lee Harvey Oswald. They planned to launch their attack on Valentine's Day, 2006. Fortunately, a fellow student heard them talking about their plans and alerted authorities.¹⁸ In April 2006, police in Platte City, MO, arrested two teenagers for plotting an attack on their high school as a commemoration of the seventh anniversary of the Columbine attack.¹⁹ That weekend, police in Riverton, KS,²⁰ and North Pole, AK,²¹ arrested five and six students, respectively, all for plotting Columbine-style attacks on their own high schools. Kliebold and Harris continue to exert a powerful appeal to some disgruntled teenagers.

Whether inspired by previous acts of violence or prompted by their own direction, hunters take actions in furtherance of acting violently. They

¹⁵ CBS *Evening News*, October 22, 2003.

¹⁶ Associated Press, December 10, 2001.

¹⁷ Associated Press, March 19, 2004.

¹⁸ *Los Angeles Times*, December 17, 2005.

¹⁹ Associated Press, April 18, 2006.

²⁰ Associated Press, April 20, 2006.

²¹ Associated Press, April 21, 2006.

plan, prepare, and attack. Threat managers can best identify hunters by concentrating on attack-related behaviors. Actions are the best indicators of hunting activity.

Anatomy of a Hunter

Bart Ross became a hunter sometime during the winter of 2004–2005. Devastated by jaw cancer in the early 1990s, he blamed Chicago's Northwestern Hospital for the pain and disfigurement the successful cancer treatment left him with. He sought revenge through the courts, only to be frustrated and disappointed when both the state and federal courts refused to sustain him. By 2004, his court filings in the Northern District of Illinois federal court gave ample testament to his burgeoning hatred of the way the judicial system had treated him. After nearly a decade of seeking judicial support, in the summer of 2004 Ross filed another federal lawsuit against Northwestern Hospital. His self-prepared filing accused the court of abiding in his torture, compared the judicial officials to Nazis, and demanded that the court grant him restitution from all that he had suffered from his medical treatment.²² In the fall of 2004, Judge Joan Lefkow dismissed Ross' case.

In February 2005, Ross fell so far behind in his house rent that he knew he faced eviction. Unemployed and out of hope, he abandoned the house and lived for two weeks in his van. His self-eviction served as the last straw. Ross researched his prey, made his plans, and put his preparations in order. Early in the morning of February 28, 2005, he broke into the basement of Judge Lefkow's home determined to wait for her to return from work that evening. As is the lot of both men and mice, Ross' plan went awry. Around midmorning, Judge Lefkow's husband went to his basement office and stumbled onto Ross, who shot him. Ross then executed the other occupant of the house, Judge Lefkow's mother.²³

For the next two weeks, Ross eluded police while apparently stalking other judges who had held against him. When a policeman pulled him over in West Allis, WI, to ticket him for a broken taillight, Ross immediately shot himself in the head. Police investigators found among his possessions a suicide note confessing his guilt and a list of other judges and their home addresses. One of those on the list lived near West Allis.²⁴

Significantly, Ross never threatened Judge Lefkow. He expressed his frustration with the judicial system inappropriately in his court filings. Instead, Ross chose to further express his dissatisfaction with the system through violence. He became a hunter.

²²*Chicago Tribune*, March 1 and 14, 2005; April 3, 2005.

²³*Chicago Tribune*, March 11, 2005.

²⁴*Chicago Tribune*, March 11, 2005.

Howlers Defined and Exemplified

The concept of *howler* describes those individuals who communicate inappropriately, ominously, even threateningly, or who communicate emotionally, but who never act violently. The only behavior a howler engages in is howling. Howlers are great communicators. How howlers choose to communicate inappropriately is largely controlled by their actual (not perceived) relationship with their target. Personal howlers, who have an interpersonal relationship with their target, essentially use that relationship, and the knowledge gained from it, to further their purposes. If, for example, they seek to control their target, they resort to threats, gestures, symbolic actions, or loaded references in order to prey on what they know of their target's fears and concerns. They confront the target, engage in harassment, and otherwise do their best to convince or cajole the target into behaving as the howler wants. In effect, personal howlers are classic bullies, all bombast and bravado on the outside, but cowards on the inside.

Impersonal howlers, who have no personal relationship with their target, find their method of communicating inappropriately constrained by their lack of access to the target. For example, impersonal howlers frequently have no way of knowing at any single moment exactly where the target is. Often, all the howler has is an address or phone number. Their lack of personal familiarity forces them to communicate from a distance using such methods as letters or telephone calls. If these howlers decide to bridge the distance by approaching the target, they stop howling and start hunting.

Some howlers are sinister, some are binders. Sinister howlers make threats, either direct, veiled, or implied. Binders express inappropriate or unreciprocated emotional feelings toward their targets or they want some connection with their targets. They may not actually know the target, or the target could be an acquaintance or former intimate. The crucial element for binders is that their emotions are expressed inappropriately and the target does not return the feeling.

Both species of howlers let their targets know exactly how they feel, what they want to do, and how they hope to do it. But they never get beyond the wanting and hoping. They may appear untoward, even menacing, but the appearance is fooling. With some howlers, the initial communication satisfies them and the target never hears from them again. With other howlers, communicating becomes an addiction. They often make numerous communications and expand to multiple targets.

In the summer of 2005, New York Yankees baseball star Derek Jeter received a letter warning him that if he continued to date white women, he would be "shot or set on fire." The threatener sent the letter to Yankee Stadium. According to an FBI agent investigating the case, the wording of the

letter closely resembled language in 60 other letters sent over the previous 3 years to prominent black athletes and public figures. Recipients included Supreme Court Associate Justice Clarence Thomas, Miami Dolphins football player Jason Taylor, and the parents of tennis player James Blake. The law enforcement officers investigating the case firmly believed all the letters came from one individual. None of those threatened suffered any kind of attack.²⁵ On May 15, 2008, David Tuason pleaded guilty to sending the letters. He explained that years earlier, his girlfriend left him for a black man.²⁶

Writing letters is easy; shooting someone or setting him on fire presents a considerably more difficult challenge. Sending 60 letters to a diverse population of prominent black men over a 3-year period, especially sending them to publicly available addresses like Yankee Stadium, without ever following up the threat with action strongly suggests the work of an impersonal howler. The written word, however frightening its expression, never killed or physically injured anyone. In this case, the howler conditioned the threat on the recipient's doing something, that is, to stop dating women of a certain race. At the same time, the threatener took no personal risks. Tuason hid in anonymity, mailing the letters from Cleveland, OH, and carefully avoiding leaving any clues that might reveal his or her identity. For the howler, the letter itself fulfills his or her purpose. In this case, Tuason made a racist political statement and tried to instill fear in the baseball player. For the sinister howler, that is more than enough.

Impersonal howlers who make threats prefer to frighten, disturb, or pester their targets while avoiding any risk to themselves. Hence, they communicate in ways designed to do that. They write, e-mail, telephone, fax, or page, all methods that allow them to keep their distance from their targets. Yet, they use gruesome, disgusting, even terrifying descriptions of what they want to do to the target. During the year 2000, Eric J. Temple threatened President Bill Clinton and candidate George W. Bush, as well as three federal prosecutors. In one letter to a prosecutor, Temple warned, "When I come for each of you individually, I'm going to cut your heads off, rip your eyes out, and cook your bodies for a holiday meal." Temple also promised to blow up the White House with a nuclear bomb.²⁷ Being told that you will be shot or set on fire or eaten can be disquieting, especially if you have no way of identifying or recognizing who will make the assault. These types of howlers count on that. They want their targets unnerved. They engage in primitive psychological warfare, using as weapons threatening words or violent images describing violent fantasies. But words and images are their only weapons. To succeed, they depend on enlisting the assistance of their target's own imagination to

²⁵ Associated Press, September 27, 2005.

²⁶ Associated Press, May 17, 2008.

²⁷ Associated Press, October 18, 2000, and February 5, 2002.

further feed the fear. They fail whenever their target remembers the childhood adage about sticks, stones, and words.

Impersonal howlers who profess romantic bonds with their targets tend to become love obsessed. These types of howlers lives in a delusional world where they envision an interpersonal relationship with someone they may never have met and, when it involves a celebrity, they probably never will meet. The communications from these binder howlers express in great detail their fantasies and emotional connections with the targets. Although frustration at not seeing their feelings reciprocated may ultimately transform them into sinister howlers, binders disturb their targets by the creepiness of their delusions and their unrequited, obsessive desire to have an emotional connection with the target.

Threat managers can best identify howlers by concentrating on how the subject chooses to communicate inappropriately, what the purpose of the communication or message is, and what is known of the subject's relationship to the target. Although it is impossible to prove a negative, the threat manager also needs to determine whether the subject has engaged in any other attack-related behaviors. Because of the impossibility of proving a negative, assessing howlers is far more difficult than assessing hunters. One can never be sure that a particular subject has not engaged in research or preparation behavior simply because the threat manager can only assess the known facts he or she has. The unknown cannot be assessed. Ironically, then, one can have a high confidence level that one is managing a hunter, but less confidence that one is dealing with a howler. Ultimately, it boils down to experience and good judgment.

Anatomy of a Howler

RF, a federal prisoner confined to the federal Bureau of Prison's Springfield, MO, medical facility, frequently howled. He spent most of his days composing lengthy letters to federal judges all across the country. He mailed the letters, all of them filled with threats and recriminations and angry, irrational ramblings, to any judge he could think of or for whom he could get an address out of the prison library's *Judicial Staff Directory*. He described in lurid detail how he would cut the judge's head off, then stuff the judge's arm into the neck hole. He promised to rape wives and daughters, then kill them, too. His tone was angry and relentless, as though nothing would stop him. Nothing, that is, except prison bars.

Most of the judges had never met RF, nor did RF know them, know what their caseloads were, or even what their decisions had been. He threatened them because they were judges. As RF once explained to his doctor, he would

not know what to do with himself all day if he did not have his letters to write. RF threatened judges as a hobby.²⁸

The Effect of Space and Time on Howling

The development of the written word enabled individuals to communicate with each other over distances and time. Subsequent technological inventions, such as the telegraph, telephone, fax, pager, e-mail, Internet Web sites, and blogs, enhanced distance communications. People no longer had to be within hailing distance to converse. Physical proximity became irrelevant. Instead, people could express their ideas, give word to their emotions, espouse their opinions, report their news, or make themselves heard from miles away. Distance no longer impeded communicating.

These advances in communicating had an unforeseen effect. They facilitated howling. Communicating at a distance allowed individuals freer vent to their emotions and their feelings, unhindered by the social decorums that control personal interactions. In other words, people communicate differently when doing so over a distance rather than face-to-face. A simple test proves the point. Any sampling of office e-mails clearly shows that people express themselves more forcefully behind the safety of their computers than they do in meetings or during face-to-face encounters with colleagues. E-mails somehow liberate people to express their opinions much more unequivocally, even forcefully. The same applies to other forms of distance communications.

In January 2006, Deborah Howell, the ombudsman for the *Washington Post* charged with representing the readership's interests at the paper, published an article commending the *Post* for breaking the story on lobbyist Jack Abramoff's shady and illegal dealings with Congress. In passing, Howell mentioned that Abramoff gave campaign donations to both Republicans and Democrats alike. In fact, Abramoff never gave directly to any Democratic candidate, but he did encourage his clients to give money to both parties. Howell's literal mistake raised such a firestorm of e-mailed criticism, much of it vulgar and sexist, and some of it threatening, that the *Post* temporarily closed its Web site to further electronic abuse.²⁹

E-mailers and bloggers across the country called Howell a liar, an idiot, a "right-wing whore" and a number of other personal epithets family newspapers simply do not print. "Yes, the WAPO [*Washington Post*] needs an enema, and Howell should be the first thing that gets medically removed," one reader wrote. Another added, "Howell is simply a paid liar. How this creature endures itself is something I don't understand. What a piece of flotsam." However, when Howell responded to one reader who accused her of being a

²⁸Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. xix.

²⁹*Washington Post*, January 22, 2006.

fool with a lack of integrity, the reader ended up offering her a sheepish apology. "I took some time and read an interview (online) with you, among other things," the reader wrote. "When I finished, I shuddered a little bit because it made me think I may be exhibiting an attribute that in others I despise. My e-mail to you was a cheap shot at your integrity and for that I am sorry."³⁰

Howell speculated that perhaps the "anonymity" of the Internet "emboldens e-mailers to conduct a public stoning." Yet, most of the e-mailers could be identified by their e-mail addresses; many even signed their names or included contact information. Anonymity was far less a factor than the distance communication combined with the speed of communicating electronically. Her readers reacted angrily to her column and vigorously typed out their opinions on their individual keyboards, no doubt drawing great satisfaction from hitting the "Send" button. Howell did not realize it, but she had stumbled into a hornet's nest of partisan impersonal howlers.³¹

As Howell found out, impersonal howlers take full advantage of the new freedom offered by distance communications. It empowered them. It allowed many howlers to determine how they communicated, what they communicated, when they communicated, and to whom they communicated. Communicating from a distance even allowed each howler to choose how much personal information he or she would reveal. Distance communications also freed howlers to express themselves in stronger, even blunter, terms. They could now say or write what they really thought without worrying about dealing with their target's reaction. In their multitude, they could even temporarily close down the *Washington Post's* Web site.

In general, personal and impersonal howlers approach their targets quite differently. Personal howlers may communicate from a distance or in person. They often make verbal threats or inappropriate statements directly to their target. Spouses spit out threats to each other during the heat of emotionally charged arguments. Some workers intentionally intimidate or disturb their colleagues or supervisors by talking frequently about weapons or what would happen if they had a weapon with them at that moment. Schools are full of bullies who use words and gestures to frighten their fellow students. Even when communicating from a distance, personal howlers will frequently use some personal information about the target or they will use symbols or loaded references they know the target will understand. For personal howlers, proximity to their targets and personal knowledge about their targets enhances their ability to frighten, control, or disturb.

Impersonal howlers have a high likelihood of communicating inappropriately from a distance. Since they do not know their target, they may only have a publicly available address. Their lack of insider knowledge about their target

³⁰*Washington Post*, January 22, 2006.

³¹*Washington Post*, January 22, 2006.

limits their reach. Their ability to charm, frighten, or disturb the target is bound by what is publicly available or observable. They may use deductions and guesses about where their target may be or what the target may be doing, but their communications do not have the same level of specificity personal howlers have.

For example, an impersonal howler may deduce that the head of a company has an office at the company's headquarters. A personal howler would know what floor and which corner the office is located. An impersonal howler may read in the tabloids that Madonna has children. A personal howler knows the children's names, where they go to school, who their friends are, and what games they play. The relationship between the howler and the target greatly influences both the content and the method of delivery of the howler's inappropriate communications.

The vast majority of impersonal howlers choose to do their howling in writing or over the telephone. Since sinister howlers do not actually intend to carry out their threats, making them from a distance ensures the howler's safety. People tend not to threaten other people in person unless they are prepared to back up the threat or, as with personal howlers, they know the target well enough to have confidence in the target's reaction. Telling persons face-to-face that you intend to kill or harm them inevitably causes them to react. That reaction may well imperil the threatener physically, a situation impersonal howlers prefer to avoid. Impersonal howlers also tend to shy away from expressing their emotional attraction to some stranger directly and in person, assuming, of course, that they can get physically close to the object of their affections. In most cases, they cannot. Writing or telephoning gets them in contact. Impersonal howlers, whether sinister or binder, prefer to do their howling from afar. Distance is the great liberator. It frees them to say their piece without risking an immediate response from their target.

Impersonal howlers enjoy greater freedom for their delusions and obsessions by writing them out, not actually acting them out. Advances in technology merely offer howlers more choices in how they decide to communicate from afar. Impersonal howlers write letters, make telephone calls, send e-mails, use faxes, post their views on Web sites and in blogs, send telephonic pages, mail harmless gifts or packages, leave graffiti, or use some combination of these means of communicating. However the impersonal howler communicates, it is almost always from a distance and the communication itself poses no harm, however frightening, distressing, or disturbing its message.

Communicating from a distance also emboldens the howler's imagination. They imagine a target's response to the communication rather than actually observe it. This plays much better than reality. Imagined responses always exceed the howler's expectations because, after all, the howler wants them to. If the purpose of the communication is to instill fear in the target, then the howler will imagine the fright created in the target. If the purpose is to attract the target emotionally, then the howler's imagination will conjure

that. Whatever the howler wants, his or her imagination will supply it far better than reality will.

For example, one particular howler became fixated on a female Hollywood celebrity. He began sending e-mails discussing the meaning of her movies and how her characters tied in with symbols from the Bible, other movies, and other actors. Frequently, he wrote lengthy missives exploring in detail various themes he had developed. One day, this howler noticed that a Web site devoted to the celebrity had been slightly revised. The revision corresponded to a theme he had recently been discussing in his e-mails. The howler immediately concluded that this change indicated that the celebrity had received his messages and was now sending him a coded answer. It cheered him to believe that she read his e-mails.³² The response he imagined her to have was much better than the reality. A fan club managed the Web site, not the celebrity. She was not even receiving his e-mails. Howlers, however, do not let reality get in their way.

In a study of 3,096 inappropriate communications directed toward federal judicial officials, Frederick S. Calhoun found that 92% of the communications were specious, that is, empty in the sense that no action was taken to approach or attack or imperil the judicial official. In 4.1% of the cases, a suspicious escalation occurred, but fell short of violence. In 3.9%, some violence took place, though not always against the judicial target.³³ When Calhoun analyzed the inappropriate communications by method of delivery, he found that 96.6% of the written communications and 96.7% of the telephone communications were specious. In comparison, only 41.9% of the cases involving suspicious activities and 80.6% of the verbal communications were specious. The findings were statistically significant (See Table 2.1).³⁴

Calhoun concluded that the method of delivery used by the subject when communicating with federal judicial officials served as a strong preincident indicator of whether the subject is a hunter or a howler. Taken together, these results clearly show that those who do not intend to act violently toward federal judicial officials communicate with those officials in writing or over the telephone, both of which keep a distance between the subject and the target. Conversely, those who do intend to act violently toward federal judicial officials engage in suspicious activities or make their inappropriate communications verbally in person. Significantly, none of the three federal judges assassinated since 1979 were threatened by their assassins. Calhoun concluded:

³² Authors' personal knowledge.

³³ Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. 56.

³⁴ Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. 66.

Table 2.1 Method of Delivery of Assessed Threats and Assaults on Federal Judicial Officials, 1980–1993^a

Method of Delivery	Specious Outcome, %	Enhanced Outcome, %	Violent Outcome, %
Written	96.6	2.6	0.8
Telephone	96.7	2.4	0.9
Informant	98.4	0.8	0.8
Suspicious activity	41.9	17.6	40.5
Verbal	80.6	16.6	2.9

^a Extracted from Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. 66. Reprinted by permission of the author.

The method of delivery was, in effect, the threatener's signature. It most reflected his style and personality, his drive and motive, his intent and purpose. Those who wrote or called interposed some physical distance between themselves and their victim. They were howlers, baying out their outrage from atop the canyon walls, well protected from any response of the victim. Those who spoke their threats to some court official or, worse, those who assaulted or attempted to assault their victim went beyond mere howling to hunt. As the method of delivery strongly showed across 3,096 threats, the howlers rarely hunted; the hunters rarely howled.³⁵

Keeping a distance is, perhaps, the truest mark of the impersonal howler.

But distance has other repercussions marking impersonal howlers. Because they feel safely away from their targets, these howlers tend to express themselves more straightforwardly and explicitly unless disguising their meaning makes the inappropriate communication more chilling or attractive. Sinister howlers frequently make direct, detailed threats. They offer elaborate descriptions of the death or injury that will befall their targets. Binder howlers describe their fantasies and daydreams in intimate detail. After all, the descriptions are symptomatic of the howler's desperate need for a relationship. Both types of howlers avoid vagueness and elliptical references in favor of straight talk. Hunters, by comparison, usually choose not to communicate at all once they go on the hunt.

Even among intimates, where threats serve as strong preincident indicators of future violence,³⁶ the threats do not always correspond in time with the act of intended violence. The threatening statements usually precede the violence by hours at least and usually by days or weeks. Once the spouse or

³⁵ Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. 66.

³⁶ Debra M. Jenkins, "When Should Threats Be Seen as Indicative of Future Violence," Appendix A.

coworker decides to resort to violence, he or she usually quits threatening, moving from talking about violence to acting violently.³⁷

For the threat manager, one of the best clues to a subject's intentions can be derived by the method of delivery used by the subject to communicate with the target. Since the subject chooses how to communicate, that choice alone gives great insight into what the subject may be planning to do, at least at the moment the communication was drafted. Subjects who choose distance communications tend to be howlers. Conversely, subjects who engage in suspicious activities or who communicate inappropriately in person or face-to-face with their target tend to be hunters. Although the threat manager should always factor all the known facts into the assessment, the subject's method of delivery should be treated as one of the more significant factors.

Consequently, as a rule of thumb, when a howler directs his or her inappropriate communication toward a target the subject does not personally know and the target enjoys a position of power, authority, or status, the subject most likely will do so from a distance in order to minimize risk or exposure to the subject. Conversely, when the howler intends to intimidate, control, or cause fear in an intimate or acquaintance, those communications are as frequently achieved in person as they are over a distance. Personal howlers do not fear the consequences of their sinister communications because they know their targets and, thus, have confidence in predicting the target's reaction. The different means of communicating between personal and impersonal howlers represents one of the outgrowths of the intimacy effect.

Hunters versus Howlers

The key to understanding hunters versus howlers lies in the difference between acting and talking. Threatening someone is a behavior, but alone is not a behavior that lends itself to carrying out the threat. Threats are actually promises of some *future* action. Many are conditioned on the target's doing or not doing something, others are deferred in time, some are veiled (sometimes to the point of obtuseness). The Cleveland howler, for example, warned Derek Jeter that dire things would happen *if* Jeter did not stop dating white women. Presumably, the burden of avoiding being shot or set on fire now fell on Jeter and his choice of dates. Many prisoners condition their threats by explicitly postponing the promised action until they get out of prison. Other threats warn of terrible events perpetrated by someone else, sometimes a vague deity, superior being, or alien. Despite their variety, threats are

³⁷We deal here with intended violence, which is planned and premeditated. During impromptu violence, threats can occur simultaneously with the violent act.

only one form of behavior. Carrying them out requires a whole different set of actions.

In some venues for violence, especially those in which an interpersonal relationship exists between the hunter and the target, hunters frequently engage in the behavior of threatening their intended target. Most domestic violence cases are scarred by repeated threats. But that behavior occurs amidst a spiraling escalation of attack-related behaviors. The hunter threatens his or her spouse, but also stalks him or her, makes plans to attack, obtains the necessary weaponry, and ultimately attacks.

The threats occur within a web of activities all designed to control the behavior of the spouse, to somehow convince him or her not to leave the relationship and, especially, to do the threatening spouse's bidding. Because of the intimate relationship, the threat itself may be clear only to the target.

For example, police in California responded to a domestic relations complaint in a small town outside Sacramento. When they arrived at the residence, they determined that the husband had hit the wife. The officers immediately arrested and handcuffed the husband. As they led him out the front door, the husband turned back to his wife and said, "Don't worry, honey. When I get out, we'll go to Las Vegas." The officers noticed that the wife reacted fearfully, visibly shaken by the innocuous promise. After putting the husband in the back seat of the patrol car, one of the officers returned to interview the wife. She told him that a year earlier, while visiting Las Vegas, the husband had beaten her so severely she ended up in a hospital. Because she understood the husband's reference and it instilled fear in her, prosecutors obtained a conviction against the husband for making the threat using symbolic language.³⁸ Understanding the controlling nature of domestic relations threats helps explain why violence so frequently results after a targeted spouse resists the control, such as through obtaining a judicial restraining order.

Howlers howl; hunters hunt, even if sometimes the hunt entails threatening the target. Threats, then, must be assessed not only within the context of the intimacy effect, but also by what other actions are taken. Threat managers need to recognize the differences between hunters and howlers and invest those differences into their ability to identify problem individuals and to assess their risk. Doing so promises the best way to make clean, persuasive, supportable assessments. Knowing how hunters act offers the best insight into the most practical ways to manage individuals of violent intent. Similarly, understanding the way howlers behave will help inform how they should be managed. Threat managers cannot afford to ignore

³⁸Heisler, C. J. (2004). "The Law of Threats," in *Investigation and Prosecution of Stalking and Related Crimes*, Sacramento, CA: California District Attorneys Association, p. X-3.

either hunters or howlers, but how they manage each varies according to circumstance and context.

Although howlers can become hunters, to do so requires that they stop howling and start hunting. In essence, they change their behavior so that they are no longer acting like howlers. They step out on the path to intended violence. Usually, these individuals suffer what we call the *last straw syndrome*. That is, something happens to trigger the howler into taking up the hunt. Some aspect of the situation changes, either through some reaction by the target or a significant change in the subject's life circumstances. Whatever the cause, the individual now feels a compelling grievance that only violence can assuage. Howling no longer suffices.

Summary

This chapter defined the twin concepts of *hunter* and *howler*. It described hunters as those individuals who engage in attack-related behaviors to further their intention to carry out an act of violence. It defined howlers as individuals who communicate inappropriately, ominously, even threateningly, or emotionally, but who never take action to implement their ideas. The chapter offered several examples of hunters and howlers and stressed that each is identified by specific behaviors. The chapter also explored the effects of space and time on impersonal howlers. Throughout, the chapter emphasized the importance of looking at how problem individuals, whether hunter or howler, behave and the actions that they take as the best indicators for assessing them. Finally, the chapter concluded by stressing the importance of distinguishing hunters from howlers and adopting threat-management strategies applicable to each.

Case Analysis: The Payoff

The Facts

Oliver has worked for a corporation for 17 years. His personnel file shows that 3 years ago his annual performance rating dropped from above average to average. The next year, it declined again to below average. Last year, he received a poor performance rating. In July, the corporation initiated the process to terminate Oliver. The termination took effect August 24.

Between July and August, several of Oliver's coworkers complained about his belligerent attitude toward them. A female coworker reported that Oliver demanded that she not walk past his cubicle and if she did, he would see to it that she would not be walking for long. A male coworker told his supervi-

sor that Oliver frequently glared at him and on several occasions went out of his way to jostle the worker as they crossed paths in the central hallway. The human resources staff members who worked on Oliver's termination reported that he told two of them that they would regret the way they were treating him. The staff members requested the presence of security officers during Oliver's exit interview. The interview and Oliver's departure from the corporation went smoothly.

Oliver called his human resources contact demanding that he receive his cash payment for unused leave immediately. The contact explained that processing leave claims could take as long as 90 days. Oliver replied that that was unacceptable. He explained that he had been offered a position out of state and needed the cash payment to cover his moving expenses. Oliver warned that if he did not receive the payment soon, he would return to the company and "wake people up" to his problem. Oliver subsequently telephoned several times a day demanding his money. His human resources contact described the calls as angry and threatening. The contact reports that he fears for his safety.

The Threat Assessment

Although Oliver has acted in a threatening manner in the past and has made ominous statements, he has no history of acting violently. Rather, he uses intimidation against coworkers as a way to keep them off balance. His current telephone calls indicate that he is trying to use the same intimidation behavior to compel his human resources contact to expedite his unused leave compensation. Security has no record that Oliver has returned to the company facility, nor has security received any report that Oliver has been seen in the area. At this time, based on the known facts, we assess Oliver as a howler with a low risk of resorting to violence. More than likely, he will continue to use telephonic intimidations short of violence.

Protective Response

Security officers should be briefed on Oliver's intimidations and shown his photograph. They should also be instructed not to let Oliver on the premises. Oliver's human resources contact and former supervisor and coworkers should receive a security briefing on measures they can take to enhance their personal security. They should also be advised to report any communications or contacts they may receive from Oliver.

Threat Management Strategy

Oliver is an excellent candidate for the refocus-and-assist strategy. Since he claims to have a new job out of state and needs the cash from his unused leave

balance to pay for his move, getting him that payment should be expedited. Helping him get out of state and into a new job will build up his inhibitors, thus decreasing the chances of his acting violently. Helping him get into a new job will also refocus him to the future and away from his bad experiences with his former employer.

Outcome

Oliver's belligerent and intimidating demeanor fostered considerable resentment among his coworkers and human resources staff. That resentment caused the staff to drag their feet processing his unused leave compensation. When members of the threat management unit requested that the claim be expedited, they were told that human resources had lots of priorities. Oliver's claim was not at the same level as their other demands. The threat managers took the issue to the department head, but were again rebuffed with the explanation that Oliver hardly deserved any special treatment.

At that point, the head of the threat-management unit approached the corporation's chairman and chief executive officer. They had developed a professional relationship based on a number of inappropriate communications directed at the chairman in the past. When the head of the threat-management unit explained the situation, the chairman immediately telephoned the director of human resources and ordered that Oliver's check be cut that day.

The threat management team personally delivered the check to Oliver and used the visit to confirm his intention to leave the state for his new job. They also asked for his future contact information so they could check up on him if necessary. Three days later, the team confirmed that Oliver had moved out of his apartment and was on his way out of state. Two weeks later, the team confirmed that Oliver was working at his new job.

Issues of Interest

Oliver's situation illustrated a number of unusual aspects of contemporary threat management:

1. Although we do not advocate rewarding intimidating behaviors, in some cases getting the subject what he or she wants solves the problem both for the subject and for the threat-management case.
2. Threat managers need to remember that they are facilitators as well as security officers. By cutting through the bureaucracy and getting Oliver his check, the threat managers effectively deflected Oliver from intimidating corporate staff and refocused him on starting his new job.
3. The individuals whom Oliver targeted with his intimidations became so upset and resentful of his interaction with them that they deliberately slowed down the process for delivering his check. In other words,

their resentment toward him blinded them from seeing that by helping him they also helped themselves get rid of him. It took an objective threat-management approach to see the solution that had been staring them in the face. Even then, it took high-level intervention to get the check cut.

4. The head of the threat-management unit was able to use his contacts from previous threat-management cases to facilitate applying the threat-management strategy. Such networking can be enormously useful in addressing future cases.
5. Threat management is as much social work as it is investigative or security. Threat managers need to be innovative and flexible in determining the most effective management strategies. Their assessments, too, need to take into account not only how the subject is behaving, but also what the subject appears to be seeking.

Hunters act. They engage in *attack-related* behaviors, that is, they do things in furtherance of their plan to commit violence. If, for example, a plan entails sending a mail bomb to a target, then they collect the necessary materials, construct the bomb, research the target's mailing address, address the package, apply the postage, and mail it. Hunters who decide to use a firearm must obtain the weapon, load it, carry it to the attack scene, then get close enough to the target to fire. These hunters engage in noticeable behaviors. They expose themselves to being identified as hunters.

What Hunters Do

Attack-related behaviors are best conceptualized as steps hunters must take to carry out acts of premeditated violence. We call this concept the *path to intended violence*. Essentially, the stepping stones consist of

- *Grievance*, which is the motive or reason compelling the hunter to act.
- *Ideation*, which requires actually settling upon the idea that violence is justified and necessary.
- *Research and planning*, which means going beyond the idea to actually figuring out how to consummate the violence.
- *Preparation*, which involves obtaining the necessary equipment, such as weapon of choice, and taking any other actions required to initiate the plan.
- *Breach*, which entails initiating the plan by circumventing the target's security (however primitive or sophisticated that may be) to launch the attack.
- *Attack*, which is the actual physical assault.

Since attack-related behaviors essentially define an individual as a hunter, the threat manager should always keep in focus what the subject is doing to identify him or her as a hunter.

Our description of the assorted behaviors associated with each step is not definitive, merely illustrative. Human behavior manifests itself in an infinite

number of ways that defy compilation into a shopping list of actions. In general, hunters behave in ways that are conducive to how they have chosen to hunt. Mail bombers do things differently than snipers. Hunters who do not expect to survive their attacks, who indeed wish to die during the attacks, engage in different behaviors than hunters who want to escape after their attacks. As we describe and illustrate the various behaviors along the path to intended violence, our purpose is not to capture all possible behaviors but to suggest the kinds of activities threat managers should be alert for.

Our approach is neither psychological nor sociological. We have no pretense of understanding what goes on inside the head of a hunter. *Why* each hunter acts the way he or she does is unique to each and, in fact, may never be fully known or understood. Many people have put forth various theories to explain why Lee Harvey Oswald shot President John F. Kennedy. Indeed, the inability to understand Oswald's grievance has fueled the innumerable conspiracy theories spawned over the years. The only thing of which we are sure is that Oswald had a grievance that led him to come up with the idea of violence. Thus inspired, he then researched, planned, and prepared for his attack. As the motorcade turned into Dealey Plaza, Oswald was in position to breach the president's security and launch his attack by squeezing the rifle's trigger. Traveling that path required him to act. He bought the rifle, built the sniper's nest in the book depository, smuggled his equipment inside, took up position in time to snipe on the motorcade, fled the building, and hid out in the movie theatre. Ultimately for our purposes, why he took those actions is less important than observing and understanding what those actions indicated. His behavior indicated that a hunter was on the prowl.

The same holds true of Jack Ruby. Maybe he shot Oswald to avenge the lost president or to ensure Oswald's silence or because he thought Oswald the personification of the devil. Whatever propelled him, at some point that weekend, Ruby decided on violence, obtained a pistol, researched where the police would take Oswald, got himself into position to breach the police perimeter, then shot Oswald as he walked past with his police escort. Like Oswald, Ruby took his reasons to the grave.

Rather than psychological, our bent is more practical. It revolves around actions, behaviors, and other things hunters *do*. Park Dietz et al. compared individuals who had inappropriately approached members of Congress with those who only wrote inappropriate letters to Congressmen. The approachers, of course, acted like hunters, the nonapproachers like howlers. The study uncovered some fascinating differences in how hunters and howlers behave. It identified ten factors statistically associated with approaching a member of Congress, all of them behaviors. Hunters

- Wrote repeated letters.
- Provided identifying information.

- Telephoned in addition to writing.
- Closed letters appropriately.
- Expressed themselves politely in their letters.
- Took the role of special constituent.
- Cast the member of Congress in a benefactor role, including the role of rescuer, benefactor, or potential benefactor.
- Repeatedly mentioned love, marriage, or romance.
- Expressed a desire for face-to-face contact with the member.
- Expressed a desire for rescue, assistance, valuables, or recognition.¹

These characteristics can be summarized in a couple of broad generalizations distinctive of hunters. First, the Dietz team found that hunters change their behaviors. They write, then telephone, then approach. Second, and more importantly, hunters want something more than the reaction that their communication causes. They want the Congressman's help, assistance, marriage, or affection. The letter or phone call is a means to some other end, not an end in itself. Perhaps that explains the study's finding that "subjects who sent inappropriate letters that contained no threats were significantly more likely to pursue a face-to-face encounter."² Those who hunt members of Congress know they will not get what they want with threats. Other actions work better.

Dietz et al. also conducted a similar comparison among those who inappropriately approached a Hollywood celebrity compared with those who merely communicated inappropriately in writing. The team found that those who sent a total of 10 to 14 communications (not more and not less) to a particular celebrity were most likely to approach. In addition, celebrity hunters

- Corresponded for a year or longer.
- Expressed a desire for face-to-face contact with the celebrity.
- Announced a specific time when something would happen to the celebrity.
- Announced a specific location where something would happen to the celebrity.
- Made repeated mentions of entertainment products.
- Telephoned in addition to writing.
- Sent letters from two or more different postmarks.³

¹ Dietz, P. et al. (1991). Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to members of the United States Congress. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 36: 1463.

² Dietz, Congress, 1466.

³ Dietz, P. et al. (1991). Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to Hollywood celebrities. *Journal of Forensic Science*, 36: 208.

Like the Congressional hunters, celebrity hunters actually wanted to meet the celebrity. They changed their behaviors from writing to telephoning to approaching. They saw a future relationship of some sort beyond the letter writing and they planned accordingly. For celebrity hunters, the inappropriate communications were only one means to their ends. The letters were not ends in themselves. Secret Service researchers also found that individuals who intended to use violence against public officials avoided threatening those officials. The researchers once interviewed a man who had stalked President George H. W. Bush with the intention of assassinating him. *Why*, they asked him, *did he never threaten the president*. The man responded incredulously, *Why would I threaten the president; I really wanted to kill him. If I had threatened him, you guys would have arrested me before I could carry out my plan.*⁴

As Dietz found, hunter behaviors are observable if the threat manager knows what to look for. Making those observations raises another key issue. Since the threat manager cannot see everything, he or she should train those who are in a position to notice suspicious activities on what to look for and to whom to report. The training should be extended not only to potential targets, but to their staffs, families, and associates. These individuals then serve as the “Doppler radar” for alerting the threat manager about potential problem individuals, suspicious events, or inappropriate contacts.

In sum, threat managers must train themselves to see the world, and the people who populate it, differently. Threat managers must recognize all the myriad attack-related behaviors that comprise the path to intended violence. They must piece together seemingly unrelated reports or incidents or behaviors that, taken as a whole, portray a hunter. Why is that person asking questions about schedules? Who is that guy watching our building? What did the caller mean by the statement, “People have limits on how much they’re persecuted”? When did that suspicious bag appear on the sidewalk? Where did the protestors go? By using the concept of the path to intended violence, threat managers can sharply focus their thinking and analyses so as to spotlight hunters when they first appear.

In reviewing the six steps along the path to intended violence, we use Paul Hill’s odyssey as a prime example of how an individual moves along the path. Hill, a former Presbyterian minister turned car detailer, husband, and father of three, began his trek to attack on March 10, 1993. He reached the end of the path sixteen months later, on July 29, 1994. Nearly a decade after that, the state of Florida executed Hill for two cold-blooded murders.

⁴ Author’s conversation with Robert Fein and Bryan Vossekuil, ca. 1996.

On Grievances

On March 10, 1993, Michael Griffin assassinated Dr. David Gunn, purportedly to keep Dr. Gunn from performing any more abortions in Pensacola, FL. Paul Hill had recently moved his family to Pensacola. Although never particularly active in the antiabortion movement prior to Gunn's murder, the killing converted Hill into an active, vocal proponent of the so-called "justifiable homicide" doctrine espoused by violent, radical antiabortionists. These ideologues argued that saving a fetus justified killing the doctors and their staffs who performed abortions. Five days after the shooting, Hill appeared on the Phil Donahue Show opposite Dr. Gunn's son. He defended Griffin's act.⁵ Ironically, Hill initiated his proselytizing at about the same time that Griffin began denying he had killed the doctor. A jury ultimately convicted Griffin.

For the next 16 months, Hill enjoyed periodic spurts of publicity for his defense of justifiable homicide. In addition to appearing on Donahue, he also appeared on ABC's Nightline and talked to interviewers from a host of other media outlets.⁶ Hill always carefully prefaced his remarks with the caution that he had no intent to actually harm a doctor, but he approved and encouraged anyone else who might. He also came to see himself as a better representative than Griffin of the violently radical wing of the antiabortion movement. In Hill's mind, Griffin's cries of innocence and charges of conspiracy diminished the importance of acting violently "in defense of the unborn." As a former Presbyterian minister, Hill believed he had more stature than Griffin.⁷ Surely, his words carried more credibility than Griffin's act.

In his spare time away from working as a car detailer, Hill began demonstrating at the Ladies Center clinic.⁸ Pensacola police arrested him several times for trespassing and disturbing the peace. Although some of the veteran protestors originally viewed him skeptically, over the course of those 16 months Hill rose to some prominence within the Pensacola-based antiabortion community. But time also had the effect of thrusting other issues onto the front pages and the talk shows. Hill and his radical cause became old news. Hill shrouded his grievance with religious and moral convictions against abortion, though his desire for infamy undoubtedly also influenced his actions.

Grievances, like the ideation that may follow, involve a state of mind, not necessarily discernable behaviors. That means that each hunter gets to choose whether to reveal his or her particular grievance. In contrast, for example, when hunters reach the research and planning step, they engage in behaviors

⁵ "Who Is Paul Hill?" author unknown, www.armyofgod.com/PaulHillindex.html.

⁶ "Who Is Paul Hill?"

⁷ Paul Hill, "Why I Shot an Abortionist," June 1999, www.armyofgod.com/PaulHillindex.html, pp. 1-2.

⁸ "Who Is Paul Hill?"

requiring them to act in public where those actions are noticeable. The activities include information gathering, surveillance, suspicious inquiries, drawing maps or diagrams, making lists, and creating diaries or blogs. Neither grievance nor ideation necessarily entails such overt, observable activities.

Individuals may choose to express their grievances in a variety of different ways. Hill took his public and sought as much media attention as he could get. Other hunters write letters, make telephone calls, or talk about their problems with anyone who will listen. On August 24, 2001, Louis W. Joy III told a friend he was despondent because his estranged wife had obtained a restraining order against him. Joy's despondency was compounded with humiliation when police officers escorted him through his own house to collect his things. The next day, Joy flew his plane into the house, destroying it and killing himself. The coroner ruled the crash deliberate.⁹

Often, the subject's fixation on the problem strikes others as obsessive. The subject appears singularly focused on the grievance. His or her behavior concerning the issue comes across as intense, unbending, emotionally exaggerated, and fixated. Clinic workers at Ladies Center became concerned enough about how intense Paul Hill acted that they began videotaping his protest activities.¹⁰ Somehow, for them, he stood out from the other protestors.

Agustin Garcia of Hackensack, NJ, considered Gladys Ricart his wife, even though they had never bothered with getting married. For most individuals, that problem would have been mooted after she broke up with him, but Garcia refused to acknowledge the end of the affair. Throughout the summer of 1999, Garcia kept the faith that they would reunite. Although he later claimed ignorance of her wedding plans to another man, he drove to her house on September 26, 1999, with a pistol in his briefcase and extra bullets in his coat pocket. He crashed the wedding and killed her.¹¹ Individuals who obsess over their grievances are only a step away from accepting violence as the only way to solve their problems.

Grievances come in all shapes and sizes. In September 2000, Sopher Prom killed her coworker, Darlene Adams, because Prom could not keep the pace that Adams set on the Prestige Display and Packaging assembly line.¹² In December of that year, former Georgia Sheriff Sidney Dorsey and two other men killed Dorsey's successor, who had beaten him in a hotly contested election.¹³ In April 2002, Peter B. Mehran killed the man who lived in the apartment below him because the neighbor had complained about how loud Mehran played his music. Notes found in Mehran's car indicated that

⁹ Associated Press, August 27, 2002.

¹⁰ Authors' personal knowledge.

¹¹ Associated Press, October 22, 2001.

¹² Associated Press, December 13, 2001.

¹³ Associated Press, November 30, 2001.

he planned the killing and intended to escape. During the shooting, however, Mehran managed to shoot himself as well as his neighbor. Both died.¹⁴ A month later, patrons at a bar in a small town in Pennsylvania challenged Jon McClure's claim that he had fought in the Gulf War. Outraged that anyone would question his war record, McClure went home, retrieved a shotgun, and returned to the bar. He killed three people and wounded one. The next day, he killed himself rather than surrender to police.¹⁵

Lots of people get shown up by coworkers, but they do not react violently. In every election, one side always loses, but the losers rarely go shooting after the winner. Neighbors complain about each other all the time without resorting to violence to resolve their disputes. Barroom arguments may lead to brawls, but rarely do they end in shotgun blasts. Yet, all these grievances led to violent outcomes. Like beauty, the importance of any particular issue lies in the eye of the beholder. One person's grievance is another's minor annoyance.

By 1992, Robert Mack had worked at General Dynamics for over 20 years. Then his performance started to fall off. He began going absent without leave. When he did show up for work, his productivity fell well below that of his coworkers. In response, his supervisor suspended him for 3 days. While Mack stayed home, the supervisor, acting in consultation with union representatives, decided to dismiss Mack. Management and the union representative cosigned a letter to Mack informing him that he had been fired and setting a date 3 weeks away for him to meet with the supervisor and the union representative to finish the termination proceedings.

Robert Mack took offense, but not at the termination. He knew his job performance had declined. However, the way the company informed him about it deeply offended him. After 20 years on the job, they wrote him a letter rather than telephoning or facing him in person. The letter bothered him so much that every time he closed his eyes to rest, the letter appeared in his mind, bursting into flames. If only someone had called him, had shown just a little of a personal approach, he would have been all right with the company's decision. He held the company accountable, he explained later, because it dehumanized everything. According to Mack, General Dynamics bore the blame for what he did. On the day scheduled for his meeting with the supervisor and union man, Mack took with him a rifle. He shot both men in the head, killing one and severely wounding the other.¹⁶

The General Dynamics tragedy illustrates the peculiarity about grievances. Each grievance is highly unique and personal to the offended individual. At first glance, any rational explanation for Mack's motive would be

¹⁴ Associated Press, April 2, 2002.

¹⁵ Associated Press, May 1 and 2, 2002.

¹⁶ United Press International, January 24, 1992.

that the company fired him after 20 years on the job. But that was not what prompted Mack. He knew his work performance had fallen off. He knew he had gone absent without leave. In sum, he knew the company had sufficient reason to terminate him. He simply objected to how his supervisor and the union representative handled the termination.

Grievances are individually peculiar things. In 1988, for example, a Mafia don went on trial for a host of crimes. Throughout the proceedings, the don sat stoically. He evinced no anger or personal feelings toward the prosecutor even though he faced the prospect of spending the rest of his life in prison. Even after his conviction, the don held no grudge. One day, however, the don overheard one of the assistant U.S. attorneys speculating about seizing the don's wife's fur coat as an illicitly obtained asset. Infuriated at this perceived insult to his wife, the don let a contract to have the prosecutor killed.¹⁷

It matters less what the particular grievance is than how emotionally invested the individual is with the issue. Eric Harris complained to his diary that classmates did not invite him to join their various activities. "I hate you people for leaving me out of so many fun things. You people had my phone, and I asked and all, but no no no no no no don't let the weird looking Eric come along." He and Dylan Kliebold attacked their high school in Columbine, CO, killing a dozen fellow students and a teacher. In describing their plan, Harris confessed, "I want to leave a lasting impression on the world."¹⁸ Other school shooters have felt equally embittered over what they considered personal slights from their classmates, although not all were quite as grandiose in their ambitions as Harris and Kliebold. By any objective, rational standard, not being invited to after-school social events hardly warranted shooting up the school. Except, of course, it mattered enough to Harris and Kliebold.

In March 2004, two second-grade boys hid a .22-caliber revolver and a box of bullets in the playground sandbox. They intended to kill a fifth-grade girl because she had teased them. Fortunately, another student reported the two boys, and authorities disrupted their plan.¹⁹ Yet, who has not been teased in school? Most students respond with teasing of their own. With these two boys, the teasing assumed a grave importance that went well beyond how most students deal with schoolyard taunting.

The individualized nature of grievances means that the threat manager needs to look for direct evidence for the motive and avoid deducing what it might be. Grievances are highly personalized to the individuals holding them. They simply cannot be ascertained by any "reasonable man" approach, test, or deduction. By any objective standard, individual grievances can

¹⁷ Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. 3.

¹⁸ CNN.com, December 5, 2001.

¹⁹ Associated Press, March 18, 2004.

appear unreasonable, illogical, even goofy. Indeed, any review of violent incidents frequently leaves one wondering how such a petty or trivial or bizarre issue could result in carnage. Unfortunately, no “objective standard” applies to individual grievances precisely because they are so subjective. What matters is not how important the issue is, but how important the subject perceives the issue to be.

Consequently, trying to identify individuals who may intend violence by trying to deduce their possible grievances rarely works. Just as importantly, it may send the threat manager in the wrong direction because the tendency is always to apply the rational man approach. Looking for reasonable motives is an unreasonable approach to threat management. Among school shooters, for example, perhaps only Peter Odighizuwa had the most readily understandable motive for killing three of his professors and wounding three students at his law school in western Virginia. A day earlier, Odighizuwa had been suspended over his failing grades. Even so, lots of students fail without turning to violence. Only Odighizuwa can really know why his suspension spawned a violent result. Violence is rarely understandable to anyone but the perpetrator.²⁰

The highly individualized nature of grievances makes it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to try to identify potentially violent people by first ascertaining what their particular motives are. Although having a grievance is the first step on the path to intended violence, rarely can it be the first step in identifying the violent individual. On February 28, 2005, someone broke into Judge Lefkow’s basement window and killed her husband and her mother. News reports immediately focused suspicion on Matthew Hale. Based solely on motive, he seemed a likely enough suspect. Judge Lefkow had presided over his criminal trial some years earlier. She found him guilty. More importantly, he had subsequently been convicted of conspiring to assassinate her. It seemed clear to everyone that he had ample motive, that is, revenging his criminal conviction and finishing his interrupted plans to have her killed.

Yet, despite these strong motives, Hale had a slight problem in terms of his ability to go after the judge. He had no assets and was kept in solitary confinement until his sentencing, his only visitors his mother and father.²¹ It is hard enough to contract a killing when one has the funds and the freedom to find an assassin. Indeed, when Hale tried the first time he ended up contracting with an FBI informant, which is what landed him in jail and solitary confinement. Convincing someone to do it for free while you languish in prison presents extraordinary difficulties.

²⁰*Washington Post*, January 17, 2002.

²¹*Chicago Tribune*, January 9, 2003; April 26, 2004; March 11, 2005; March 14, 2005.

Bart Ross took his grievance over a civil lawsuit through the rest of the steps to intended violence and launched his attack. Compared with Hale, Ross's issue hardly attracted attention. But it was important to him. He had invested enough emotion in his complaint that it had become an obsession. Acting violently against those in the judicial system seemed the only resolution for him. Hale may have had plenty of motive, but Ross had motive and ability, and he had created his own opportunities.

The Lefkow case raises an interesting point about grievances and their use in identifying individuals of violent intent. Precisely because grievances are so personal to the individual, they offer little value as a means of identifying violent intent. Indeed, as with the Lefkow case, focusing first on who reasonably has the most logical grievance can be, and frequently is, misleading. Too many threat management cases show that linking grievance to violence does not support the reasonable man test. Too often, people's objections are entirely irrational, many even *unreasonable* to anyone but the subject.

Although grievance is the first step along the path to intended violence, it cannot be the initiating point for threat management. For example, many Americans oppose abortions and pray for the procedures to stop. The vast majority of these people do not follow the path taken by Hill. Similarly, everyone at one time or other feels aggrieved about something, but by far most people do not let that issue, hurt, or slight propel them to violence. Consequently, identifying that someone has a grievance does not mean, ipso facto, that the individual will resort to violence. Grievance is the first necessary step, but feeling aggrieved does not unalterably commit the aggrieved individual to any future acts. Other steps must follow.

In addition, many individuals embarked on the path to violence keep their grievance secret. Revealing it pinpoints the target, which the subject may not want to happen until he or she is ready. Subjects intent on violence do not want too much information getting out and used against them. Ken Cruz made no contact with his former company until November 3, 1999, when he walked into an office at the Northlake Shipyard in Washington State and fired 11 rounds, killing two people and wounding two others. According to press reports, "prosecutors believe he harbored a grudge because he was fired soon after the company's insurance company cut off his benefits for a work-related injury, saying he wasn't really hurt."²² Since grievances are personal, they are easy to keep secret. They reside in the subject's head, which means that revealing them is entirely at the subject's discretion.

Some subjects initially announce their grievances in legal, proper, ways. They file lawsuits, initiate complaints, or make protests. They feel, like both Hill and Ross, that they have pursued every legitimate option open to them,

²²Associated Press, February 11, 2002.

but all without success. That continued failure, and an ultimate inability to recognize more or different options, moves the subject forward to violence, almost as a last resort. The complete frustration caused by feeling powerless and unheard pushes these subjects onto the path to intended violence.

But when it comes to grievances, the threat manager knows one certainty. Once an individual comes to attention because he or she has reached a later stage along the path, that individual first had a grievance. The steps along the path are sequential. Grievance always comes first. Once the threat manager identifies a subject as a potential hunter, the protective investigation can determine what the subject's issue really is. Knowing the motive helps inform the threat assessment. The threat manager can assess the subject's emotional investment in the grievance. Obviously, the stronger the investment, the higher the risk.

Once someone is identified through other means as potentially contemplating violence, then determining what that grievance is can be extraordinarily useful in assessing the risk he or she poses. Had law enforcement officers identified Ross, checking his court filings and past behaviors would have shown them the depth of his emotional investment in his civil case against Northwestern University Hospital. They would also have found how desperate he felt because of the wrongs he believed he had received from the judicial system in general, Judge Lefkow in particular. The intensity of his feelings clearly would have led to an assessment that he posed a significant risk. We know this to be true because 5 years earlier, Ross came to the attention of law enforcement officers assigned to the state's attorney general's office. After investigating him and interviewing him, the officers concluded that he posed a significant risk.²³ Before he could act out, his attention shifted to seeking relief through the federal courts. That led him to Judge Lefkow.

In sum, threat managers need to understand the subject's grievance, but that understanding usually comes after the subject comes to their attention for other actions related to other steps along the path to intended violence. That understanding plays a crucial role in the assessment and management stages of threat management, but rarely in the identifying phase.

On Ideation of Violence

On July 21, 1994, an idea struck Paul Hill like a thunderbolt. For nearly a year and a half, he had expressed his grievances over abortion. He had preached the need to take lives in order to save others. He had demonstrated at the local clinic to show his opposition, but until July 21 he openly avowed that he would not personally turn to violence. On that day, he reached his personal Rubicon. He decided it was time to go beyond talking and demonstrating to action. He

²³Chicago Tribune, March 11, 2005.

later remembered detailing a used car and wondering who would be the next attacker on an abortion doctor. Suddenly, “the idea of acting myself struck; it hit hard. . . . I began to consider what would happen if I were to shoot an abortionist. My eyes were opened to the enormous impact another such shooting in Pensacola would have.”²⁴

Interestingly, at this moment of personal epiphany, Hill’s language began to incorporate shades of violence: “The idea of acting myself struck; it hit hard.” He added, “I realized that many people were still reeling from the previous shootings. A second punch, in the same spot, would continue a chain reaction.”²⁵ The idea of violence found expression in violent terms.

Still, Hill later confessed, “the decision was agonizing.” He would forfeit his wife and family and undoubtedly spend the rest of his life in prison. Yet, once he crossed that great divide between grievance and ideation, he felt better for it. “When I went from debating whether to act, in general, to planning a particular act, I felt some relief.” Having taken the biggest step, deciding on violence, the other steps seemed far less challenging. According to Hill, once he crossed to ideation, “I felt that the Lord had placed in my hands a cup whose contents were difficult to swallow, but that it was a task that had to be borne.”²⁶

Hill chose to keep his ideation a secret lest someone try to stop him. Still, he admitted that during the 8 days between the time the idea struck him and the attack, he remained withdrawn and preoccupied. On a family outing to the beach, Hill felt detached. “I enjoyed watching them through eyes unknown to them—like a man savoring his last supper.”²⁷ He knew he could keep his secret from his wife only so long. If he did not act soon, while she and the children were away on vacation, “she would almost certainly develop suspicions later, and my plans would be spoiled for fear of implicating her.”²⁸ Still, Hill took great pains to hide his emotions and give no clues as to the terrible thing he intended to do. On that hot Florida day, while cleaning a used car, Hill reached the second stop along his personal path to intended violence.

As Hill’s experience showed, the second step along the path to intended violence requires crossing something of a watershed in the subject’s trajectory from grievance to attack. Arriving at the decision that violence offers the only resolution to the subject’s issue is a great leap forward along the path. In many ways, ideation requires the biggest step of them all. The vast majority of people suffering some sense of injustice do not cross that great divide to

²⁴Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 1.

²⁵Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 3.

²⁶ Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 5.

²⁷ Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 4.

²⁸ Hill, “Abortionist,” pp. 3–4.

seeking violence. Perhaps only the actual attack demands as much fortitude and determination as deciding to do it.

Like Hill, many hunters choose to keep their decisions secret. Still, ideation can be detected through the hunter's observable behavior. Since reaching ideation is such a watershed, crossing it can result in changes in demeanor or behavior. After July 21, Paul Hill acted preoccupied, distracted, even troubled. Jack McKnight, who attacked the Topeka, KS, federal courthouse, refused to talk about the future beyond prison with either his lawyer or probation officer.²⁹ Having received a 10-year sentence for growing marijuana, McKnight's ideation included his own suicide. He knew he had no future. Other hunters may seem resolved, perhaps even relieved that the deciding point has passed. For those hunters who have loudly and frequently proclaimed their grievance, a lapse into silence may point to ideation. Indeed, *any* change in behavior may indicate a decision.

Bolder hunters may act more expressly. They may communicate inappropriately with their targets or, like Hill, use more violently expressive language. Their attention may focus on particular dates or anniversaries or court appointments. Some hunters take their inspiration from media reports of major acts of violence or by the examples of iconic assassins such as Lee Harvey Oswald, Sirhan Sirhan, or John Hinckley. Hill saw himself as a step above Griffin. Arthur Bremer, who shot George Wallace, felt like the man who shot Archduke Ferdinand in 1914, thus setting off the chain of events that culminated in World War I.³⁰ Secret Service researchers interviewed a woman who was preparing to kill President George H. W. Bush. She had become fixated on John Wilkes Booth, even going so far as to buy the same model Derringer that Booth had used to shoot Lincoln.³¹ Such obsessive attention to particular details can signal that the hunter has decided to prepare for the hunt.

Some subjects, when considering violence, communicate in grandiose ways, associating their grievance to some larger issue or campaign. The subject is not involved in a simple insurance dispute, but has taken on a widespread conspiracy between the judge and the insurance company lawyers. The old saying that people can measure their power and importance by the power and importance of their enemies certainly applies to many hunters. Paul Hill believed his act of murder would spark a nationwide revolution. Edward Lansdale, who in October 2000 shot to wound the woman who had accused him of molesting her, believed his story would be sold for a movie or a *60 Minutes* investigation. For these hunters, their adversaries loom large.

²⁹Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, pp. 107–108.

³⁰Gavin de Becker, Tom Taylor, and Jeff Marquart (2008). *Just Two Seconds: Using Time and Space to Defeat Assassins* (p. 24). Los Angeles, Gavin de Becker Center for the Study and Reduction of Violence..

³¹Secret Service Presentation, National Sheriff's Association Threat Management Seminar, February 2000.

Hunters have also been known to communicate or act ominously, though short of explicit threats of violence. Lansdale told his daughter and her mother he would be dead in 2 weeks from an unspecified disease. He gave his car to the mother and added his daughter's name to the title of his house.³²

In the fall of 2001, a high school girl warned her favorite teacher that a handful of the girl's friends were plotting to harm both students and teachers. School administrators at the New Bedford (MA) High School had heard other rumors about the plot. The information allowed them to forestall it.³³

For intimates who become hunters, their point of ideation may coincide with their making explicit threats of harm or death toward their target. They almost take pride in announcing that they reached the ideation stage, often in very graphic language. Over the course of a year, Steven Lancaster repeatedly sent ominous, threatening notes to his estranged wife, Janice: "I'm ready to go any time to lay my body to rest and [I am] not going to be the only one." He told their children he was "going to kill your mother stone dead." On January 3, 2000, Steven killed Janice, then himself.³⁴

Shortly after David Reza was fired from the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station in 2001, he began making threatening phone calls to former supervisors and other employees. "He said he had lots of guns and he was going to come back and shoot them," a sheriff's office spokesman reported. Reza spoke the truth. When police arrested him for the threats, they also carried out a search of his residence and a rented storage locker. They found more than 250 firearms, including assault rifles, tear gas, hand grenades, thousands of rounds of ammunition, and a container of explosive powder.³⁵ Reza wanted his fellow workers to know he was coming.

Although not all hunters directly threaten their targets, many communicate their plans to someone else. During the last week of October 2005, William Freund posted messages on an online forum describing his intention to launch a "terror campaign" using his newly purchased Remington 870 shotgun. "It's the synthetic Kind [sic] so IT [sic] looks very modern and is super heavy to whack people with," he posted. The operators of the Web site tried to contact Freund's parents, but decided against alerting law enforcement out of concern that the young man had enough problems already. On Saturday, October 29, Freund donned a dark cape and a paintball mask and went prowling through his neighborhood armed with his shotgun. He killed two

³²Calhoun, F. S., and Weston, S. W. (2001). *Defusing the Risk to Judicial Officials: The Contemporary Threat Management Process* (pp. 3-5). Alexandria, VA: National Sheriffs' Association.

³³*Washington Post*, December 27, 2001.

³⁴*Washington Post*, August 27, 2000.

³⁵Associated Press, January 9, 2002.

neighbors, fired at another house, and tried to shoot a third neighbor, but the Remington jammed. Freund then went home and killed himself.³⁶

Sirhan Sirhan told his garbage collector that he intended to kill Robert F. Kennedy. Liam Youens maintained an Internet blog where he discussed his plans to kill Amy Boyer. He consummated those plans on October 15, 1999.³⁷ Harris and Kliebold also posted their violent musings on a Web site.³⁸ Several months before McKnight shot up the Topeka courthouse, he said to a friend, "What I ought to do is kill all those bastards," apparently referring to the people in the justice system who were sending him to prison for 10 years.³⁹ Mike Bowers wrote California governor Gray Davis in 1999 to complain about Bowers' treatment at the Atascadero State (mental) Hospital in San Luis Obispo County. Bowers also made a number of delusional statements, commented on the fall of the Soviet Union, and claimed to be the leader of the new world order. On January 17, 2001, he crashed his 80,000-pound truck into the California Capitol, burning himself alive, but injuring no one else.⁴⁰

The signs indicating a subject has reached ideation tend to be expressive indicators such as dramatic changes in behavior, inappropriate communications with violent themes, threats, or references to violence. The clues consist of any indications that the subject has begun thinking about violence in general or acting out violently in particular. But ideation, as its name indicates, is about ideas, and ideas can be very closely held by the person having them. Fortunately, the remaining four steps along the path to intended violence require overt, observable behaviors.

In sum, the threat manager should look for changes in behavior, references to violence, threats to intimates or colleagues, obsessive attention to details related to violent acts, or undue interest in other acts of violence as indicators that a hunter may be emerging. Unfortunately, the absence of these behaviors does not provide counter-indications that the subject is not a hunter. As Paul Hill demonstrated, hunters are perfectly capable of keeping their ideas to themselves.

On Research and Planning

Paul Hill had several things to take into account in devising his plan to kill an abortion doctor. First, Hill knew that the doctor came to Pensacola every Friday. Second, he wanted to get the assassination over with while his wife and children were out of town on vacation. That gave him only a brief window of opportu-

³⁶Los Angeles Times, November 2, 2005.

³⁷Boston Globe, November 29, 1999.

³⁸Erickson, W. et al. (2001). *The Report of Governor Bill Owens' Columbine Review Commission* (p. 17). Denver, CO: Governor's Office.

³⁹Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. xvii.

⁴⁰Sacramento Bee, January 18, 2001.

nity. Knowing her travel plans, Hill reckoned that “I would have the remainder of the day she left, and all of Thursday, to prepare to act on Friday—eight days after the idea first struck me.”⁴¹ As part of his research, the day after reaching his decision Hill went to the clinic to protest. He described discovering a crucial piece of information. Normally, Hill arrived at the clinic before any other protesters. On this morning, exactly a week before his attack, another protestor had beaten him to the scene: “After discrete questioning, I learned he had been there when the abortionist had arrived, about 7:30. . . . I discovered that the abortionist had arrived prior to the police security guard. This information was like a bright green light, signaling me on.”⁴² His wife’s vacation schedule, combined with the doctor’s work schedule, determined the date Hill would attack. His research gave him the timing of it. Since he already owned a shotgun, he knew what weapon to use. Next, he needed a plan.

Hill used the information he had to plot out what he would do. The following Friday, he would arrive at the clinic before 7:30 a.m. After that, “my plan was to carry the shotgun from my parked truck to the front of the abortion clinic in a rolled-up poster board protest sign. I would leave the concealed shotgun lying on the ground until the abortionist drove past me into the clinic parking lot.”⁴³

Nonetheless, Hill later confessed, “in spite of my careful plans, the morning of the shooting was not easy.”⁴⁴ Researching, planning, even preparing are nothing compared with actually acting out violently.

By its very nature, intended violence requires forethought and premeditation. That leads to some degree of research and some degree of planning, though both the research and the planning can be quite simplistic or elaborate. The Unabomber conducted sophisticated research in picking his targets, then in custom-building bombs designed to arouse the target’s curiosity to ensure that he or she opened the package. In contrast, Sirhan Sirhan’s plan was simplicity itself. He researched Kennedy’s itinerary, hid in the kitchen closet, and shot the Senator as he walked past.

Research and planning entail overt behaviors. Hunters may need to conduct surveillance of the target, which requires them to go to some physical location for their observations. Arthur Bremer, for example, attended public rallies where President Nixon appeared and even followed him on a trip to Canada. During each public appearance, Bremer studied the Secret Service’s security arrangements in hopes of finding a way to circumvent them. When that proved too difficult, he switched targets. A few weeks later, he shot Gov-

⁴¹Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 3.

⁴²Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 3.

⁴³Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 5.

⁴⁴Hill, “Abortionist,” p. 5.

ernor George Wallace.⁴⁵ Walter Moody researched Judge Robert Vance's personal life. He found out the judge's home address and gleaned some insights into who the judge's friends were. After constructing his mail bomb, Moody used as the return address the home address of a fellow judge.⁴⁶ For both Moody and Bremer, their research required travel, making inquiries, and looking up information.

For some hunters, the research can be simple. William Strier shot attorney Jerry Curry six times outside the Van Nuys, CA, courthouse on Halloween, 2003. Curry represented the professional trustee who controlled a large trust fund set up for Strier after an automobile accident. The trustee had refused to release some funds Strier wanted. As Curry came out of the courthouse, Strier approached him and asked, "Are you Mr. Curry?" When the attorney affirmed his identity, Strier pulled his pistol and opened fire.⁴⁷ Mark Bowers, who crashed his tractor-trailer into the California Capitol, first circled the capitol complex, presumably looking for the most direct route that would allow him to get up plenty of speed.⁴⁸

Other hunter behaviors indicating research and planning include information gathering; asking suspicious, personal, or detailed questions; conducting research on the target or places frequented by the target or places scheduled for the target to visit. The planning may involve drawing maps or diagrams, making up a schedule, or keeping a diary. Bremer maintained a diary, Paul Hill had a personal schedule to keep. In early 2004, six students at the Laguna Creek (CA) High School conspired to attack the school with guns and bombs. Alerted by a concerned parent, police searched the homes and found one antique .22. They also found a hand-drawn map of the school cafeteria. One of the students confessed that the plan included breaking into a local hardware store and stealing the firearms they needed.⁴⁹

The plan need not be elaborate. In June 2001, Dominic Culpepper decided to kill Frank McCool because the 16-year-old had stolen a half pound of his marijuana. Culpepper arranged for two other teenagers to lure McCool to Culpepper's home. Once there, Culpepper beat McCool to death with a baseball bat.⁵⁰

Oddly, the planning may take into account the hunter's personal issues. Hill wanted to murder the doctor while Hill's family was out of town on vacation. Charles the Poacher planned to firebomb a courthouse in Califor-

⁴⁵Laucella, L.(1998). *Assassination: The Politics of Murder* (p. 309). Los Angeles: Lowell House).

⁴⁶Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁷Katie Couric interview with Jerry Curry on the *Today* show, November 7, 2003.

⁴⁸*Sacramento Bee*, January 18, 2001.

⁴⁹*Sacramento Bee*, February 11, 2004.

⁵⁰Associated Press, February 14, 2002.

nia on the one night a week his jealous and possessive girlfriend had her hair done.⁵¹ Being henpecked restricted his hunting.

In sum, the threat manager should pay special attention to any behavioral indicators that someone is conducting research on a target. Research and planning require overt, noticeable behavior. Indeed, this is the stage where threat managers are most likely to identify suspicious subjects. That identification is crucial to threat management because without it, there can be no assessment and no opportunity for managing.

On Preparation

Paul Hill wanted to ensure nothing went wrong with his plans to kill the doctor on the one Friday his wife and children would be out of town. He took his shotgun to the firing range to practice. He later wrote: "One particular obstacle arose to test my determination. While practicing with my shotgun at a nearby gun range, it began to jam. A local sporting goods store had a handy replacement: a 12-gauge Mossberg shotgun with a shortened barrel and an extended magazine. It was called "The Defender."⁵² Hill clearly wanted to ensure that his weapon would not fail him.

Hill also engaged in another act of preparation common to those hunters who do not expect either to survive or escape after their attack. When he and his family went to the beach the Saturday before the Friday shooting, Hill used the occasion to say a silent good-bye to his wife and children. He remembered that afternoon feeling proud to be a father playing with his children in the surf: "They enjoyed their father's attention. I took them one by one . . . in water over their heads as they clung to my neck. As I carried and supported each child in the water, it was as though I was offering them to God as Abraham offered his son."⁵³ Unbeknownst to his family, Hill used the beach excursion as a final act of being together because he knew that prison would soon separate him from them. He continued with other final-act behaviors up to the moment he left to drive to the clinic. When Friday came, Hill rose early to prepare for the day by spending "time in prayer and Bible reading."⁵⁴ Although his resolve started to weaken that morning, he forced himself to go forward.

Preparations involve putting things together and getting ready for the assault. Hunters at this step engage in such behaviors as obtaining their weapon of choice, making sure it works, assembling the necessary equipment, arranging their travel to the attack site, costuming, conducting final

⁵¹ Authors' personal knowledge.

⁵²Hill, "Abortionist," p. 5. Curiously, subsequent revisions of Hill's account deleted the description of these preparations.

⁵³Hill, "Abortionist," p. 4.

⁵⁴Hill, "Abortionist," p. 5.

acts, or observing significant dates. In effect, they ready themselves to implement their assault plans.

Getting the weapon of choice ready is most important. When California police arrested David Reza for making terroristic threats against his former supervisors and coworkers at the San Onofre nuclear plant, they discovered he had amassed an arsenal of weapons and explosives large enough to equip a small army.⁵⁵ Six weeks before Harris and Kleibold shot up their high school, they took the weapons they planned to use into the mountains and practiced firing. Friends videotaped them.⁵⁶ When Augustin Garcia drove by his former girlfriend's house, he carried with him a handgun, with extra ammunition in his coat pocket. Garcia's defense lawyer claimed that the shock of her imminent betrothal threw Garcia into a violent rage, but his preparations for shooting her convinced the jury otherwise.⁵⁷ In all these instances, and in every instance of intended violence, hunters prepared their weapons prior to the attacks. In making those preparations, they risked exposure.

Not all hunters hunt with firearms. Their choice of weapon can therefore complicate their preparations. In February 2002, Gene Hodler tried to bring to an end his long-running court dispute with his ex-girlfriend over several hundred thousand dollars they had amassed together as day traders. Hodler rigged a pipe bomb to the turn signal on her car. The explosion severely burned her feet and legs.⁵⁸ That attack required Hodler first to make the pipe bomb, then wire it to the turn signal, both fairly elaborate preparations that also risked exposure.

Other hunters prefer toxicants. Vincent Hall of Fairfield, CA, put insecticide on his ex-girlfriend's lipstick and antidepressant medication. She tasted "something foul" when she tried to bite her antidepressant pill in half.⁵⁹ Seven Denver fifth graders repeatedly put pills, glue, lead, and chalk in another student's water bottle and sodas. The perpetrators explained they did not like the victim and wanted to hurt her.⁶⁰ Elisa McNabney used horse tranquilizer to kill her husband,⁶¹ while Ann Kontz used arsenic on hers.⁶² James Keowin, well-known in Missouri as a radio talk-show host, killed his wife by spiking her Gatorade with a chemical constituent of antifreeze. She had found out he had lied about enrolling in Harvard Business School.⁶³ Ryan Furlough, at the time of the incident a Maryland teenager, put cyanide in a romantic

⁵⁵ Associated Press, January 10, 2002.

⁵⁶ CBS *Evening News*, October 22, 2003.

⁵⁷ Associated Press, October 22, 2001.

⁵⁸ Associated Press, March 15, 2002.

⁵⁹ Associated Press, July 18, 2002.

⁶⁰ Associated Press, January 17, 2003.

⁶¹ Associated Press, March 19, 2002.

⁶² Associated Press, November 7, 2005.

⁶³ *Washington Post*, November 8, 2005.

rival's soda, killing him.⁶⁴ In all of these toxic murders, the hunter first had to obtain the poison of choice and put it into something the victim would ingest, both acts of preparation someone might have noticed.

Securing the weapon may be the most crucial step, but it is still only part of the preparations hunters make. Depending on the plan, they may need other equipment. Hunters who choose to attack with bombs first have to make or obtain the explosive device, then prepare to deliver it. In 1993, Jack McKnight spent over 40 hours constructing two dozen pipe bombs. On August 5, he personally delivered the bombs to the Topeka, KS, federal courthouse.⁶⁵ Christopher Bishop, knowing that his ex-wife worked in the Apex Supply Company mailroom, mailed two bombs to the company address. His ex-wife opened the first package and suffered minor burns on her face and hands when the bomb detonated. Another employee inadvertently opened the second package upside down so that the force of the explosion was directed away.⁶⁶ Bishop and McKnight, like all bombers, had to acquire their bomb-making equipment, assemble the bombs, and prepare them for delivery. Those activities exposed them to discovery.

Many plans require the hunter to arrange to get him- or herself to wherever the victim is. This can be simple, as when Hinckley took a cab to the Washington Hilton,⁶⁷ or it can be more complicated, like Oswald's building his sniper's nest in the book depository where he worked. The Unabomber traveled from his Montana cabin as far away as the California coast to ensure the postmark on his mail bombs could not be traced back to him. The travel itself exposes the hunter to other people, thus posing the risk that someone may notice him or her.

Hunters also engage in final-act behaviors. In 1999, Mark Barton killed his wife on Wednesday, his two children on Thursday, and shot up two day-trading places where he had lost his life savings on Friday. On his way to the stock centers, he first went to his attorney's office and executed his last will and testament.⁶⁸ In the weeks prior to Lansdale's assault on his accuser in the Yreka courthouse, he spent several hours making audiotapes addressed to his sister in which he told her his reasons and justifications. He also encouraged her to sell his life story to a television movie-producer for ten thousand dollars.⁶⁹ On his last night alive, Jack Gary McKnight videotaped three messages to his in-laws. He asked his father-in-law to poison some trees the two men had planted on McKnight's farm. The next morning, McKnight killed

⁶⁴ Associated Press, May 18, 2004.

⁶⁵ Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, p. xviii.

⁶⁶ *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, July 19, 2001.

⁶⁷ Clarke, J. (1990). *On Being Mad or Merely Angry: John W. Hinckley and Other Dangerous People* (p. 6). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

⁶⁸ Authors' personal knowledge.

⁶⁹ Calhoun and Weston, *Defusing the Risk to Judicial Officials*, p. 4.

his dogs before setting off for the Topeka federal building.⁷⁰ Sometimes the final act brings complete finality.

In sum, the threat manager should take very seriously any evidence that the subject is preparing his attack. The preparations stage is the last step before the actual assault is launched. This is the point where the hunter begins implementing his or her plan of assault. It is also the last chance the threat manager has to intervene prior to the hunter's breaching security.

On Breach

*Hill did not drive directly to the clinic. Instead, he "decided to drive past it first, to see if everything looked normal (I was concerned that someone may have become suspicious and called the police)."*⁷¹ *A police car passed his truck going the opposite way, which startled him, so he drove farther on to make sure the squad car kept going. He turned the truck around, parked it, hid the shotgun, and took up his post to await the doctor's arrival. As the moment approached, he began praying that the doctor would arrive before the police. "God heard my prayers," Hill wrote, "and the abortionist arrived prior to the police guard." Even then, Hill still had some security to breach. The doctor was escorted by James Barret, a retired general who had "vowed to shoot first and not miss," Hill claimed.⁷² While Barret parked the truck, Hill retrieved his shotgun and walked down the clinic drive. "When I lifted the shotgun, two men were sitting in the front seats of the parked truck; Jim Barret, the escort, was directly between me and the abortionist."⁷³ *With the shotgun aimed and ready to fire and the targets unaware of his approach, Hill had breached the doctor's last line of defense.**

Breaches offer precious little time for security officers or targets to react. The famous Zapruder film shows Oswald's shots occurring within a time span of under 4 seconds. On November 1, 1950, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola tried to shoot their way into Blair House to assassinate President Harry Truman. Secret Service agents blocked their way. The ensuing gunfight lasted less than 40 seconds, during which the combatants fired as many as 31 shots.⁷⁴ For hunters who choose surreptitious assaults, such as poison or bombings, the time between breach and attack shrinks even more. For example, when Judge Vance opened the package sent by Moody, the explosion was practically instantaneous with his ripping open the envelope. Breach leaves precious little time for security to provide its defenses.

⁷⁰Calhoun, *Hunters and Howlers*, pp. xvii–xviii.

⁷¹Hill, "Abortionist," p. 6.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Hunter, S. & Bainbridge, J. Jr. (2005). *American Gunfight: The Plot to Kill Harry Truman and the Shoot-Out that Stopped It* (p. 3). New York: Simon & Schuster.

In sum, breach offers the threat manager one last chance to thwart the hunter. But as last chances go, breach allows little or no time to respond. It can be done, but is expensive because it requires having sufficient bodyguards and other security countermeasures. That requires considerable training and infrastructure support. In the end, too, it relies on luck.

On Attack

As Hill walked down the clinic drive, he began firing. The first blasts killed the escort, who sat between Hill and his target. Hill emptied the shotgun into the driver's side of the truck, then reloaded as he walked around to the passenger side. He emptied the shotgun on that side as well, killing both the escort and the doctor and severely wounding Barret's wife, who was taking cover in the back-seat. "When I finished shooting," Hill reported, "I laid the shotgun at my feet and walked away with my hands held out at my sides, awaiting arrest."⁷⁵ The police arrived quickly and took Hill into custody. Nearly a decade later, the state of Florida executed Hill by lethal injection.

Hill exemplified all the steps a hunter has to take along the path to intended violence. He acquired a grievance, came up with the idea of resolving that grievance through violence, researched his target and planned his attack, made preparations, breached the doctor's security, and attacked. Along the way, he engaged in observable behaviors. Once at ideation, his demeanor changed. His research required asking suspicious questions, such as did the police arrive before the doctor. His plan involved using his shotgun, so his preparations required practicing with it at the firing range. When the shotgun did not work, he purchased a new one. He also engaged in a few final act behaviors, such as saying a silent good-bye to his family. At the clinic, he breached security by hiding the shotgun rolled up in a protest poster in the bushes along the clinic fence. Once the doctor and his escorts arrived, Hill retrieved the gun and began his fateful walk down the clinic drive.

Hill apparently even realized that his behaviors might have aroused suspicions. He reported that he worried that someone might have become suspicious and contacted the police, so he drove past the clinic to make sure all was clear. Clinic employees, though clearly unaware of Hill's murderous plans, did pick him out from among the other protestors as someone particularly to be concerned about. They had alerted police and frequently videotaped him to show he trespassed on clinic property. Police had arrested him for the trespassing. The clinic got an injunction against him to prevent him from getting too close to the clinic. But without a trained threat manager, no one recognized Hill as a hunter, so no one employed any threat-management strategies to divert him off the path to intended violence.

⁷⁵Hill, "Abortionist," p. 6.

In sum, if the subject reaches the attack step along the path to intended violence, both the threat-management process and the physical security countermeasures failed. The threat management process depends on three crucial phases: *identifying* an individual who intends to act violently, *assessing* how far along the path to intended violence the subject has traveled, and *managing* the subject off the path. That process cannot begin at breach or attack. Thus, it is crucial that the identification occur much earlier, preferably at the research and planning step. For this reason, threat managers need to cultivate and promote a solid reporting process so that potential targets, their staffs, and their families know what to be aware of, what to report, and to whom to report it. Reporting inappropriate communications or suspicious behaviors allows the threat manager to initiate the threat management process.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the various types of behaviors in which hunters engage when they take up the hunt. All hunters have grievances or reasons for deciding that violence will resolve their issues. That grievance may be reasonable only to the hunter, but it nonetheless provides the hunter's motivation. Second, all hunters must decide that violence is the only option available to them. Simply put, subjects must come up with the idea of using violence to settle their problem. Third, all hunters must research and plan how they will commit the violence. The research and planning can be complex and sophisticated or it can be straightforward and simple. Fourth, all hunters must prepare their attack according to the dictates of their plan. They must arm themselves or build their bomb or otherwise get themselves ready for the attack. Fifth, all hunters must breach their target's security, again according to the dictates of their plan. That security can be as tight as that surrounding the president or as lax as that for targets who protect themselves. Sixth, and finally, all hunters must summon the courage to actually attack once the security is breached.

Acting violently is not a simple matter. Threat managers can use the various behaviors associated with each of these steps to help identify individuals of violent intent, assess their actual degree of risk, and manage the subject away from violence.

Case Analysis: The Nonaccidental Tourist

The Facts

Jay e-mailed a large corporation's public complaint center in February. In the e-mail, he expressed his belief that a prominent public figure under Secret

Service protection had been poisoned. The content of the rest of the e-mail had nothing to do with the corporation's business or responsibilities. Jay described himself as a homeless person living on Social Security disability benefits. He claimed to live in a homeless shelter in a large Northwestern city. Jay believed that the government was trying to control his mind and that the other men living at the YMCA tried to rape him. Based on the inappropriate reference to the public figure, the implied delusional disorder, and the references to violence, the staff of the complaint center forwarded the e-mail to the corporation's threat-management unit.

The Threat Analysis

Although Jay's e-mail contains an inappropriate reference to a Secret Service protectee and includes allegations of violence committed against himself, Jay expresses no intention to take any action beyond sending the e-mail. Nor did the e-mail give any reason to conclude that Jay believes he has a personal relationship with the Secret Service protectee or with anyone affiliated with this corporation. In addition, Jay's e-mail contains no mention at all of this corporation's staff, facilities, or mission. Based on the impersonal nature of his relationship with the Secret Service protectee, the sinister aspect of his reference to the person, and his choice of making a distant communication, Jay is assessed as a howler at this time. Based on the facts under assessment, he is considered a very low risk to this corporation's staff, facilities, or business.

Protective Response

The corporation's threat management unit should forward Jay's e-mail to the Secret Service. In addition, Jay should be flagged in the contact center's computer data base to ensure that any future communications, whether inappropriate or not, will be forwarded to the threat-management unit for assessment. The corporation should not respond in any way to Jay's e-mail.

Threat Management Strategy

Based on the low-risk assessment, the corporation should adopt a passive watch-and-wait strategy toward Jay. Any future communications from him, whether inappropriate or not, should be monitored to determine any changes in theme, tone, or method of communication. Although Jay's interests at this time have no relation to the corporation's staff, facilities, or mission, his choice to e-mail the corporation an inappropriate communication requires that future communications, whether inappropriate or not, be assessed by the threat-management unit. All future communications should be imme-

diately forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agencies such as the Secret Service.

The Outcome

Jay continued to e-mail the corporation's complaint center an average of one communication a day. The e-mails continued to express his objections to mind control by the government and he continued to complain that he was the victim of violence at the shelter. In one series of e-mails, Jay described how he followed a young schoolgirl on a bus. The threat manager forwarded those e-mails to the police department where Jay lived. A police officer interviewed the manager of the shelter to verify that Jay lived there and to find out more about him. Based on the information obtained from the shelter manager, the police officer determined that Jay was suffering from some mental illness, but that he did not pose a risk to anyone else, including young schoolchildren.

The corporation's threat-management unit continued to monitor and forward Jay's e-mails. In an e-mail in early May, Jay discussed a man who had the same last name as Jay who taught at a small college in a mid-Atlantic state. Jay claimed that the professor was his brother, whom he held responsible for murdering Jay's other family members, including their younger siblings. The threat management unit contacted the college police department and forwarded the e-mails to the chief. The police chief informed the threat-management unit that the college had had communications from Jay in the past. He also stated that the college professor was no relation to Jay. Every time Jay brought up the professor in subsequent e-mails, the threat-management unit forwarded the e-mail to the police chief.

In August, Jay announced his intention to take a vacation, traveling the country via a Greyhound AmeriPass, which allowed him 30 days' unlimited travel throughout the continental United States. As part of his itinerary, he planned to visit his "brother" in order to "confront" him. Suddenly, for reasons unknown, Jay became a hunter. He started acting. Each day, Jay would arrive by bus in a different city, go to the library to send an e-mail, then spend the night at a local homeless shelter. His direction of travel took him eastward toward the college. The threat-management unit was able to obtain Jay's state department of motor vehicles photograph and forward it to the campus police chief. The chief confirmed through Greyhound that Jay was traveling aboard its buses, then arranged to have a city police officer meet the bus when it reached the college town. The officer identified Jay, asked what his business was, then sternly warned him not to set foot on the campus grounds or try in any way to approach or confront the professor. Jay denied sending the e-mails and promised not to go near the campus or the professor. Two days later, Jay resumed his bus tour of the country. Several months later, he stopped e-mailing the corporation.

Issues of Interest

The events that transpired in this case illustrated a number of important lessons for threat managers:

1. Simply because Jay never referred to the corporation's staff, facilities, or business did not mean that the corporation's threat-management unit could ignore his e-mails once it determined that Jay had communicated inappropriately. Jay's choice to send his e-mails to the corporation complaint center put a responsibility on the corporation to assess and monitor those e-mails. This was not so much the unit's looking for new work as having new work imposed upon it.
2. Although Jay's inappropriate interest in the senator, the schoolgirl, and the college professor had no relationship to the corporation's staff, facilities, or business, the threat management unit had a responsibility to determine which law enforcement corporation had jurisdiction and to alert that corporation of Jay's inappropriate interest. In this case in particular, not alerting other law enforcement agencies would have put the college professor at risk.
3. Whenever an organization opens itself to receiving communications from the public, it must be prepared to manage inappropriate communications.
4. For months, Jay acted as an impersonal, sinister howler. He communicated from a distance, made inappropriate comments about his targets, but took no action beyond sending the e-mail. In August, however, his demeanor and method of communication suddenly changed. Instead of complaining about his "brother's" past activities, Jay decided to "confront" the brother. He also acted in furtherance of carrying out that decision by buying the bus pass and traveling across the country. What prompted that change from howler to hunter may never be known since Jay gave no reason for it. It may have been as simple as Jay's seeing a Greyhound bus advertisement. For whatever reason, the transformation from howler to hunter resulted in a dramatic change in Jay's behavior from sending e-mails to sending e-mails while traveling toward the college town.
5. Neither hunters nor howlers need rational motives for their actions, provided their actions make sense to them. Jay suffered a delusion that he had a brother and that the brother had committed crimes, including murder. Jay acted on the delusion by attempting to "confront" the brother.
6. Once Jay turned to hunting, the threat-management strategy had to be reassessed and changed from passive watch and wait to confronting him with a warning.

7. Finally, Jay amply illustrates a fundamental fact about threat management and the hunters and howlers it manages: both hunters and howlers may cross jurisdictional lines. Because they may cross jurisdictions, threat managers need to be prepared to coordinate and cooperate with different organizations and agencies, even to the point of seeking out the appropriate entity and establishing a new relationship for sharing information and managing the subject.

Understanding Howlers

4*

Unlike hunters, who are best understood by analyzing their attack-related behaviors, howlers are defined by their relationship to their targets, then by what they seek to accomplish through their inappropriate communications. We classify howlers into one of two broad types, then categorize them into two groups and several subgroupings within each type. The typology derives from the nature of the relationship between the howler and his or her target. The groupings depend on what the howler intends or seeks to accomplish. For both types, of course, the communication, however delivered, is the end game. Using these categories will help the threat manager accurately assess the subject, factor in the *intimacy effect*, and identify the most appropriate management strategy.

Little research has as yet been done to further our understanding of howlers and how they behave. The following discussion relies on those few studies, but also on our experiences in managing howlers. We also received insights and suggestions from Gavin de Becker, who undoubtedly has worked with more howlers than anyone in the field of threat management. Ironically, though less studied than hunters, howlers compose most of the workload for any threat manager. Researchers should pay more attention to them.

Howler Categories

Personal howlers know their targets. They may have an intimate relationship with them or they may work or go to school with them, live nearby, or attend the same social functions. This type howler may also communicate inappropriately with an organizational entity, such as a business, school, or government agency. But the communication is spawned by the howler's current or former relationship with that business, school, or government agency. The howler may have worked there, attended classes, or had personal dealings with the agency. The degree of familiarity between the personal howler and his or her target spans the spectrum from casual acquaintance to current or former intimate, but the distinguishing feature of personal howlers is that

* Portions of this chapter originally appeared in J. Reid Meloy, Lorraine Sheridan, and Jens Hoffman, eds., *Stalking, Threatening, and Attacking Public Figures: A Psychological and Behavioral analysis* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).

they personally know their targets. They use that knowledge to inform their communications.

Impersonal howlers do not know their targets. They communicate inappropriately with public figures such as government officials, celebrities, or individuals who happen to make the news, such as lottery winners. Impersonal howlers may also target organizations such as government agencies, businesses, or institutions, but not because they have had personal dealings with the agencies, businesses, or institutions. Rather, they are drawn by the targets' prominence, authority, or symbolic representation. The Central Intelligence Agency frequently receives inappropriate communications or contacts with no indication the howler has targeted any particular person who works there. Similarly, airlines, courthouses, schools, and abortion clinics all suffer bomb threats. Whatever their target, the distinguishing feature of impersonal howlers is that they have no personal familiarity with the person or entity to whom they address their inappropriate communications. Consequently, their communications are marked by the absence of any personal knowledge about the target.

By analyzing what personal and impersonal howlers seek to accomplish through their inappropriate communications or contacts, they can be categorized into two large groupings, each of which have several subgroupings. Both personal and impersonal howlers have either a sinister intent or they intend to bind themselves in some way to their target. *Sinister* howlers want to scare their targets. *Binder* howlers want some kind of interpersonal relationship, usually intimate, with their targets.

Sinister howlers make explicit threats or use disturbing, ominous, even frightening language. They provide graphic descriptions and express themselves in angry, violent terms. They pose themselves as relentless, unbending, and uncompromising. Their motives vary, but they are united in seeking to instill fear in their targets. Their purpose is not to cause physical harm; it is psychological. Sinister howlers prey on their targets' emotions. They try to manipulate their targets' imagination. They hope that the target will believe all the terrible actions the howler threatens. Their success depends on how much the target believes.

Binder howlers believe they have or they want an interpersonal relationship with their target. Personal howlers who seek a bind actually know their target and may, in fact, have had a relationship that the target no longer wants. Impersonal howlers who desire a relationship do not personally know their targets, but may have seen or heard of them, usually through the media.

Beyond that, differences begin to emerge between sinister and binder howlers depending on whether they fall into the personal or impersonal types. Figure 4.1 organizes the howler groups according to their purposes or motives.

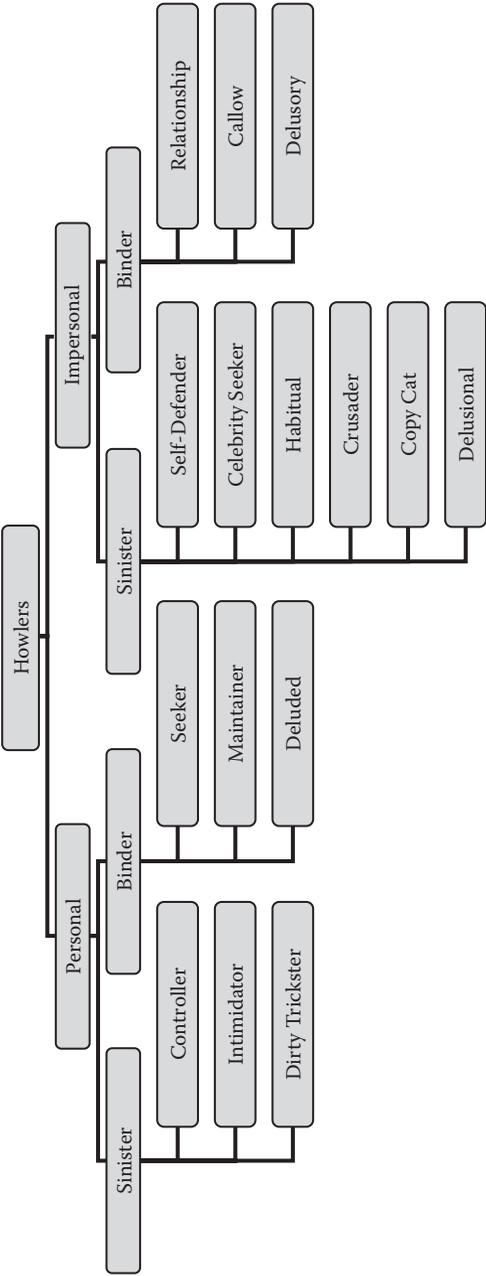


Figure 4.1 Typical howler categories.

The range of motives shown by these groupings underscores the attractiveness that making threats or communicating inappropriately holds for certain individuals. With the possible exceptions of habitual and copycat howlers, the other types all seek to solve some problem between themselves, the target, or, in the case of dirty tricksters, a third party. The problems, of course, are unique and personal to each howler, but that makes them no less real to the howler and, through the communication, to the target.

Howlers of all stripes seek their goals through communication. By giving expression to their anger, hatred, desire to kill or maim, or emotional frustration with the target or the world, the howler accomplishes his or her goal. He or she may communicate once or multiple times, but each communication is an end in itself. For this reason, the threat manager must take each communication with fresh seriousness. Each one offers new insights into the howler's current state of mind. Any changes in demeanor, focus, or complaint need to be assessed in light of everything the threat manager knows about the howler.

Recognizing which type and group to which the howler belongs allows the threat manager to make informed decisions about how to manage the subject. It also allows the threat manager to look for warning signs that the subject may be near a flash point that might transform the subject into a hunter. This is especially possible among personal howlers, but it can happen with any of them. Clearly, the threat manager must avoid any management strategy that might induce such a transformation, but must also be alert to any other influences affecting the howler.

Personally Sinister Howlers

Our research and professional experiences suggest that sinister howlers who personally know their targets can be grouped into three distinct groups:

- *Controller* howlers use threats and inappropriate communications to control the behavior of the target, usually a spouse, domestic partner, or a family member.
- *Intimidator* howlers use threats and inappropriate communications to intimidate their target, typically a supervisor, coworker, teacher, classmate, or others within their social group.
- *Dirty trickster* howlers want the target to think an innocent third party made the threat in order to cause problems for that third party.

What distinguishes these groups is the fact that the howler personally knows his or her target and intends the inappropriate communications to frighten or disturb the target.

In domestic settings, personal howlers use threats to control their intimates. Unlike most howlers, *controllers* often make their threats or inappro-

ropriate communications in person, directly to their target. Their purpose is to intimidate the target to bend him or her to the howler's will. The domestic controller's physical presence and access to the target make the threats more effective because they appear real. Since these howlers have intimate knowledge of their target, they can easily customize their communications to play on the target's worst fears. If the couple has children together, the offspring can become targets as well. In effect, controllers use everything they can to subdue their targets.

One of the reasons that howlers in domestic disputes often become hunters is that the ability of threats alone to control the spouse eventually weakens. Repeated threats, especially if combined with intolerable domestic conditions, over time lose the desired impact on the target. In effect, the target calls the howler's bluff. When the threats fail to control the spouse, the spouse making the threats has to either give up or escalate his or her actions to regain control. Those who give up or continue to howl remain howlers, those who escalate to violence become hunters. The research on domestic violence strongly supports the increased potential for violence when a spouse leaves an abusive relationship. A spouse who leaves is in effect forcing the howler either to put up or shut up. Debra Jenkins found that the lethality of domestic violence increased significantly if the victim had already physically left the relationship.¹

For example, Tom dominated his wife, Anne. He used threats and physical intimidation to bend her to his will. He tracked the mileage on her car, always demanding to know where she had been and to whom she had spoken. Fearing that she could not support herself, Anne put up with the threats and domination in return for Tom's financial support, even though he gave it grudgingly. She felt trapped; he felt in control.

In assessing the situation, the threat manager recognized Tom as a controller who would remain a howler as long as Anne did what he told her to do. The threat manager reasoned that as long as Anne subdued herself to Tom's demands, then the threats worked and Tom had no need to escalate toward violence. Indeed, it would be counterproductive for him to carry out the threats since what he really wanted was the control. The threat manager strongly cautioned that as soon as she left the relationship, she should seek protection at a shelter or other place where Tom would not be able to find her. Once she left, the threat manager recommended keeping close tabs on Tom in order to identify any attack-related behavior on his part. Evidence of any of these could be used to support an arrest or civil order against Tom. The terrible quandary facing Anne, of course, was either to live with the threats and controls or leave and risk having Tom decide to make good on his promises of violent retribution.

¹ Jenkins, Appendix A—When Should Threats Be Seen As Indicative of Future Violence? Threats, Intended Violence, and the Intimacy Effect.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from controllers by their

- Focus on a spouse, intimate partner, or family member
- Delivery in person to the target or the ready availability of the target to the controller
- Use of intimate knowledge about the target
- Insistence on controlling the target's behavior

Threat managers should also keep in mind that as the value of the threats diminishes over time, the subject may be tempted to take violent action to reassert control. Violence may also result if the controller loses control over the target.

Similarly, *intimidators* in workplaces or schools use fear to control coworkers and supervisors or classmates and teachers. They use threats and intimidating demeanors to convince their colleagues to do what the intimidator wants or to leave the intimidator alone. Supervisors who fear their subordinates cannot effectively supervise. Coworkers who fear a colleague tend to avoid that colleague, even if it means handling the colleague's work. The same holds true for teachers and fellow students. Like controllers, intimidators engage in face-to-face confrontations with their targets because they are thrown together in the workplace or schoolyard. They also use their access and personal knowledge of their targets to exploit weaknesses for their own advantage.

Threatening incidents at schools appeared to increase after the well-publicized school shootings that occurred across the last half of the 1990s. A much harsher law enforcement response greeted the increase. For example, on March 15, 2001, two second grade boys in Irvington, NJ, folded a sheet of paper in such a way that it resembled a handgun. Eight-year-old Hamadi Alston stood up at his desk, pointed the paper gun at his classmates, and said, "I'm going to kill you." Police arrested both boys for making terrorist threats.² Eight days later, 18-year-old Benjamin Ballard of Portland, OR, sent an instant message indicating there would be "a lot of bodies" at Edgemont High School in Greenburgh, NY. Despite the cross-continent distance between Ballard and the school, the FBI arrested Ballard for making a threat and school officials closed the school. Ballard said he was making a joke, but howlers rarely get a laugh.³

Also like controllers, intimidators eventually reach a crossroads when their threats and intimidating demeanors begin to lose their ability to instill fear in the targets. At this point, the intimacy of the relationship cuts both

² *Washington Post*, March 22, 2001.

³ *Washington Post*, March 27, 2001.

ways. The targets know the howler as well as he or she knows them. If the intimidations drag on long enough, the targets may eventually challenge or ignore the bully. At that point, the intimidator has to back his or her intimidations by becoming a hunter, changing tactics, or retreating.

For example, Mitch used his 6-foot-6-inch height and 280-pound weight to physically intimidate his coworkers at an accounting firm. Although he never explicitly threatened anyone or did anything else that might prompt disciplinary or termination proceedings, he had his coworkers thoroughly cowed. He delegated his work to them, then signed his name to the final products. His immediate supervisor knew of the intimidations, but felt too concerned for her own safety to report the problem up the chain of command.

The threat manager recognized Mitch as an intimidator who would remain a howler as long as his intimidations worked. She recommended a dual management strategy combining administrative orders and a variation on target transfer. The threat manager suggested that the identity of the coworker who reported Mitch to senior management be closely guarded and that Mitch receive a transfer under some routine bureaucratic guise to another division. The supervisor of the new division should be briefed about Mitch's inappropriate behaviors. If Mitch tries to use intimidation in his new position, he should quickly be brought to task and told that the behavior is unacceptable. Continued intimidations could then be handled as part of the firm's disciplinary process.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from intimidators by their

- Focus on supervisors and coworkers or teachers and classmates or similar interpersonal relationships
- Purpose to frighten or discomfit their targets
- Use of personal knowledge of the targets
- Delivery in person or accessibility of the target to the intimidator
- Insistence on using intimidation to influence target behaviors or organizational decisions

Intimidators closely resemble controllers and both closely resemble schoolyard bullies. How much of their controlling and intimidating is bluff and how much is serious ultimately determines whether they will remain howlers or become hunters.

Both controllers and intimidators frequently make their threats in person to their targets. Eventually, the controlling threats and intimidating behaviors wear thin to the target. The target begins to ignore or challenge the controller and the intimidator, forcing both to show what they are made of. Because they are involved in interpersonal relations with their targets, neither the controller nor the intimidator can hide behind distance. Consequently,

the intimacy effect also affects the subject. Threats early on carry weight in influencing the target, but that weight ultimately wears off. As the veneer strips away, both the controller and the intimidator reach a point where they have to retreat completely or begin hunting. Unlike other howlers, they do not have the safety distance provides.

For example, Steven Lancaster threatened his wife, Janice, for over a year. A week after she obtained a temporary restraining order against him, he carried out his threats by killing her and himself.⁴ In early September 2001 in Raleigh, NC, Burns Security suspended Joseph Ferguson after his ex-girlfriend, also a Burns employee, complained that he had vandalized her car. Over the course of the next week, Burns threatened his former colleagues and made a videotape boasting that he had “put on a hell of a show.” Burns added that “I giveth and I taketh away, that’s how it goes in . . . life.” Burns also claimed that he wanted to outdo Nikolay Soltys, who in August 2001 had killed six of his family members and himself in Sacramento, CA.⁵ On September 9, a week after his suspension and the beginning of his threats, Burns began killing. Over the next 2 days, he came within one murder of matching Soltys’ body count before police came for him. Four of his five victims were employees of Burns Security. After a 40-minute car chase with police, Ferguson killed himself.⁶ Interpersonal relations between the subject and the target can quickly blur the line between hunters and howlers.

Some personally sinister howlers seek to get a third party in trouble. These *dirty tricksters* disguise themselves as that third party, hoping that their threats will get the third party arrested or disciplined. Typically, dirty tricksters have some interpersonal dispute with the third party. For example, an ex-husband will forge his ex-wife’s name on a threatening letter to a government official. The purpose is to have the ex-wife arrested and jailed for making the threat. In other cases, the dirty trickster may pose as a concerned citizen or informant trying to pass on disturbing information about the innocent third party. They employ poison-pen communications. Their real target is the third party, not the person threatened.

For example, John J. Donovan Sr. may prove the ultimate dirty trickster. Donovan is a self-made millionaire, executive mentor, and business consultant. The *New York Times* dubbed him the “Johnny Carson of the training circuit” because so many Fortune 500 companies hire him as a speaker.⁷ Unfortunately, Donovan has not been able to get along as well with his own family. For several years, he and his five children have engaged in various legal squabbles and accusations. Donovan accused his offspring of trying to

⁴ *Washington Post*, August 27, 2000.

⁵ *Washington Post*, August 20, 2001.

⁶ Associated Press, September 11, 2001.

⁷ *New York Times*, May 4, 2006.

force him off his 68-acre estate. They accused him of molesting one of the daughters and harassing the other children through frivolous restraining orders. In all, the family has filed 17 lawsuits against each other.⁸

Then, on December 16, 2004, Donovan called 911 from the parking lot of his company, Cambridge Executive Enterprises, to report two men had shot him several times. When officers responded, they found Donovan wounded in the left side, a window shot out of a car parked in the parking lot, and spent .22-caliber cartridges scattered across the asphalt. Donovan told the officers that as he emerged from the building to go home for the evening, two men who sounded Russian fired four or five shots at him. Most of the bullets were deflected by the large belt buckle he was fortuitously wearing. One bullet shot through his left side, but did not strike any organs. Later in the investigation, Donovan told police that his son James had arranged for the shooting.⁹

Although the police initially accepted Donovan's account, they grew suspicious after determining that the surveillance camera that covered the parking lot was not working the night of the incident. They also learned that Donovan was an experienced shooter who had been issued a concealed weapons permit. Undoubtedly, the police also must have been a bit skeptical about the bullets striking Donovan's belt buckle. No doubt someone on the police department assessed Donovan as a dirty trickster, especially after he accused his son of orchestrating the assault. On May 4, 2006, the Middlesex County (MA) district attorney obtained an indictment against the elder Donovan on charges of lying to police and filing a false police report. Donovan strenuously denied the charges. A judge found him guilty in August 2007.¹⁰ Ironically, when news reporters interviewed Stuart Madnick, a former business partner of Donovan's, Madnick told them he was "not shocked" about the charges. "I learned over the years never to be surprised, particularly with him. That's what makes him so interesting," Madnick said.¹¹

Thus, the threat manager can recognize inappropriate communications from dirty tricksters by their

- Use of explicit threat language or actions with specific information on who supposedly sent the threat or committed the acts
- Lack of an issue or complaint with the target of the inappropriate communication by the dirty trickster
- Insistence on implicating the third party

⁸ *New York Times*, May 4, 2006; *Boston Globe*, May 5, 2006.

⁹ *Boston Globe*, May 5, 2006.

¹⁰ Associated Press, August 17, 2007.

¹¹ *Boston Globe*, May 5, 2006.

The key to understanding dirty tricksters is their method of drawing attention to someone else in order to get that person into some kind of trouble.

Personal sinister howlers differ from their impersonal counterparts in the ease with which they can transition from howler to hunter. The intimacy effect greatly facilitates that change. Since personal howlers know their target and observe their target's responses, they are less able to imagine or fantasize about the target's reactions. Conversely, impersonal howlers cannot so easily gauge how their targets respond. Thus, their imagination and fantasies have free rein. In effect, sinister personal howlers are more grounded by reality; impersonal ones are not.

Personally Binding Howlers

Binder howlers who know their targets can be categorized into three groups:

- *Seekers* try to establish an intimate relationship with their target despite the target's continued rejection of the seeker's attention.
- *Maintainers* insistently try to reestablish a former intimate relationship with their target, but the target wants to end the relationship.
- *Deluded* binders suffer from a delusion that they have had or should have an intimate relationship with a target.

Personal binders do not intend violence against their targets as long as they remain convinced they have a chance to establish or maintain a personal relationship with the target. In that stage, killing the target would be self-defeating. The danger of violence comes when the personal binder realizes that he or she has no hope of that much-desired personal relationship.

Seeker binders usually become infatuated with a fellow student, coworker, neighbor, or relative and persistently try to initiate a closer relationship with that individual. Seekers communicate in a variety of ways. They may write letters, call on the telephone, or leave gifts or messages where they know the target will be. They frequently have considerable difficulty accepting rejection. Indeed, they easily convince themselves that with just a little extra effort, the target will have a change of heart. One more gift or another e-mail or a quick conversation will prove to the target that the seeker's feelings should be reciprocated.

Seekers frequently confuse themselves with suitors. They fail miserably at understanding that suitors do not press their suit once their object says no. Instead, seekers confuse persistence with romance. By not accepting the no, seekers go way beyond pressing their suit to pushing the limits of acceptable behavior in whatever social venue they find their target. Their approach to their target borders on, even crosses over into, obsession.

Threat managers frequently encounter seekers in workplaces or schools or any places where people spend long periods of time together in a common setting. Seekers frequently get accused of sexual or physical harassment. They represent a particular problem in workplaces because not only does their own job performance suffer from their distraction, but they also distract the target and, quite frequently, their own and the target's coworkers.

For example, toward the end of the school year, Julie, a high school junior, reported that her science teacher, Mr. Jarvis, had been making sexual innuendos to her, asking personal questions, and inviting her to eat at his lunch table and see him after school. Julie felt uncomfortable with the approaches and wanted to be transferred out of his class. After the transfer was made, Jarvis continued his unwanted pursuits. However, at no time did he cross any moral or ethical line in his dealings with her. Instead, he carefully remained within professional boundaries and did not give adequate grounds for disciplinary action. In that respect, Jarvis was smart.

The threat manager recognized Jarvis as a seeker who had become infatuated with one of his students. Fortunately for both, Jarvis had not yet done anything to support disciplinary action. The threat manager assessed this as a positive indicator that Jarvis felt inhibited about not risking his career. The threat manager recommended that Jarvis be transferred to another school on the other side of the school district. He should also be cautioned about further efforts to contact or approach the student. If that should occur, the threat manager advised that the school would then have sufficient cause to move against him using administrative orders.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from seeker howlers by their

- Focus on a specific individual who has rejected or ignored their advances
- Expressed desire for a closer relationship over the target's objections
- Persistent attempts to contact the target

The key to seekers is that they have never had, and never will have, a positive relationship with the target because the target does not want one.

A close cousin to seekers is the howler who insists on maintaining a relationship which the target considers over. *Maintainers* closely resemble seekers in their behaviors, except they have actually had a personal relationship with the target. Maintainers can use their intimate knowledge of the target and the target's habits to inform their campaign to rewin the target. Unlike most seekers, maintainers do not necessarily belong to the target's organization. They may not be coworkers, fellow students, or someone else involved with the threat manager's organization. For example, the maintainer may work somewhere else, but appear at the target's worksite as part of the effort

to reestablish the previous relationship. Since maintainers know more than seekers about the private life of their target, they can exploit that personal knowledge. They can pursue the target at the target's home, workplace, school, church, or relatives' or friends' places. They are every bit as persistent as seekers, but their approach is considerably more knowledgeable.

As with seekers, the persistence of the maintainer disrupts not only the target's life, but also the target's colleagues, friends, and relatives. Maintainers cannot take no for an answer, so they keep coming back. Indeed, getting a no often emboldens them to escalate their pursuit. Because they know the target so well, they can convince themselves that the target does not really mean the rejection.

For example, in February, Rhonda broke up with her boyfriend, Joe. Two weeks later, Joe began leaving her long voice-mail messages and flooding her corporate e-mail account with messages begging her to give him another chance. Despite her repeated rejections, Joe remained undaunted in his efforts to change her mind. Rhonda moved out of her apartment into another one, changed her phone number and e-mail address, and took other precautions to ensure that Joe would not find her new residence. However, she was unwilling to give up her job and promising career with the talent agency.

The threat manager recognized Joe as a maintainer who would continue his pursuit of Rhonda as long as he could get messages through to her. The threat manager recommended that building security be provided his photograph. He also advised the company to try a variation of the monitoring strategy by changing Rhonda's e-mail and telephone number, but leave her old mail and number active so Joe's messages and e-mails could be monitored for any changes in his demeanor. The threat manager took responsibility for monitoring Joe's messages using a passive watch-and-wait strategy. As long as he remained a maintainer who expressed himself through telephone calls and e-mails, he would also remain a low risk of violence.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from maintainer howlers by their

- Focus on a specific individual with whom they have had a positive personal relationship in the past, but which the target wants to end
- Detailed familiarity with the target, especially the target's personal life
- References to past times together, including coded or symbolic threats or inappropriate references
- Use of multiple methods of communicating with the target

The key to understanding maintainers lies in their obsessive inability to accept the target's decision to move away from their previous relationship.

Deluded personal howlers suffer from a psychological delusion that they have or should have a closer personal relationship with the target than they actually have. Those deluded howlers who fixate on a fellow worker or some other acquaintance differ from seekers and maintainers based on their mental instability. Both seekers and maintainers know that the object of their pursuit is rejecting them; they simply believe that persistence and their inherent charm will win the day. Deluded howlers do not recognize the rejection because it does not enter their mind set. They fervently believe that they have a relationship that simply does not exist.

For example, Kathy J. first came to the threat manager's attention as a deluded personal binder. Two years later she returned as an impersonal delusory howler. In 2002, sheriff's deputies responded to a call about a suicidal person armed with a pistol. When they arrived at the reported address, they found Kathy, clearly distraught, lying in bed and holding the gun to her head. A female deputy patiently built up a rapport with Kathy and managed to talk her into putting down the gun. Once Kathy surrendered, the deputies took her to the local mental hospital for evaluation.

Although the female deputy treated the incident simply as part of her job, Kathy convinced herself the two had a much more personal relationship. She began writing the deputy letters thanking her and expressing a desire to meet the deputy socially. At first, the deputy simply ignored the letters, but that did not stop Kathy. Indeed, in addition to the letters, Kathy began sending the deputy e-mails through the sheriff's Web site. The letters and e-mails became increasingly amorous and fanciful. Kathy wrote about fictitious dinners and dates between them. After several months of distance communication, Kathy appeared one night at the sheriff's office. She waved down a deputy who happened to be leaving. Kathy explained that she was the female deputy's girlfriend and asked the deputy to deliver the take-out dinner she had brought for the deputy.

The threat manager assessed Kathy as a deluded personal binder. Since all of the communications and the approach had been directed to the sheriff's office, the threat manager recommended giving the deputy a personal security briefing as the best protective response. The threat manager also recommended dual threat management strategies. First, the deputy should get a restraining order prohibiting Kathy from approaching her at any time. Second, the threat manager recommended arranging a third party monitoring through Kathy's mother, whom the sheriff's office knew could be depended on based on her response to Kathy's mental commitment after the suicide attempt. Kathy still had enough inhibitors, including a good job. The restraining order worked. Through the mother, the threat manager monitored Kathy's obedience to the order and eventual loss of interest in the deputy.

Threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from deluded personal howlers by their

- Focus on a relationship that does not and never did exist
- References to that nonexistent relationship
- Evidence of being deluded or out of touch with reality
- Persistence in pursuit of the object of their delusion

Deluded howlers live in a fantasy world of their own creation. Their obstinacies derive from that unreality.

Impersonally Sinister Howlers

Howlers who do not know their targets but communicate with them in sinister or ominous ways can be grouped into six categories:

- *Self-defender* howlers feel a target or an organization has attacked them and they need to defend themselves.
- *Celebrity-seeking* howlers direct their threats and inappropriate communications to public figures or other celebrities precisely because of the target's public status.
- *Habitual* howlers like to make threats as a hobby.
- *Crusader* howlers use threats to advance some personal cause.
- *Copycat* howlers are inspired to make threats and inappropriate communications by news reports of acts of violence or threatened acts of violence.
- *Delusional* howlers suffer a mental delusion compelling them to threaten their target.

In many cases, the sinister howler feels under attack and is lashing back in anger or despair. These *self-defenders* feel imposed upon by something they believe the target has done or is about to do to them. More precisely, the self-defender perceives that he or she has suffered some injury or indignity through some fault of the target. In fact, self-defenders may risk losing their jobs or face prison or be embroiled in a divorce or child custody dispute. They may have been bullied or teased at school or passed over for promotion. Whatever the insult or injury, they feel it very personally. The wound goes deep into their egos.

Self-defenders seek to solve their problem through instilling fear in the target. If they can scare the target away or scare the target into doing what the self-defender wants, then the self-defender's problem will go away. His or her ego will be repaired. Consequently, communications from self-defenders tend to make a complaint or reference an issue or dispute. They talk about their particular problem, usually in great detail. They are desperate to be heard, for being heard exonerates them from making the threat. Self-defenders are specific in what they want and how they want it done. They rarely accept any responsibility for their personal situation or problems. They blame their tar-

gets entirely, which serves to increase their wrath. Self-defenders reason that if the target caused the problem, then the target must fix it. They seek both justice and restitution, but on their terms only.

Since self-defenders express a specific complaint, they tend to be the howlers most likely to communicate only once. Many of them make their complaint inappropriately, but feel better for having gotten it off their chest. They then get on with their lives. Given the American emphasis on freedom of expression, many self-defenders may not even realize they have communicated inappropriately.

For example, Jonathan W. owned his own business, had a wife and three children, and played a prominent role in his church and community. One day, a customer slipped and broke his arm at Jonathan's business establishment. The customer sued, claiming negligence on Jonathan's part. The costs of the lawsuit escalated enough that Jonathan finally had to dismiss his attorney and begin representing himself. When he failed to follow court procedures and decorum, the judge personally rebuked him. The next day, Jonathan called the judge's chambers and asked to speak to the judge. When told the judge was unavailable, Jonathan replied, "Tell the judge to show me some respect. This is my life we're talking about and if he takes mine, I'll take his." Jonathan then hung up the telephone.

The threat manager who assessed Jonathan's inappropriate communication recognized him as a sinister howler seeking to defend himself against a perceived insult from the judge. The threat manager factored into the assessment the inhibitors in Jonathan's life, especially his family, home ownership, and standing in the community. Given that Jonathan's message was to demand future respect from the judge, the threat manager recommended adopting a passive watch-and-wait strategy to see if Jonathan's outburst was a one-time occurrence. Had Jonathan insisted on something else, such as an apology, retribution, punishment, or a disciplinary action against the judge, the threat assessor would have recommended that a threat manager interview Jonathan. The interview could start as a friendly effort to assist him, but if necessary could end with a warning to avoid future inappropriate communications. But since that did not occur, the threat manager settled on a passive watch-and-wait management strategy.

Having expressed his anger at the judge, Jonathan calmed down. He returned to court and successfully avoided any additional admonishments from the judge. He also won the lawsuit. Jonathan never tried to contact the judge again.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from self-defender howlers by their

- Focus on a specific issue, complaint, or dispute affecting them
- Desire for the target to rectify the situation

- Use of threats or ominous references to frighten the target into acting
- Refusal to take personal responsibility for their conduct as it relates to the dispute
- Insistence on a resolution according to their terms

Since self-defenders are issue-specific, they direct their inappropriate communications to those whom they hold responsible for their situation. They do not send out bulk communications or direct them to individuals not involved in the dispute. They feel empowered by their threats even though their situation reveals their impotence. If they had the power to effect the change, they would not need to threaten or communicate inappropriately.

What marks impersonal sinister howlers is their lack of information about the target. The Secret Service once had a case of an individual who clearly demonstrated his complete lack of personal knowledge about his target. This subject threatened to kill presidential candidate and then Vice President George H. W. Bush. The howler addressed his threatening letters to President Ronald Reagan at the White House, not the Naval Observatory where the Vice President lived. When Secret Service agents tracked down the threatener, they asked why he addressed the letters to President Reagan when his actual target was the Vice President. The howler explained that he knew the White House address was 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, but he did not know the Vice President's address. Thus, it was easier for him to send the threats to the President, presumably hoping the President would be kind enough to forward them along.¹²

Celebrity-seeking sinister howlers focus on public figures or celebrities precisely because the targets are famous. The threat or inappropriate communication may have been inspired by something the celebrity did or it could be directed at the celebrity simply because he or she is well-known. Hundreds of celebrity howlers threaten the President of the United States every year, sometimes because they disagree with his policies, but more often just because he is the President. Other politicians, such as governors, mayors, and members of Congress also receive inappropriate communications both because of their public stance on issues and because of the positions they hold. Similarly, actors and other public figures become the targets of celebrity howlers. They, too, are targeted both for what they do or say or for the personae they project in the media.

Celebrity-seeking howlers obviously focus on their chosen public figures. Their communications may contain explicit threats, but they may also make ominous comments, suggestions, or proposals. Generally, too, celebrity-seeking howlers evince little knowledge of their targets beyond what is

¹²Secret Service training presentation, Newark, NJ, January 2000.

popularly available. Some action by the public figure may attract the howler's attention. Typically, however, the celebrity-seeking howler addresses the celebrity because the celebrity is famous. The howler envies that fame and tries to steal some of it by communicating with the public figure. It is not the celebrity's stance on the issues of the day or how he or she behaves or what he or she does that enrages the celebrity-seeking howler. Rather, the howler objects that the celebrity is famous instead of the howler.

For example, Tom Q. became obsessed with a male movie star after the star appeared in an action film in which he was portrayed as having near superhuman strength and stamina. Tom completely bought into the movie's premise and the star's feats and did not seem to understand the power of special effects. Instead, he repeatedly wrote the star claiming that he, Tom, could do everything the star had done in the movie. He challenged the star to fight him, then explained in great detail how he would overpower the star and show the world how much stronger he was.

The threat manager assessed Tom as a celebrity-seeking impersonal howler who made all his communications through letter writing. The letters never showed any evidence of detailed knowledge about the star. Quite the opposite, the letters all indicated that Tom thought the star was, in reality, the character he had played in the action movie. The threat manager recommended maintaining the star's current level of security as an appropriate protective response and monitoring Tom's subsequent communications for any change in theme, knowledge, or tone.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from celebrity-seeking howlers by their

- Focus on the celebrity as a celebrity or on individuals portrayed in the media, or on fictional characters in a movie or on television
- Lack of personal knowledge or information not reported in the media about the public figure
- Expressions of animosity due to the celebrity's fame, fortune, popularity, or position of power and influence
- Perception that the howler is equal to or better than the howler's opinion of the public figure

Since celebrity-seeking howlers are attracted to fame and power, they may focus on one particular public figure or more than one. Their interest may shift from target to target, either because the public figure's public position shifts or simply because a different celebrity attracts the howler's attention. For example, former presidents receive far fewer inappropriate communications than they did while in office or than their successors receive.

A profound indignation over the celebrity's fame or power undergirds the celebrity-seeking howler's inappropriate communications. These howlers

do not profess their love for the celebrity nor their delusions of sharing their lives together. Sinister celebrity-seeking howlers are jealous. By threatening the public figure, or communicating in disturbing, ominous ways, the howler imagines bringing the celebrity down a few notches by the fear and trembling the communication causes. In essence, the communications somehow validate the celebrity-seeking howler's sense of self-worth.

In other cases, sinister howlers simply enjoy the act of making explicit threats. They have no ulterior motive other than scaring their targets or, more precisely, imagining the fear their communications cause. These *habitual* howlers howl repeatedly, frequently to multiple targets who have no connection other than being targets of these communications. For habitual howlers, the act of communicating is just as important as the message they are trying to get across. Most of the time, they do not know their targets personally. Instead, they find them in business directories, by reading news stories, or by sending "To whom it may concern" type messages to particular organizations, businesses, or government agencies.

For example, doctors obviously work at Veterans Administration (VA) hospitals, so it is easy for howlers to address their communications to "Head of Surgery" or "Chief Oncologist" or some other title typically associated with a VA hospital. Large corporations have chairmen and presidents. Reproductive health care facilities have doctors, nurses, and patients. Courts have judges, prosecutors, and clerks. Cities have mayors, states have governors, and the United States has a President. All of them are easy targets for letter writing. For habitual howlers, the self-satisfaction comes in composing the threatening communications, then imagining the reactions they will cause.

Many habitual howlers are inmates confined to prisons or mental health facilities, or even prison mental wards. Inmate howlers, whether incarcerated or institutionalized, make threats as a way of getting attention. Bored or frustrated with their incarceration or institutionalization, and with plenty of time on their hands, they direct their communications generally at public officials or individuals featured recently in the news. By threatening a government official, they invite an investigation. The investigation usually includes law enforcement officers interviewing the inmate. That interview breaks the monotony of life in a prison or mental health facility. It gets the inmate attention, thus confirming that he or she is important and cannot be ignored.

For example, in December 2002, Rodney Yoder, an inmate at a maximum security mental hospital in Illinois, admitted sending over 100 threatening letters to judges, a staff assistant to a U.S. senator, and other public figures in 1995 and 1996. Yoder hoped the letters would get him reassigned from the hospital to a federal prison. That would give him a fixed release date. At his recommitment hearing in 2002, Yoder assured the jury that he never carried out the threats he mailed. He promised the court he would not do so

if he was released from the hospital. The jury voted to recommit him for at least another 6 months.¹³

A good threat assessor would have recognized Yoder as a habitual howler because of the number of inappropriate communications Yoder sent. The threat assessor would have recommended a third-party control strategy using the mental hospital staff to control and monitor Yoder's future attempts to communicate inappropriately. That contact with the hospital staff would have also ensured that the threat manager would be alerted to any changes in Yoder's status.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from habitual howlers by their

- Focus on making voluminous communications, frequently to multiple, unrelated targets or to public figures or individuals recently featured in the media
- Lack of expressed personal motive or complaint for making threats to the particular target
- Emphasis on threatening or violent references
- Markings that the communication was sent from a prison or institution, such as an envelope stamped "Legal mail" or showing an institution's return address
- Indications of mental illness in the writing
- Insistence on making multiple threats as a means of getting attention

Simply put, habitual howlers like to make threats. They send their communications to multiple targets over long periods of time. They have no specific complaint or issue, find their targets in public directories or by good guessing, and make no effort to draw any connection between them. They communicate inappropriately solely for the purpose of communicating inappropriately.

In one bizarre case beginning in the early 1990s, CD was incarcerated in a state penitentiary. U.S. Marshals overnighed some federal prisoners in the state facility while en route to the federal penitentiary to which the prisoners had been sentenced. That night, CD fell in love with one of the federal prisoners, but the next morning the marshals took their prisoners away. CD determined that committing a federal crime was his ticket to get into the federal prison system and reunite with the object of his affection. Since he was already in state prison, his ability to commit such a crime was severely limited to most activities except writing threatening letters to federal officials.

¹³ Associated Press, December 5, 2002.

He began a long campaign of mailing threatening letters to federal judges, prosecutors, and individual marshals.

After confirming CD's incarceration, the threat manager assessed him as a howler who would continue making baseless threats in order to be tried and sentenced in federal court. The threat manager recommended prosecuting CD for the threats. Unfortunately for CD, the courts determined that his punishment for being convicted of making threats would commence at the conclusion of his state sentence 20 years hence. CD got the attention he sought, just not in the way he wanted it.

Crusaders howl as a way of advancing some cause they perceive as larger than themselves. They threaten political or social opponents in the hope of disrupting the target's operations, business, or social activities. They use threats to persuade their opponents to abandon their views or adopt the howler's. Crusader howlers are specific in their choice of targets. They go after individuals who represent some political or social cause opposed by the crusader. Religious, moral, or political beliefs motivate them, which allows them to justify the threats as a necessary evil in a larger war. In their minds, the purity of their motives justifies the extremity of their tactics.

For example, Clayton Waagner violently opposed abortions and those who performed them. He expressed his opposition in religious and moral terms. At one point, he toyed with the idea of killing abortion providers, but he could never quite work up the courage to attack. Instead, he settled on a unique way of howling. Inspired by the anthrax letters addressed to two U.S. senators and several newscasters in the fall of 2001 that resulted in the deaths of five people,¹⁴ Waagner tried a howler-style variation of the tactic. "In October of 2001," he explained, "I mailed fake anthrax to 500 abortion clinics. In November of 2001, I Federal Expressed another 300 fake anthrax letters. The white powder I used was harmless, but tested positive for anthrax." Inside each envelope, he also included a brief letter explaining that whoever opened the letter had just been exposed to anthrax. Waagner calculated that his letters resulted in "3,940 clinic closure days, and the disruption of nearly 20,000 scheduled abortions. According to abortion clinic numbers, 5,000 or more babies are alive today because of my act of 'Domestic Terrorism.'"¹⁵ Waagner now crusades from a prison cell.

Had a trained threat assessor evaluated Waagner's anthrax letters, he would have recognized a crusading howler based on Waagner's targets, all reproductive health care facilities. The best threat-management strategy for handling Waagner was arresting him since his letters did break the law and disrupt dozens of clinics and their personnel. Once arrested, the threat man-

¹⁴http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001_anthrax_attack.

¹⁵Waagner statement, <http://www.armyofgod.com/ClayWaagnerMainPage.html>.

agement strategy would change to third-party control and monitoring, in this case by the prison staff.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from crusaders by their

- Focus on political, moral, or social issues
- Presenting their issue as larger than themselves
- Portraying themselves as part of a larger group or collective (which usually does not exist)
- Insistence on justifying their behavior by how they perceive the importance of their particular issue

Crusaders have causes. They use threats and inappropriate communications to advance those causes. In effect, they believe that the importance of their issue outweighs everything else. It also excuses their behavior.

Finally, a portion of sinister howlers are *copycats*. They hear or read about some incident, usually an instance of violence, and use that as the inspiration for their threats. This usually happens in the immediate aftermath of some well-publicized tragedy. The copycat then refers to the event as part of the threat or ominous communication. In early March 2001, Charles “Andy” Williams killed 2 and wounded 13 at his high school in Santee, CA.¹⁶ Over a month later, 18-year-old Patrick A. Smith of Maryland e-mailed two high school girls in California. One of the girls attended Williams’ high school. Smith wrote, “I’m finishing what Andy started and this time its going to work.” Police arrested Smith for making the threat.¹⁷ Copycat howlers follow the news.

For example, in the week or two after Timothy McVeigh bombed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK, law enforcement agencies throughout the country received reports on threats against government buildings. Some were straightforward bomb threats. Others specifically referenced the Oklahoma bombing, saying that the same thing would happen to the building targeted by the threatener. Law enforcement had to take each threat seriously because hunters can be copycats, too.

Yet, the threat assessor who assessed these multiple bomb threats recognized the threateners as copycat howlers because none of the threats resulted in an actual bombing. Instead, the threat assessor determined that the threateners also wanted to use the horror generated by the Oklahoma City bombing to cause fear in their targets. As a result, the threat manager recommended arresting anyone caught making a copycat threat. In lieu of that, all that could be done was to watch and wait for the infamy of McVeigh’s action to fade in the public’s and the copycat’s collective memories.

¹⁶ *Washington Post*, March 6, 2001.

¹⁷ *Washington Post*, April 25, 2001.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from copycats by their

- Focus on recent well-publicized acts or threats of violence
- Nonviolent use of past well-publicized tactics that resulted in violence or threat of violence
- Insistence on benignly attempting to copy someone else's act of violence or threat of violence

Copycats get their inspiration from the news. They want to wrap themselves in the aura of an actual hunter without going through the necessary steps of taking up the hunt. By referring to someone else's violence, these howlers try to piggyback on the fear the previous violence caused. They ride into infamy on the coattails of the actual hunter.

Finally, some impersonal sinister howlers suffer from some mental disorder that compels them to threaten or harass their target. They may perceive the public figure as the devil or some evil force. Many *delusional* impersonal sinister howlers feel threatened by the public figure or, at a more grandiose level, these howlers may feel the public figure poses some danger to the community at large, perhaps even the entire world.

One delusional impersonal howler believed that he and a female gospel singer loved each other even though they had never met. He knew of her feelings toward him through the messages she sent him in her song lyrics and by the way she looked at him from the pictures on her album covers. He sent her an average of five letters and packages a day, plus scores of e-mails. When the singer's management staff began returning the letters and packages unopened and then blocked his e-mails, he convinced himself that she had been corrupted and had become the devil's consort. His love turned to hate. His e-mails took on an ominous tone. He made references to an ending, as though the singer would bring on the end of the world. He expressed a desire to stop her, to make a last good-bye, and to be present at the end. Throughout, however, the writer maintained his distance and continued to communicate only through e-mails.

Thus, delusional sinister howlers can be recognized by their

- Focus on some imaginary or unreal perception of the public figure
- Belief that the public figure represents a threat to the howler or to others
- Insistence that the public figure is someone other than who the public figure really is

Impersonally sinister howlers vary in their motives and purposes. Some believe they are defending themselves, others try to bask in a celebrity's

glow. Habitual howlers make threats almost as a hobby. Crusader howlers promote some cause. Copycat howlers use references to the acts of hunters to cloak themselves in the hunter's act. Delusional howlers live in their own made-up worlds.

Knowing impersonally sinister howler traits, motives, and purposes enables the threat manager to recognize that the communication under assessment came from a howler, indeed, from a particular type and category of howler. That understanding and knowledge will help the threat manager select the most appropriate strategy for handling that particular howler. Just because howlers do not escalate to violence does not mean that the threat manager does not have to manage them. Sinister howlers create fear and disrupt the lives of their targets. They must be managed in order to mitigate or offset that fear and disruption. As each of our examples showed, threat managers have a variety of strategies to use in managing howlers.

Impersonally Binding Howlers

Many impersonal howlers try to bind themselves to strangers, almost always public figures or celebrities. These types of binders use the target and their perceived or desired relationship with that target to escape the banality of their own lives by essentially stealing or borrowing the more exciting life of the target. Failures on their own, they lust after the public figures success. We classify these impersonal binders into four types:

- *Relationship* binders look to the public figure for a relationship. They seek to become a lover, relative, or friend to the target, even if at a distance, and feel somehow incomplete if that relationship does not materialize. Relationship binders frequently see themselves through their pretended relationship with the target. They have little sense of self-worth beyond that relationship.
- *Delusory* binders suffer a mental illness that results in their convincing themselves that they have a binding relationship with their target. They believe that the public figure sends them messages through his or her activities or they believe destiny will bring them and the public figure together.
- *Callow* binders simply do not realize how inappropriate their communications with the target are. They convince themselves that they have a binding relationship with the target and, therefore, this is the way people in a binding relationship act.

Impersonal binders look beyond the dreariness or boredom of their own lives to find fulfillment in someone else's life. Seeking that fulfillment explains why so many impersonal binders focus on public figures or celebrities. Peo-

ple in positions of power or glamour give the appearance of transcending mundane existences.

Relationship binders draw great satisfaction simply from communicating with the target. The communications forge the relationship. Binders are happy with the long-distance communication because it gives them a connection to their target. Nor does receiving a response from the target matter much to the relationship binder because they still have the relationship through their communications.

For example, a state senator began receiving numerous overfamiliar letters and cards. All were signed the "U.S. Ambassador to Singapore." The alleged ambassador also sent a package containing a plaque and a written commendation. Through liaison with other agencies, the threat manager identified the sender as a 60-year-old woman who had used other titles in the past to communicate with public figures and send them bogus awards. Her pattern was to begin numerous and intense communications with a target, then lose interest, presumably to move on to another target. Her communications, though clearly efforts at personal relationships, had never escalated or turned sinister.

The threat manager assessed the woman as a relationship binder seeking to ingratiate herself with the state senator. He recommended adopting a passive watch-and-wait strategy of monitoring subsequent communications from her. Given her past behavior, she would soon enough lose interest in the state senator, probably to move on to another target.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from relationship impersonal binders by their

- Focus on a public figure, especially the exciting or glamorous aspects of the public figure's activities
- Expressed desire to continue communicating with the public figure as though those communications formed a bond between them
- Claims to be the best or closest or top supporter or defender of the target
- Insistence on believing that the binder and the target have a true connection

Relationship binders want a friend, someone in whom they can confide or share. They find such relationships among the famous and the well-known.

Delusory binders step beyond reality in believing they have a personal, even intimate relationship with the target. They believe that their target responds to the binder's communications by sending coded messages in speeches, songs, performances, even by secret looks in photographs or film footage. The delusion is usually tenacious and the binder refuses to accept any reality that challenges the delusion.

For example, 2 years after Kathy J. began obeying the restraining order to keep away from the female deputy who had talked her out of a suicide attempt, she became an impersonal delusory binder. When the local city police department, in an effort to recruit more female officers, posted the photographs and biographies of its highest ranking female officers, Kathy took notice. One of them was a deputy chief. Kathy began sending the deputy chief e-mails to her work account and leaving voice mails on the chief's office telephone. All the phone messages were left late at night when Kathy had some assurance no one would actually answer the phone. In the e-mails and phone messages, Kathy talked about how she had seen the chief's photograph on the police Web site. Kathy immediately felt a special kinship with the chief. She knew they were destined to have a love affair. Over time, the e-mails became more sexually explicit, including fantasies involving the chief's law enforcement equipment, especially her handcuffs.

When the local newspaper published a story on the deputy chief that mentioned her children, Kathy began talking about her plans to form a family with the chief and the children. That discussion alarmed the chief who then referred the case to the threat manager.

After checking with his threat-manager colleagues in other jurisdictions, the police threat manager learned about the previous personal delusion toward the female sheriff's deputy. The police manager contacted the sheriff's threat manager to share information. Since the initial strategy of obtaining a restraining order and setting up a monitoring through Kathy's mother had worked, the two threat managers agreed to expand those controls to cover the police deputy chief. Once again, Kathy obeyed the restraining order. From the mother, the threat managers learned that Kathy had turned her attention to the deputy chief after breaking up with her girlfriend. Once she developed a new relationship, her interest in the police and sheriff's personnel would quickly fade.

Thus, the threat manager can recognize inappropriate communications from delusory impersonal binders by their

- Focus on a nonexistent reciprocal relationship between the binder and the target
- Claims that the target is sending messages or signals through the target's work, appearances, or other improbable means
- Insistence that the target feels toward the binder as the binder feels toward the target
- Evidence of possible mental illness in their behavior

Delusory impersonal binders usually enjoy their delusions without trying to actually live them. They communicate from a distance and rarely engage in approach behavior.

Callow binders are generally too unsophisticated to realize the inappropriateness of their communications. They have a naive and innocent approach to the world. Infatuated with the target, they express themselves in ways they think lovers always do. They cannot fathom that their communications might be misunderstood and their intentions misinterpreted. If confronted, they frequently act shocked or horrified that anyone would take offense at what they did or how they communicated.

For example, an entire group of individuals banded together by a common hobby became callow impersonal binders. Shortly after Arnold Schwarzenegger took office as governor of California, the value of his autograph skyrocketed among autograph seekers. One autograph club came up with the idea of making a contest out of it. Through their Web site, they offered bragging rights to the first member who could get Governor Schwarzenegger's signature.

The members took the game seriously. Since the governor had a law enforcement security detail, getting physically close to Schwarzenegger meant getting past the security. Club members began crashing events, sneaking into places where the governor was scheduled to appear, and lining the route through which he had to walk to get to his next location. Although all the members wanted was his autograph, their efforts disrupted the security.

The threat manager recognized the members as aggressive autograph hounds. She realized they were callow impersonal binders intent on winning the club's game. As an appropriate protective response, she recommended that the security detail treat the members sternly. Her recommended threat-management strategy was to persuade the club to call off the game, thus refocusing the members on their regular pursuits. Once the club announced an end to the game on its Web site, the efforts of the club members stopped.

Thus, threat managers can recognize inappropriate communications from callow impersonal binders by their

- Focus on presuming the target will accept or respond to their communication
- Nonviolent motivations or intentions
- Insistence on acting on their presumptions

Frequently, callow binders can be quite stubborn in contacting the target, but with the right persuasion and approach, the threat manager can, if necessary, convince them of the error of their ways.

Impersonal binding howlers try to fill some gap in their lives. They believe that their binding with someone else, whether stranger or acquaintance, will fill that void. The emptiness can be oppressive enough to compel the impersonal binding howler to turn sinister or, worse, take up the hunt. Consequently, how the threat manager manages these individuals is crucial.

Making them feel rejected or left alone compounds the problem that drove them toward seeking a relationship in the first place.

What Howlers Want

Howlers want something very different from what hunters want. Howlers use their communications to cause a reaction, to frighten or enamor, to upset or provoke. They have no need to do anything beyond speaking, writing, or calling, even if they speak, write, or call repeatedly. They never intend to take any action in furtherance of their inappropriate communications. For the howler, communicating is sufficient. It results in the end they seek. Hunters, by comparison, want a more tangible result. They intend to take violent action to rectify their issues. For them, justice is expressed in force, vengeance in blood, affection in approaching.

Sinister howlers seek fearful reactions from their targets. They communicate to frighten or disturb. As a result, and as odd as it sounds, the target actually invests the threat with whatever value it ultimately has. For the howler, how the target reacts to his or her threat or, just as importantly, how the howler imagines the target to react is the primary goal. Making the threat is sufficient.

Sometimes, sinister howlers strike gold. On December 2, 2005, Javier Rodriquez of Connecticut had a court date related to driving violations. Since the court had suspended his driver's license, he decided not to drive himself. Unfortunately, he could not find anyone to take him. To get out of this predicament, Rodriquez walked to a telephone booth near his home and placed five telephone calls to various locations across the state. During each call, Rodriquez claimed that bombs had been placed in courthouses and judicial buildings all over the state. In response, all 45 state court buildings were evacuated and searched, including the one at which Rodriquez was scheduled to appear. After police traced the bomb threat calls to the pay phone, they compared the names of nearby residents to the names of people who were scheduled to appear in court and did not show up. That led them to Rodriquez.¹⁸ He caused plenty of panic, which was the purpose of his phone calls. Unfortunately for him, the scheme did not keep him out of court.

Park Dietz et al. compared individuals who had inappropriately approached members of Congress with those who only wrote inappropriate letters to congressmen. The approachers, of course, acted like hunters, the nonapproachers like impersonal howlers. The Dietz team found that "subjects who sent threats to members of Congress were significantly *less* likely to

¹⁸ Associated Press, December 3 and 6, 2005.

pursue a face-to-face encounter with him or her.”¹⁹ More tellingly, Dietz et al. found the following types of threats were characteristic of those who made no effort to approach, that is, the howlers

- Threatening any kind of harm toward any public figure
- Threatening to kill any public figure or those around a public figure
- Indicating that a threat would be executed by the subject or his agent
- Indicating that a threat would be executed by someone other than the subject or his agent
- Making any direct threat
- Making any veiled threat
- Making any conditional threat
- Making any implausible threat²⁰

The team concluded that the presence of a threat in a communication to a member of Congress “appears to lower the risk” toward the congressman.²¹

As we discussed in Chapter 3, Dietz and his crew concluded that those who approached members of Congress generally wanted something fairly tangible, like the congressman’s assistance with a problem. Not so with howlers. They saw congressmen entirely differently, so their communications strove for a completely different effect. Howlers

- Wrote in cursive
- Took an enemy role, including the role of assassin, persecutor, and condemning judge
- Cast the Congress member in an enemy role, including the roles of persecutor and conspirator
- Attempted to instill fear in the member
- Attempted to provoke upset in the member
- Attempted to instill worry in the member
- Made threats²²

These impersonal howlers saw achievement in the communication itself. They used it to instill fear, provoke upset, or cause the congressman to worry. The howlers achieved what they wanted through writing or calling. They needed do no more. Unlike hunters, they had no need to communicate in different ways. They had no need to be nice or solicitous. Most importantly, they

¹⁹Dietz, P. et al. (1991). Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to members of the United States Congress. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 36: 1466.

²⁰Dietz, Congress, 1463.

²¹Dietz, Congress, 1463.

²²Dietz, Congress, 1463.

had no need to approach. Their imagination provided them plenty of images of scared, upset, and worried congressmen. The howlers fully succeeded in their purpose simply by writing their letters.

Dietz et al. also conducted a similar study on those who communicated inappropriately with Hollywood celebrities. For celebrity howlers, like their congressional counterparts, writing inappropriately was the end game. Celebrity howlers

- Used tablet-like paper
- Provided their full addresses
- Expressed a desire to marry, have sex with, or have children with the celebrity
- Enclosed commercial pictures
- Attempted to instill shame in the celebrity
- Indicated a sexual interest in the celebrity
- Mentioned other public figures repeatedly
- Mentioned any kind of sexual activity²³

Unlike celebrity hunters, celebrity howlers did not change their method of communicating. Rather, they used their letters to express their intimate fantasies. As with congressional howlers, celebrity howlers sought a reaction from the celebrity through the communication itself. They showed no interest in accomplishing or doing anything else. For them, it sufficed to describe their sexual and romantic fantasies without the trouble of acting them out.

Unlike congressional howlers, celebrity howlers showed no strong correlation between threatening and not approaching. Rather, Dietz et al. found that “the presence or absence of a threat in the communications is no indication whatsoever of whether a subject is going to pursue an encounter.”²⁴ Although the relationship between explicit threats and not approaching was much more pronounced among congressional howlers, celebrity howlers nonetheless fit the mold of individuals who achieved their goal through writing inappropriate communications. The writing was an end unto itself, not a means to some other objective. Perhaps significantly, members of Congress attracted more impersonal sinister howlers while celebrities caught the attention of more impersonal binder howlers. That difference no doubt helps explain the different findings on threats.

In sum, what howlers want is achieved through the act of communicating inappropriately. Both personal and impersonal howlers, both sinister and

²³Dietz, P. et al. (1991). Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to Hollywood celebrities. *Journal of Forensic Science*, 36: 208.

²⁴Dietz, Hollywood, 208.

binder, serve their purposes through their communications. What they want is the reaction, real or, better yet, imagined from the target. Sinister howlers of every stripe seek to cause fear or disquiet in their targets. Binding howlers hope their communications will spawn a relationship with the target. For all howlers, the act of communicating suffices.

Impersonal howlers, whether sinister or binder, generally prefer to keep their distance from their targets. They rely on distance communications to get their inappropriate communications across. They let these communications do all the work. They design their letters, phone calls, faxes, e-mails, or whatever to cause the desired reaction from the target. Even better, once an impersonal howler launches a communication, he or she is then free to imagine that reaction. Thus, no matter what really happens, the howler always believes he or she succeeded in getting the result sought. Doing anything more risks letting reality intrude.

Summary

Chapter 4 analyzed howlers. It typed them by their relationship to their targets and categorized them by what they sought to accomplish. Personal howlers know their targets; impersonal howlers do not. Sinister howlers seek to inspire fear in their targets, binder howlers try to establish some kind of relationship with their target. We categorized sinister personal howlers into three distinct groups. The groupings centered on what the howler intended his or her howling to accomplish, such as controlling the target, intimidating the target, or playing some dirty trick on a third party. Personal binder howlers may seek a relationship with someone they know, try to maintain a relationship their target wants to end, or respond to some delusion the howler has that makes him or her believe he or she has a relationship with the target.

Impersonal sinister howlers fell into five groups: self-defenders, celebrity seekers, habitual, crusaders, and copycats. Impersonal binders divided into relationship, delusory, and callow. After defining and illustrating each type, including some of the threat-management strategies appropriate to each, we examined what howlers want and how what they want differs from what hunters want.

Case Analysis: The Snitch

The Facts

In December 2006, a prisoner serving a life sentence at a state penitentiary without possibility of parole approached a guard. The prisoner claimed he had information concerning a plot by a particular gang to kill a prominent

state elected official using explosives. The prisoner claimed his source was a civilian employee at the prison who belonged to the gang. According to the prisoner, this civilian employee had told him about the plot. Corrections officers assessed the informant as credible and passed the information to the state threat-management unit.

At the time, the state was roiled by media frenzy over the impending execution of a world-famous gang member. The governor of the state was receiving a lot of attention because he had not yet announced his decision on whether to commute the prisoner's execution to a life sentence. Along with the media attention, the governor also received an increased number of threats and other inappropriate communications.

The Threat Analysis

Any case deriving its information from an informant first requires assessing the informant's credibility before assessing the potential threat. However, given the controversy over the upcoming execution, the information from the prisoner could represent leakage of an actual plot. Given the current pressure generated by the execution, the threat-management unit's assessment was to treat the case as a potential high risk until an aggressive protective investigation determined the prisoner's actual credibility. Once the results of the protective investigation were the unit would reassess the potential threat.

Protective Response

The threat-management unit recommended that the commander of the governor's security detail be notified of the potential threat. In addition, the governor's public schedule was to be reviewed to determine whether any security adjustments were necessary.

Threat-Management Strategy

Based on the urgency of determining the informant's credibility, the threat-management unit should have deployed agents to interview the prisoner and, once his or her identity was established, interview the prison civilian employee accused of being the source. Polygraphs or voice stress analyzers should have been used on both individuals. New information should have been immediately fed back to the threat assessors for their revised assessments.

The Outcome

A team of threat managers was immediately dispatched to the state prison to interview the informant. The managers learned that the prisoner had never

been an informant in the past. During the interview with the prisoner, he claimed that a prison male nurse gave him his daily insulin injection. The nurse, knowing that the prisoner's son produced rap music, expressed to the prisoner his desire to record some rap songs the nurse had written. The prisoner agreed to write a letter of introduction for the nurse to take to the prisoner's son.

Once the prisoner wrote the letter and the nurse delivered it, the nurse became friendlier and more at ease with the prisoner. According to the prisoner, the nurse's discussions started turning around violence and the nurse's need to establish his "street cred." The nurse confided to the prisoner that he knew of a plot to kill an elected official using explosives. The prisoner, worried about his son's connections to the nurse, passed the information on to prison officials. The threat managers evaluated the prisoner's demeanor and command of the facts as sincere and firm, thus giving him some credibility. The prisoner also agreed to take a polygraph examination. The managers scheduled it for the next morning.

The threat managers determined through prison personnel files that the nurse had worked at the prison for 5 years. He had a good record with positive evaluations and no disciplinary problems. The nurse was on his regular day off and could not be located at home. Due to the urgency of the situation, the threat managers set up a surveillance post at the residence to await the nurse's return.

When the nurse arrived home that evening, the threat managers requested to interview him. With some hesitation, the nurse agreed. During the interview, the nurse admitted that he gave the prisoner his daily insulin injections. He also confirmed that the prisoner had written a letter of introduction to the prisoner's son about the nurse's rap songs. The nurse adamantly denied any knowledge or information about an assassination plot.

At this point in the interview, the threat managers adopted a tougher, more interrogatory style of questioning in order to increase the pressure on the nurse. After about 45 minutes of grilling the nurse, he began to cry and offered to confess what really happened.

According to the nurse, he and the prisoner had talked about the nurse's interest in rap music. The prisoner had written the letter, which the nurse delivered. The nurse established a relationship with the rap producer, who expressed interest in the nurse's songs. At the son's request, the nurse agreed to carry a letter back to the father, along with some cigarettes and a lighter. The next day, he delivered the items to the prisoner.

A few days later, the prisoner told the nurse that the prisoner's son wanted to see the nurse. When the nurse met with the son, the son gave him a small amount of marijuana to take back to the prisoner. The nurse objected, but the son reminded him that he had already violated prison rules and the law by passing the letter and cigarettes to the prisoner. After delivering the

marijuana to the prisoner, the prisoner ordered the nurse to meet with his son regularly and smuggle packages from the son to the prisoner. If the nurse did not comply, the prisoner threatened to turn him in to prison authorities. He would lose his job and probably end up in prison himself.

Several months passed during which the nurse made a few more deliveries. The nurse took advantage of a promotion to a supervisory position to schedule other nurses to give the prisoner his daily injections. The prisoner sent him a note ordering him to resume giving the shots himself. If not, the note warned, the nurse would be sorry. The nurse continued to avoid the prisoner. After a while, he convinced himself the ordeal was over. The nurse readily agreed to a polygraph examination that night. The examiner determined that the nurse's answers were nondeceptive.

The next morning, the prisoner refused to go to the scheduled polygraph test. He claimed that he had received "hard looks" from other prisoners. He did not want to be labeled a snitch.

Based on the new facts derived from the expedited protective investigation, the threat-management unit's threat assessors assessed the allegation of a plot against an elected official as not credible and, hence, low risk. The assessors determined the prisoner was a personal howler using dirty trickster tactics against the nurse in order to punish the nurse for no longer serving as a private courier.

Issues of Interest

The events that transpired in this case illustrate a number of important lessons for threat managers, especially pertaining to information from informants:

1. All informants, but especially inmate informants, need to be treated with great caution and skepticism. They can appear very sincere and convincing and, as in this particular case, elements of their story can be verifiably true.
2. Informants can also be very manipulative and mercenary in generating their information.
3. In all cases involving an informant, the informant's credibility about all aspects of his or her story should be assessed before assessing the informant's allegations.
4. The use of polygraph examinations or voice stress tests is the best way to verify the informant's credibility about all aspects of his story.
5. Other issues, political or social, may escalate the priority of a threat case. In this case, the pending controversial execution of a gang member had an impact on both the resources available to the threat-management unit and the pressure to quickly resolve the case.

6. Other law enforcement agencies may deem the informant reliable, but the threat manager has to make his or her own determination about that credibility.
7. Highly developed interview and interrogation techniques are essential to the threat-manager's ability to get to the truth. In the instant case, those skills prevented a threat case from going out of control.
8. In social venues susceptible to the leakage phenomenon, such as schools and workplaces, the source of the leak should be treated as an informant whose credibility needs to be established.
9. In sum, individuals who pass along derogatory information about other individuals should not be automatically accepted as credible. Whether in workplaces, schools, or prisons, informants must first be assessed for credibility before their information or allegation is assessed.

Working with the Intimacy Effect and the Law

5

For too many years, threat managers and the laws that proscribed threatening communications focused almost exclusively on explicit threats. Cases were not opened until, or more likely unless, the subject explicitly threatened the target with physical harm. The law punished only threateners and attackers, not stalkers or harassers or those who prepared themselves to act violently. This emphasis on threatening communications had the unfortunate effect of spotlighting sinister howlers, leaving the hunters well hidden in the shadows.

Over the past decade or so, research studies and practical experience began convincing threat managers to see threats as only one behavior among a full panoply of other attack-related behaviors engaged in by hunters. Contemporary threat management discounted the previous overriding emphasis on threats and shifted its focus to attack-related behaviors. Threat managers began to understand that hunters posed a threat while howlers merely made threats. Each, hunter and howler, had to be managed, but the strategies for doing so for each differed radically.

Research, combined with experience, sometimes bitter experience, suggests that the relationship between threats and actual violence has to be understood within the context or venue in which it occurs. Threats are relative, for their predictive powers very much depend on the relationship between the subject and the target. To explain this phenomenon, we hypothesized that the value of threats as preincident indicators of violence increased in proportion to the degree of intimacy between the subject and the target. We called this hypothesis the *intimacy effect*. It postulates that the more interpersonal or intimate the relationship, the more likely threats will precede some ultimate act of violence. Threat managers can work with the intimacy effect by factoring it into their assessments and their selection of management strategies.

Consequently, when assessing threats, the threat manager must always ask:

- What is this threat intended to do?
- What is the social setting in which the threat occurred?
- What is the relationship, real or perceived, between the threatener and the target?

If the threatener seeks to control a spouse or intimidate coworkers, supervisors, fellow students, or teachers, then the value of the threat increases. If, instead, the subject aims only to instill fear in strangers or uses the threat to gain attention or makes repeated, empty threats, or uses the threat to express complete frustration or anger at some bureaucratic process or system beyond his or her ken, then the value of the threat as a preincident indicator of future violence decreases. Taking into account the intimacy effect, then, goes a long way toward assessing specific threats.

At the same time that research and threat management discounted the importance of threats as preincident indicators among strangers, lawmakers, especially at the federal level, toughened up the penalties for making such threats. Conversely, even though the research showed that the intimacy effect increased the value of threats in interpersonal venues, the Supreme Court dealt new laws mandating law enforcement responses to domestic disputes a grievous blow by ruling that police departments have wide discretion in enforcing temporary restraining orders such as those commonly issued in domestic situations.¹ As a result, research and the law, fell largely out of sync.

This chapter first summarizes research conducted by Debra M. Jenkins to test the intimacy effect hypothesis against the research on domestic and workplace violence, school shootings, and attacks on public figures. Jenkins found that the research on the various venues of intended violence supported the hypothesis. Next, the chapter addresses the significant gap between the intimacy effect and the focus of federal laws and recent court decisions. Finally, the chapter examines recent state efforts to bring their statutes into line with the research. Although federal laws and court decisions essentially contradict the research, state legislatures seem to be taking a much more realistic approach to confronting intended violence. Perhaps in time the federal approach will catch up with the states.

Working with the Intimacy Effect

The Appendix presents a research essay written by Debra M. Jenkins summarizing the current research on the relation between threats and the major venues of intended violence. Jenkins has reviewed studies focusing on violence toward public figures, workplace colleagues, school officials and students, and current and former intimates. She has concluded that the research supports the principal tenet of the intimacy effect even though no primary research has yet been done on the effect.

¹ *Castle Rock v. Gonzales*, 000 U.S. 04-278 (2005). We discuss below the significance of this case for managing domestic disputes.

Rather than summarize Jenkins' summaries, we refer the reader to her work. Here we quote from a number of observations Jenkins reached regarding each of the major venues and on intended violence in general. In addition, we strongly endorse her recommendation that the intimacy effect become the subject of some primary research to further refine our understanding of it. Much of the research Jenkins reviewed focused on some other topic, with threats addressed as a secondary or even tertiary issue.

Jenkins observed:

Violence against Public Figures

- Public figures are attacked without first being threatened in most cases studied.
- There is little motivation to threaten a public figure if violence is the desired outcome.
- Consequently, the research shows that threats are not good preincident indicators for violence against public figures.

Violence against Workplace Colleagues

- Threats are more prevalent among coworkers than from other sources in the workplace.
- Workers suffer attacks of greater lethality from coworkers than from clients.
- Most threat assessment professionals believe that threats among coworkers are important in determining level of danger.
- Consequently, the research suggests that the intimacy effect may apply in coworker workplace violence.

Violence against School Officials and Students

- Researchers are conflicted about how important threats are in the assessment of potential violence in the school venue.
- Threats of violence in the school venue may more likely be in the form of "leakage."
- Leakage supports the intimacy effect hypothesis since it occurs within interpersonal settings.

Violence against Domestic Intimates

- Threats of violence are common among intimate partners.

- It is possible to discern intended violence from impromptu violence in the domestic venue.
- Separation of an intimate couple may trigger more lethal intended violence.
- Female intimate partners are less likely to threaten prior to violent attack.
- Control motive is prevalent in male intimate-partner threats.
- Loss of control may prompt male intimate-partner attacks.
- Intimate partners who are severely or lethally violent are likely to have made prior threats of violence.
- The research on threats and violence in the domestic violence venue supports the intimacy effect.

General Observations

- Threat assessors may be able to evaluate direct threats differently depending on familiarity of victim and target.
- There is a stronger relationship between threats and intended violence in the domestic violence venue than in the public-figure violence venue.
- The enforcement of laws against threats of violence is less likely in the domestic venue than when directed toward public figures.
- If threat assessors wait for direct threats to occur against public figures, they may be misdirecting their attention away from real dangers.
- Within the domestic violence venue, the separation of intimates may be the most lethal stage of the relationship.
- Workplaces and schools provide social environments of familiarity where threats and talk of violence before an attack are common.
- In workplaces and schools, others are likely to know or suspect an attack is likely or imminent.
- Research drawn from the various venues for intended violence supports the intimacy effect hypothesis that the value of a threat as a preincident indicator increases in proportion to the degree of familiarity between subjects and targets.

Based on Jenkins' findings and observations, we envision threats as occurring along an interpersonal continuum in which the value of the threat increases in direct relation to the intimacy of the interpersonal relationship. Figure 5.1 illustrates this progression. Where the two lines join, threats carry the greatest weight because that is the intimate-partner social setting. Where the two lines diverge at the greatest distance, threats carry little weight as preincident indicators because that is the stranger-to-stranger social setting in which neither subject nor target knows—or even think they know—each other.

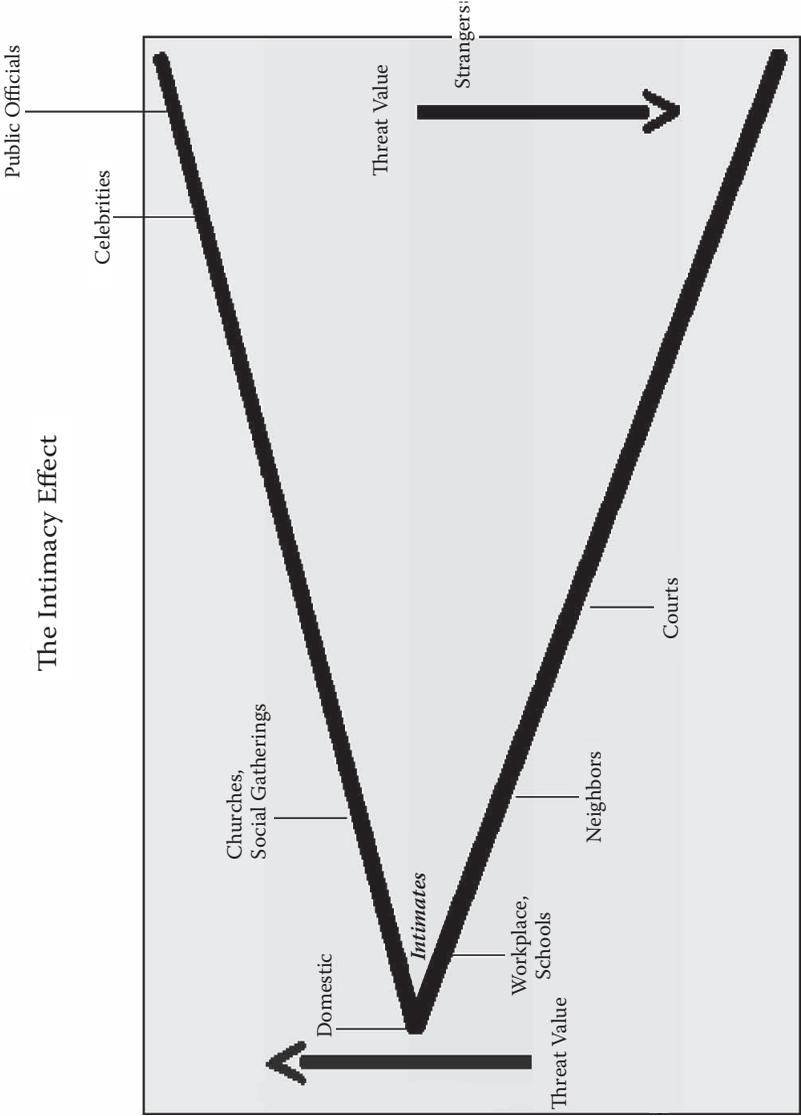


Figure 5.1 Intimacy effect chart.

Using the relationship continuum allows the threat manager to envision the value of threats within the social context in which they occur. We do not mean by this that all threats directed at intimate partners ultimately lead to violence, merely that a higher proportion of them ultimately do, especially when compared with threats to public figures. The intimacy effect should serve the threat manager as a crude barometer for measuring the pressure that threats bring to the different venues of intended violence. Sometimes that pressure rises to the level of hurricane force. At other times it is no greater than a mild spring day.

In all the years we have spoken on the intimacy effect, someone always asks “How do we gauge the intimacy effect when there is no relationship, but the threatener believes (either mistakenly or delusionally) that there is a relationship?” The prudent answer to that question is to always assess the relationship from the subject’s point of view. If he or she strongly believes a relationship exists, take any threats as a positive indicator of future violence.

Yet, having urged the threat manager to work with the intimacy effect when assessing threats, we hasten to emphasize that the threat manager’s attention should always be on the subject’s behaviors, of which making or not making a threat is one of many. Again, both research and experience show that how an individual acts is the best way to determine whether he or she is a hunter or a howler. Hunters engage in behaviors that promote their hunting; howlers engage in behaviors conducive to howling.

Ironically, of course, the ability of the threat manager to discount the value of a threat because of the impact of the intimacy effect in no way means that the threat can be ignored or shelved. After all, making a credible threat against another person violates state, sometimes even federal, laws. The threat manager may know for a certainty that he or she is managing a howler. At the same time, the threat manager cannot allow the howler to break the law with impunity. For corporate threat-management teams, school officials, mental health professionals, and others outside the law enforcement community, this situation raises a host of new challenges. Used creatively and innovatively, these situations also open up a host of opportunities for intelligently managing both hunters and howlers.

Two cases illustrate how the twin concepts of acting like a hunter and acting like a howler, combined with measuring the intimacy effect, enhance the accuracy of the threat manager’s assessments. Psychologist Reid Meloy has boldly asserted that “threats are not that big a deal.” He based that conclusion on a review of research, most of which dealt with either threats to public figures or stalking cases.² Meloy did not take into account threats

² Meloy, J. R. (2000). *Violence Risk and Threat Assessment: A Practical Guide for Mental Health and Criminal Justice Professionals* (p. 161). San Diego, CA: Specialized Training Services.

among intimates that culminated in violence. But he did describe a case study that dramatically showed how acting like a personal howler seeking control, when combined with the intimacy effect, can transform the howler into a hunter.

According to Meloy, a case in Colorado involved a husband who physically and sexually abused his wife over the course of a decade. Whenever she expressed a desire to leave, he would respond, "If you do, I'll bag you," by which he apparently meant put her in a body bag. After 10 years of threats and abuse, the wife finally left, thus ending the howler's control over her. Her departure turned the husband into a hunter. Within a week of her moving out, the husband decided to kill her, developed a plan to do it that depended on his personal knowledge of her workday, assembled his weapons, and went to the supermarket where she worked.

When she arrived, the husband shot her in the back. He chased her into the store, killed her, and also killed the store manager. He left the store and drove his van to the highest point in the parking lot and waited for police to arrive. He killed the first officer on the scene, but eventually surrendered after law enforcement officers returned his fire.³

Rather than discount the threats because they occurred repeatedly for nearly a decade without being carried out, threat managers familiar with the hunter-and-howler concepts and the intimacy effect would understand that the husband was a controller. For most of the decade his threats successfully kept his wife from leaving him. Since the threats worked, he had no need to carry them out. Indeed, carrying them out would have defeated his determination to keep her in the relationship. When finally she did pack up, the threat manager would have recognized that the intimacy effect indicated that the risk of the threats being carried out was higher once the control was lost. At the point of her departure, the threat manager would assess the husband as a high risk for carrying out lethal violence.

In Meloy's defense, he did recognize that in cases involving stalking of private individuals, "Articulated threats appear to have a positive and significant relationship to violence risk, but the correlation is weak."⁴ But the correlation is not measured simply between public and private figures. Rather, the correlation scales along the degree of intimacy between subject and target. Public figures have intimates and acquaintances, thus making them subject to the intimacy effect, too. The lethal formula in Meloy's case study combined a personal howler who sought to control an intimate, but who eventually lost his control over her. That combination correlates very well with the risk of violence.

³ Meloy, *Violence Risk*, pp. 161–162.

⁴ Meloy, *Violence Risk*, p. 166.

The second case study involves an impersonal howler who habitually made threats. In 1986, Scott L. Rendelman was a 31-year-old accountant living with his wife and children in Rockville, MD, a suburb of the nation's capitol. When he invested a client's \$283,000 in gold without the client's permission, law enforcement charged him with 15 counts of embezzlement. The court sentenced him to 4½ months in prison. "The first thing that happened was that I lost everything," he remembered 15 years later when he finally got out of jail, "The credit card people started suing me. The mortgage people came after the house. My wife took the kids and divorced me." Finally, the appellate court upheld his conviction.⁵

Rendelman's first threat was as an impersonal self-defender objecting to the appellate judges' ruling. Those threats got him a 10-year prison sentence. Within the first 6 months, Rendelman essentially gave up on life. "And after 6 months they'd ground me down. I had absolutely no desire to get out. I was ashamed. I didn't want to face my family again, and I had absolutely nothing to go back to," he later remembered. He found he actually preferred prison life. "You didn't have to pay bills. They did your laundry for you. Brought you your meals—room service. And I didn't have to show my face and be ashamed," he admitted. As a result, he became an impersonal habitual howler. Every time his sentence drew near closing, he sent threatening letters to public officials, including presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton and the governor of California.⁶ He signed himself "GRM," which stood for Government Rehabilitated Motherfucker.⁷

Threat managers familiar with the hunter-and-howler concepts and the impact of the intimacy effect would recognize Rendelman as an impersonal, habitual howler who communicated in writing from a distance. He did not know his targets, but he threatened them repeatedly and did so for his own benefit and enjoyment. The intimacy effect would discount the value of his threats as preincident indicators of violence. Consequently, the threat manager would assess him and his threats as low risk.

Ultimately, the judge who presided over Rendelman's last threat case saw that enough was enough. He refused to send him back to prison. "The court wants to take Mr. Rendelman finally out of the nightmare that he's been living for the last 15 years," the judge explained. Instead, the judge ordered Rendelman to serve a year at a halfway house where he would be required to find a job and begin paying rent. "That letter writing is over," Rendelman told a reporter. "I just did it from prison basically because I didn't want to be

⁵ *Sacramento Bee*, February 15, 2002.

⁶ *Sacramento Bee*, February 15, 2002.

⁷ Authors' personal knowledge.

released.” Significantly, however, he added, “Now, though, if they did send me back to prison, that’s when I’d start writing again.”⁸

The value of the intimacy effect lies in its filtering the results of the research on intended violence. Since most of that research has focused on public figure threats, the lessons of the research for threat managers became skewed. Rather than dismiss direct or veiled threats out of hand, the intimacy effect requires the threat manager to inquire into the nature of the relationship between the threatener and the target. That inquiry alone will go a long way toward making the threat assessment an informed, knowledgeable, and defensible analysis. By also applying the twin concepts of acting like a hunter and acting like a howler, the threat manager further enhances the threat assessment by focusing on the subject’s behaviors. The concepts of hunters, howlers, and the intimacy effect foster the best assessments.

Applying Federal Law

While the research on domestic and workplace violence, school shootings, and attacks on public officials uncovered the influence of the intimacy effect, Congress tightened up the federal response to explicit threats directed at federal officials. At the same time, the Supreme Court made a half-hearted effort to apply its concept of *true threat* as an exception to First Amendment rights of free speech. Since the Supreme Court failed to define the concept, individual circuit courts of appeal developed and applied their own definitions. Not surprisingly, that resulted in considerable confusion among the circuits. Federal law and federal court decisions drifted far away from what the research on intended violence was finding out about threats and attack-related behaviors.

For example, federal law makes it a crime to threaten a federal judge. Yet, in over 3,000 threatening communications directed toward federal jurists between 1980 and 1993, no individual who threatened a federal judge ever actually attacked that judge. That pattern continued over the next 14 years. One could argue then, as Dietz did with members of Congress, that judges who receive threats are relatively safe from the person making the threat. Conversely, the three federal judges who were assassinated were never threatened by their assassins.⁹ Nor did Bart Ross explicitly threaten Judge Lefkow or her family or any of the other judges on his list.

⁸ *Sacramento Bee*, February 15, 2002.

⁹ Calhoun, F. S. (1998). *Hunters and Howlers: Threats and Violence against Federal Judicial Officials in the United States, 1979-1993*. Washington, D.C.: United States Marshal Service.

Perhaps Congress intended the law punishing threats to insulate federal judges from frightening, disconcerting communications so they could better focus their attention on the cases before them. However, if Congress passed the law criminalizing threats as a way for law enforcement to enhance security for federal jurists, it missed its mark. The only security against actual assaults that federal law affords federal judges is the law punishing such assaults, but that seems precious little consolation.

So, too, with the laws securing the president. Congress made it a crime to threaten the president or to assault the president, but that was all. Every year, the Secret Service arrests scores of individuals who utter threats against the incumbent. But in the service's own research on 43 individuals who attacked a public figure in the United States, none threatened their target beforehand. Indeed, the researchers felt so strongly about discounting the value of threats they concluded that the belief that threats precede violence was a "myth."¹⁰ If Congress intended to provide law enforcement with tools to *prevent* presidential assassinations, it again missed its mark.

Take the case of Steven Baldwin, presidential threatener. On July 20, 2005, Baldwin mailed two packages to the White House. One had a label declaring "Biological Weapons Enclosed." The other label said "Letter Bomb!" Secret Service agents did not assess either package as actually posing a threat to the president. Rather than arrest Baldwin, the investigating agents simply warned him to stop sending threatening mail to the president. Clearly, the investigators assessed Baldwin as more of a pest, a howler, than someone who really posed a risk to the president. In the summer of 2005, the Secret Service did not even bother prosecuting him for sending the packages with the threatening labels. That would change as soon as Baldwin's behavior became even more disruptive.

The warning worked for nearly 6 months until December 14 when Baldwin again sent a package addressed to President George W. Bush. This time the package label read "Brace For Impact, I've Read Your Fortune & The Signs Are Not In Your Favor." The mail room x-ray showed a possible improvised explosive device (IED) inside the package. This prompted the White House mailroom to shut down for nearly 2 hours until investigators determined that the package held a cell phone wrapped in wires.

This time, Baldwin had gone too far. The brouhaha over the December package inconvenienced the mailroom and the Service. Consequently, Secret Service agents arrested him several weeks later. The charges they filed against him revealed just how serious a threat they thought he posed: making a false threat using biological weapons, making a false threat using explosive mate-

¹⁰Vossekuil, B. & Fein, R. (1998). *Protective Intelligence and Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State and Local Law Enforcement Officials* (p. 6). Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

rials, and threatening the president.¹¹ Clearly, the Secret Service used the law to help it manage a howler. But does that enhance the security of the president? The service reacted to the disruption of the offense, not any actual danger posed by Baldwin's actions.

Nor has Congress offered its own members any better security than it has offered the judiciary and the presidency. As with presidents, judges, and other federal officials, Congress made it a crime to threaten or assault members of Congress. Yet, research conducted over 15 years ago by Park Dietz et al. showed a statistically significant relationship between threatening a member of Congress and *not* approaching that member. Dietz et al. described the finding as particularly "robust."¹² One could almost argue that a public official is better off in terms of personal security if he or she is threatened by the subject. Unfortunately, the law has taken little notice of what the research found.

The Supreme Court further muddied the legal waters surrounding threats by creating a new category it called "true threats." Although the definition of a true threat remains murky, it seems to require the courts to balance expressed threats with the First Amendment by evaluating the threatening statement within the context of everything that happened as well as what the subject intended, where and how the threat was communicated, and any reasonable reaction of the recipient. In *Watts v. United States*, which dealt with the threat to the president statute, the Supreme Court recognized that

The Nation undoubtedly has a valid, even an overwhelming, interest in protecting the safety of its Chief Executive and in allowing him to perform his duties without interference from threats of physical violence. ... Nevertheless, a statute such as this one, which makes criminal a form of pure speech, must be interpreted with the commands of the First Amendment clearly in mind.¹³

In the instant case, Watts, while attending an anti-Vietnam War rally in 1966, told a small group of his fellow protestors on the grounds of the Washington Monument that "if they ever make me carry a rifle, the first man I want to get in my sights is L.B.J."¹⁴ The majority on the Court held that the statement was more political than threatening, pointing out that Watts' audience laughed at the comment. The Court added almost off-handedly that "the statute ini-

¹¹ Associated Press, January 13, 2006.

¹² Dietz, P. et al. (1991). Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to members of the United States Congress. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, [Au: Please insert volume number.], 1466.

¹³ *Watts v. United States*, 394 U.S. 705.

¹⁴ *Watts v. United States*, 394 U.S. 705.

tially requires the Government to prove a true ‘threat.’”¹⁵ The Court offered no clarification of exactly what it meant by that term.

Over 20 years later, the Supreme Court tried to clarify the meaning of true threats. In *R.A.V. v. St. Paul, Minnesota*, the Court explained:

And the Federal Government can criminalize only those threats of violence that are directed against the President, see 18 U.S.C. 871—since the reasons why threats of violence are outside the First Amendment (protecting individuals from the fear of violence, from the disruption that fear engenders, and from the possibility that the threatened violence will occur) have special force when applied to the person of the President.¹⁶

R.A.V. seems to imply that “true threats” are those not protected by the First Amendment because of the need for “protecting individuals from the fear of violence, from the disruption that fear engenders, and from the possibility that the threatened violence will occur.”¹⁷ More confusing still, *R.A.V.* had nothing to do with the president. It involved several teenagers who planted a burning cross in the yard of an African-American family. The St. Paul trial court convicted *R.A.V.*, one of the youths, of violating a city ordinance that “prohibits the display of a symbol which one knows or has reason to know ‘arouses anger, alarm or resentment in others on the basis of race, color, creed, religion or gender.’”¹⁸ The Supreme Court found the ordinance in violation of the First Amendment. Ironically, in the two cases addressing threats, the Court found in favor of the individuals convicted in the lower courts of violating statutes prescribing threatening communications.

The closest anyone on the Court has yet to come to articulating a definition of true threat occurred in a 1975 concurring opinion written by Justice Thurgood Marshall, with Justice William O. Douglas joining. The majority opinion rested on a technicality and did not address the merits or the meaning of true threat. George Rogers, a local Shreveport, LA, “town drunk,” showed up at a coffee shop one morning and began expressing his opposition to President Richard Nixon’s planned trip to China. He told several patrons and a waitress or two that he was Jesus Christ and had privileged information that the Chinese had a bomb which they might use against the American people. Rogers told his unwilling audience that he intended to go to Washington to “whip Nixon’s ass” or “kill him in order to save the United States.”¹⁹

Rogers became enough of an irritant that someone summoned the police. The arresting officer asked Rogers if he had threatened the president. Rogers

¹⁵ *Watts v. United States*, 394 U.S. 705.

¹⁶ *R.A.V. v. St. Paul, Minn.*, 505 U.S. 377.

¹⁷ *R.A.V. v. St. Paul, Minn.* 505 U.S. 377.

¹⁸ *R.A.V. v. St. Paul, Minn.* 505 U.S. 377.

¹⁹ *Rogers v. U.S.* 422 U.S. 35 (1975).

replied, in part, “I’m going to Washington and I’m going to beat his ass off. Better yet, I will go kill him.” Rogers added that he would have to walk since he did not like riding in cars. The police did not arrest him on any local charge, but they did refer his statements to the local Secret Service office. The Secret Service promptly arrested him for threatening the president.²⁰

“This sad set of circumstances,” Marshall wrote, “resulted in a five-count indictment under the ‘threats against the President’ statute, 18 U.S.C. 871 (a).” At trial, the jury found Rogers guilty. Rather than overturn the conviction on a technicality, as the majority voted to do, Marshall and Douglas wanted to address the breadth of the threat statute. They found that the lower courts interpreted the statute to mean applying an “objective” literal interpretation to the words uttered. That is, if the communication carried a threat on its face, then the subject had violated the threats-against-the-president statute. Marshall believed that balancing the statute against the First Amendment required delving deeper to determine whether the person making the utterance actually *intended* to make a threat. “Statements deemed threatening in nature only upon ‘objective’ consideration will be deterred only if persons criticizing the President are careful to give a wide berth to any comment that might be construed as threatening in nature,” Marshall opined, “and that degree of deterrence would have substantial costs in discouraging the ‘uninhibited, robust, and wide-open’ debate that the First Amendment is intended to protect.” Marshall explained:

I would therefore interpret 871 to require proof that the speaker intended his statement to be taken as a threat, even if he had no intention of actually carrying it out. The proof of intention would, of course, almost certainly turn on the circumstances under which the statement was made . . . Under the narrower construction of 871, the jury in this case might well have acquitted, concluding that it was unlikely that Rogers actually intended or expected that his listeners would take his threat as a serious one. Because I think that the District Court’s misconstruction of the statute prejudiced petitioner in this case and may continue to do mischief in future prosecutions brought under 871, I would reverse on this ground.²¹

Clearly, the Supreme Court sympathizes with fools and drunks, but it has yet to fully distinguish between true threats, either to presidents or private citizens, and free speech.

A number of commentators have expressed grave reservations about the lack of clarity from the Supreme Court regarding the definition of true threats, especially given the chasm between the law and the research. Their commentaries, especially those concerned with the lack of guidance in the school

²⁰-*Rogers v. U.S.* 422 U.S. 35.

²¹*Rogers v. U.S.* 422 U.S. 35.

venue, further illustrate the continued disconnect between the research findings on intended violence and the judicial findings on threats. These commentators argue that until the gap between the law and the research closes, threat managers will find themselves frustrated by the demands of the federal courts.

Jennifer E. Rothman asserted that the Supreme Court's silence on clarifying the definition of true threats has resulted in "unaddressed confusion" among the lower courts. Some circuit courts focus on the intent of the person making the threatening communication; other circuits focus on an objective interpretation of the communication by a reasonable person, usually the recipient.²² Thus, an individual who intended to make a threat may be acquitted in some circuits if his or her target did not reasonably infer that a threat had been made. In other circuits, subjects who did not intend their communication as a threat could be convicted if the target reasonably interpreted the communication as threatening. Justice Marshall's fear of continued "mischief" has been realized. The Supreme Court has not taken any opportunity to rectify the different approaches.

As a solution, Rothman proposed a three-part test for determining a communication a true threat. First, the subject intended to make a threat. Second, the subject indicated that the subject or some specific confederates of the subject would carry it out, as opposed to some unnamed or unidentified parties carrying it out. Third, would a reasonable person understand the communication as a threat?²³ If the communication passed all three tests, the subject had made a true threat. Failing any single test negated the validity of the threat.

Scott Hammack believed that the problem of no clear definition or approach has been compounded by advances on the Internet. After citing a number of incidents involving threatening communications on the World Wide Web, Hammack observed, "These cases illustrate how the Internet amplifies the effects of threats and the need for courts to understand the full impact of this new technology. The courts' two traditional approaches to true threats, the subjective speaker test and the objective listener test, both fail to deal with on-line threats effectively."²⁴

Hammack predicted that the very elements that make the Internet such a strong source of information and exchange of ideas also lend themselves to hate mongers and would-be terrorists. "The features that make the Internet an ideal free speech forum, such as the large and transient audience, rapid

²²Rothman, J. E. (2001). Freedom of speech and true threats, *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, 25, 286.

²³Ibid. 333-335.

²⁴Hammack, S. (2002). The Internet loophole: why threatening speech on-line requires a modification of the courts' approach to true threats and incitement. *Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems*, 36, 95.

exchange of information, anonymity and low cost of access, also serve to magnify threatening speech,” Hammack observed, adding that “these features also allow clever speakers to exploit a gap in the courts’ threats approach by using incitement to create the same effect as a threat.”²⁵ Hammack believed that if the courts continued their current muddled approach to true threats, it “will allow the Internet to become a prominent weapon of terror, while simultaneously permitting the restriction of benign speech.”²⁶ Instead, Hammack proposed a hybrid approach that would take into account what the subject intended to communicate and how the target reacted to it.²⁷

The Supreme Court’s muddled approach to true threats has drawn the ire of legal researchers interested in the spate of school shootings that has received so much media attention over the past decade. School shooters, researchers have found, tend to talk about their plans for violence with their fellows. FBI researchers on school shootings have labeled the phenomenon “leakage.”²⁸ “In each of the recent school yard slayings,” Lisa Popyk wrote on November 10, 1998, “somebody read the class assignments that ended up being rants on violence and death, someone heard the threats or saw the weapons. Some even helped form the plan. And yet no one spoke up or tried to stop them.”²⁹ For example, in a shooting at the Bethel, AK, high school in 1997, a crowd of students, one equipped with a video camera, knew about the plan and congregated on the second-floor balcony to watch when Evan Ramsey, the shooter, arrived. Although leakage is not entirely the province of school shooters, the phenomenon has attracted the attention of legal commentators interested in developing a coherent approach to true threats in schools.

These scholars have criticized the courts for not addressing leakage. “Recent court cases suggest that the courts are largely out of touch with the real needs of threat assessment and of the schools’ necessary response to stop violence,” Sara E. Redfield wrote. “Specifically, the courts fail to recognize the vital difference between a threat made and a threat posed.”³⁰ She could as easily have applied this analysis to any and all of the venues for intended violence. Redfield became so enamored of the FBI’s proposed assessment process for students, she recommended that the courts use the same process for determining whether a student had made a true threat. The suggestion would require the courts to take into account the sociological climate at the

²⁵Ibid., p. 102.

²⁶Ibid., p. 102.

²⁷Ibid., p. 102.

²⁸O’Toole, M. E. (n.d.). *The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective* (pp. 16–17). Quantico, VA: Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime.

²⁹Popyk, L. (1998, November 10). Killers gave plenty of warning signs. *Cincinnati Post*, .

³⁰Redfield, S. Threats made, threats posed: school and judicial analysis in need of redirection, at [http://www.law2.byu.edu/jel/v2003_2/Redfield .htm](http://www.law2.byu.edu/jel/v2003_2/Redfield.htm).

school, the psychological profile of the accused student, and family relationships and dynamics in judging the accused.³¹ That judicial approach probably risks more harm than the current ill-defined definition of true threat. Although Redfield correctly distinguishes between someone who makes a threat from someone who poses a threat, making that distinction should be left to trained threat managers, not jurists.³²

Lisa M. Pisciotta proposed a simpler, but no less unrealistic, solution. She would give considerable deference to school officials and how they handled the student. However, Pisciotta's approach risked running directly up against the Supreme Court's traditional concern with granting broad protection to the First Amendment. Pisciotta observed that

School administrators across the country have begun to implement zero-tolerance policies when dealing with threatening behavior by students. Administrators are suspending, expelling, and even having students arrested for discussing and planning acts of violence against their teachers and schools. ... In response to these zero-tolerance policies, civil rights and First Amendment groups have zealously advocated the free speech rights of censored students.³³

Because of the leakage problem, Pisciotta would have the courts dismiss the constitutional issues and back the school administrators. She argued, "As courts attempt to draw this line in the context of student threats, they must remember that adolescents are still learning responsibility, civility, and maturity, and consequently need to grow into their constitutional rights." Rather than emphasize individual freedom, she urged the courts to acknowledge that "educational professionals must be granted ample discretion in order to regulate and punish student threats and keep America's schools productive and safe."³⁴ Since the few Supreme Court cases that have addressed threatening communications have all revolved around protecting First Amendment rights, Pisciotta's approach probably has little chance of being judicially accepted.

Perhaps taking a clue from state legislatures (see below), in 1996 Congress addressed the issue of interstate stalking. Interestingly, the federal Interstate Stalking Punishment and Prevention Act does not require evidence of a credible threat as proof of stalking. Instead, the law requires proof that the subject traveled between states "with the intent to kill, injure, harass, or intimidate

³¹Ibid.

³²The best source for assessing the potential for school violence is Kris Mohandie, *School Violence Threat Management*, (San Diego, CA: Specialized Training Service, 2000).

³³Pisciotta, L. M. (2000). Beyond sticks and stones: a first amendment framework for educators who seek to punish students' threats. *Seton Hall Law Review*, 30, 637-638.

³⁴ Pisciotta, Beyond sticks and stones, pp. 669-670.

another person” or to put that other person “in reasonable fear.” The law, then, directly addresses hunters who travel between states. In 1999 Congress amended the law to include cyber-stalking.³⁵ Although the statute moved away from the threat requirement, it still poses a challenge to prosecutors by making them prove that the defendant specifically intended to injure or instill fear in the victim. It does not allow for imputed knowledge, that is, that the stalker knew or should have known that his or her actions would result in injury or fear. Rather, the prosecutor has to prove the stalker specifically knew the impact and effect of his or her actions.³⁶ That requirement poses a tough standard of proof.

With the possible exception of the federal antistalking statute, federal law and court decisions have produced the curious result that individuals like Steven Baldwin will be convicted of false threats, even though no one believed he actually posed a threat to the president, while laws addressing attack-related behaviors go largely unwritten. Undoubtedly, Justice Marshall would find Baldwin’s case an equally “sad set of circumstances” as those he addressed in *Rogers v. U.S.* In effect, federal laws and court decisions do a fine job policing howlers, but threat managers will find them of little value in managing hunters. Even in the sensitive venue of school violence, the Supreme Court has yet to balance the First Amendment against the leakage phenomenon. Based on past decisions, threat managers can probably expect little help when it finally does. In the federal arena, the disconnect between the law and its interpreters and the research on intended violence remains a wide and thus far unbridgeable chasm.

Working with State and Local Laws on Threats and Domestic Violence

Whereas the U.S. Congress and U.S. courts have failed to marry the law with current research findings, state legislatures and state courts, especially in California, have taken the lead in doing just that. State laws proscribing threats usually require four elements of proof. First, the communication must, in fact, contain a true threat. Second, the person making the communication must intend to make a threat. Third, the threatener must have the apparent ability to carry it out. Fourth, the threat must instill reasonable fear in the recipient. Case law has interpreted apparent ability broadly enough to cover

³⁵Briggs, K. M. (2004). Federal stalking laws. In (Eds.), *Investigation and Prosecution of Stalking and Related Crimes* (pp. XV-1–XV-23). Sacramento, CA: California District Attorneys Association.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 6.

individuals incarcerated or institutionalized. Across the country, individuals who intentionally threaten someone else with harm break state laws.

Making threats illegal helps threat managers in certain venues, especially among intimates and acquaintances, but it only targets howlers in other venues involving threats to strangers. These laws offer effective ways to police intimate partner violence, as well as violence in schools and workplaces. They are mostly ineffective in enhancing a target's security in settings involving threats among strangers. Indeed, they may even offer a false sense of security in those settings since they essentially police howlers, not hunters. The laws against threats have yet to cleanly shift their focus from what individuals communicate to what they do. Until that shift occurs, the law puts howlers at risk, not hunters.

In contrast to the U.S. Congress and the Supreme Court, the California legislature has crafted a clear, straightforward definition of what the anti-stalking law calls "credible threats." California courts have enhanced that definition through their interpretations of it. According to the statute, a credible threat is

a verbal or written threat, including that performed through the use of an electronic communication device, or a threat implied by a pattern of conduct or a combination of verbal, written, or electronically communicated statements and conduct made with the intent to place the person that is the target of the threat in reasonable fear for his or her safety or the safety of his or her family and made with the apparent ability to carry out the threat so as to cause the person who is the target of the threat to reasonably fear for his or her safety or the safety of his or her family. It is not necessary to prove that the defendant had the intent to actually carry out the threat. The present incarceration of a person making the threat shall not be a bar to prosecution under this section. Constitutionally protected activity is not included within the meaning of "credible threat."³⁷

The most important breakthrough made by the statute was to invite the courts to infer a credible threat through the subject's behavior, not based simply on what the subject communicated in writing or verbally. For example, according to Raymond Armstrong, the appellate court upheld a stalking conviction based on an inferred credible threat derived from the subject's bizarre behavior. The courts can also infer the existence of a credible threat through the context of the subject and victim's previous or current relationship, including a lack of any interpersonal relationship.³⁸

The statute's requirement that the threat put the target "in reasonable fear" allows prosecutors to enumerate all the reasons the target felt fear,

³⁷Quoted in Armstrong, "Stalking Law," p. IX-2.

³⁸Armstrong, "Stalking Law," pp. IX-2-IX-3.

including previous acts of violence by the subject, criminal convictions, and any untoward incidents in the subject and target's relationship. The court ruled, for example, that Steven Spielberg reasonably felt fear for himself and his family from the man who took action to kidnap him, even though Spielberg was in Europe and the stalker (and hunter) was in Los Angeles in the custody of the police when Spielberg learned about the plot.³⁹ Such expansive interpretations of the antistalking statute gave California threat managers and law enforcement considerable leeway in managing stalkers.

The problems that stalking and threat laws run up against are the constitutional protections of free speech, not to mention the post-*Castle Rock* issue of police discretion. State and federal laws criminalizing threats and threatening behaviors try to overcome these protections by usually requiring proof that the offender, by word or deed, intended to cause fear in the victim and that the words or deeds did in fact cause actual fear. This usually boils down to showing that the offender had opportunity and means and that the target knew it. The "crime" has become the causing or instilling of fear in the target. Ironically, that is precisely what sinister howlers aim to do.

Fortunately, the evolution of both laws and court interpretations addressing domestic violence and stalking has begun a clear trend toward taking behavior into account. Beginning in the 1980s, states began passing mandatory arrest laws to address what many viewed as a crisis in police nonenforcement of domestic abuse crimes, especially the nonenforcement of restraining orders. "Because these cases were considered non-criminal," Sack observed, "police assigned domestic violence calls low priority and often did not respond to them for several hours or ignored them altogether."⁴⁰ To combat this inattention to a growing national tragedy, states mandated that police must arrest a spousal abuser. "Many states enacted mandatory arrest statutes under which a police officer must arrest an abuser when the officer has probable cause to believe that a domestic assault has occurred or that a protection order has been violated," a column in the *Harvard Law Review* noted.⁴¹ The statutes were purposefully designed to remove all police discretion in the matter.

Both the laws against domestic violence and the reason prompting the courts to issue restraining orders addressed subject behaviors. Domestic violence entails threats, subjugation, hitting, pushing, strangling, and other forms of physical attacks used by hunters. Restraining orders seek to stop harassing, stalking, threatening, disrupting, and approaching, again all tac-

³⁹ Armstrong, "Stalking Law," p. IX-3.

⁴⁰Sack, E. J. (2004). Battered women and the state: the struggle for the future of domestic violence policy. *Wisconsin Law Review*, (no vol.), 1663.

⁴¹Developments in the law: legal responses to domestic violence. (1993). *Harvard Law Review*, 106, 1498, 1537.

tics used by hunters. Threats, state legislatures began to understand, were but one type of behavior used by the abusive spouse to control the abused spouse. By addressing all the behaviors, the states turned their laws toward hunters, at least hunters caught under the spell of the intimacy effect.

Unfortunately, perhaps ultimately even tragically, in a 2005 decision, the Supreme Court dealt a crippling, perhaps fatal blow, to the legislative efforts to mandate police enforcement of temporary restraining orders in domestic-abuse cases. The majority reached its decision in the face of a particularly horrific example of how violent domestic disputes can be. Simon and Jessica Gonzales, who shared three daughters aged 10, 9, and 7, initiated divorce proceedings in 1999. During the process, the husband made suicidal threats and engaged in sufficient erratic behavior that the court obliged Jessica's request for a temporary restraining order. The court granted it on May 21. When it was served on June 4, it became permanent. The order excluded Simon from the family home and prohibited him from "molesting or disturbing the peace of Ms. Gonzales and their three daughters." The order allowed Simon to take the girls every other weekend and for 2 weeks each summer. Upon reasonable notice and with Jessica's consent, Simon could also take the girls out to dinner one night a week.⁴²

A few minutes after 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 22, Simon kidnapped the three girls while they were playing in the yard. He had not discussed with Jessica taking the girls to dinner. When Jessica discovered their absence, she immediately sensed that Simon had taken them. She called the police to report the possible violation of the restraining order. Castle Rock police officers responded, interviewed Jessica, and told her they could do nothing to enforce the order and for her to wait until 10:00 p.m. for the children to return. If they were not back by then, the officers instructed her, she was to call the police.⁴³

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Jessica reached Simon on his cell phone. He told her he had taken the girls to Elitch Gardens, an amusement park in Denver. Jessica immediately called the Castle Rock police to report that she had confirmed Simon's violation of the restraining order. She pleaded with the police to find and arrest Simon at the amusement park. Again, the officer refused to enforce the order and advised Jessica to wait until the magic hour of 10:00 p.m.⁴⁴

Shortly after 10:00 p.m., Jessica called the Castle Rock police station to report the girls still missing. This time, the officer advised her to wait until midnight. A little after midnight, Jessica called again, but again the police

⁴²*Jessica Gonzales v. City of Castle Rock et. al*, 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, Number 011053 v 2, April 29, 2004.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Gonzales v. Castle Rock* 366 F. 3d. 1093.

refused to act. In fact, it turned out at trial, the Castle Rock police had a policy and custom of not enforcing restraining orders in domestic disputes despite the state legislature's efforts to mandate that enforcement. Jessica went to her husband's apartment complex where she reported to police he and the girls had not returned. The police dispatcher promised to send a patrol car, but none ever came. Jessica went to the police station at about 1:00 a.m. An officer interviewed her, but took no report. The officer again made no attempt to enforce the restraining order or to find the three children.⁴⁵

Simon had not told his wife that, in addition to taking the three girls to the amusement park, he had also purchased a semiautomatic pistol and ammunition. At around 3:20 a.m., he pulled his truck into the Castle Rock police station, got out, and opened fire on the building. Police officers returned fire, killing Simon. The officers found the three girls in the cab of the truck, all dead from gunshot wounds.⁴⁶

Despite the fact that the standard language on the back of the restraining order specifically instructed "law enforcement officials" that "YOU SHALL USE EVERY REASONABLE MEANS TO ENFORCE THIS RESTRAINING ORDER" and despite the legislative history of the Colorado statute giving a clear showing that the legislature intended to make enforcement mandatory in domestic dispute situations, the United States Supreme Court held in a 7-to-2 ruling that enforcement of the order was discretionary for the police, not mandatory. Since the police could enforce it as they chose, the majority concluded that Jessica Gonzales "did not, for purposes of the Due Process clause, have a property interest in police enforcement of the restraining order against her husband."⁴⁷

However one reads the *Castle Rock* majority opinion, it strikes us as dumbfounding that any court would rule that lawful court orders are at the discretion of the police to enforce, especially in a case in which the Castle Rock police made the choice more out of laziness and bad habit than any legitimate law enforcement rationale. In consolation, the Court observed that when Simon violated the restraining order, he gave Jessica Gonzales "grounds on which he could be arrested, criminally prosecuted, and held in contempt."⁴⁸ The Court stayed silent on the issue of how she could effect that arrest given the apparent lack of interest by the Castle Rock police officers and Simon's eventual suicide by cop. Had Simon survived his shootout with police, violating the restraining order would have been the least of his legal troubles.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷*Town of Castle Rock, Colorado v. Gonzales, individually and a next best friend of her deceased minor children, Gonzales et al.* 000 U.S. 04-278 (2005)

⁴⁸Ibid.

Even more disturbingly than this rather callous response, the Court simply refused to take seriously the Colorado legislature's efforts to address domestic violence through mandatory police responses. "We do not believe that these provisions of Colorado law truly made enforcement of restraining orders *mandatory*," the majority agreed.⁴⁹ Apparently, it all depended on what the definition of "shall" is. Rather, the Court pointed to a long tradition of deferring to police discretion in the face of riots, mayhem, and difficult decisions of when to arrest or not. That attitude may have a profoundly negative effect on the two-decade long effort by state legislatures to get local police departments to take domestic violence seriously. That alone makes *Castle Rock* a notorious setback for preventing intended violence between intimates.

Castle Rock bodes to become just as big an impediment to state stalking laws as it seems to be for restraining orders precisely because one strategy for controlling stalking behavior relies on temporary restraining orders. However, most states make stalking a crime, thus raising anew police discretion in how to enforce it; that is, if the *Castle Rock* precedent in terms of police discretion applies. Given how broadly stated the majority's opinion stretches, it may well have value as a precedent with antistalking laws.

State Stalking Laws

Beginning in the early 1990s, antistalking laws have developed from the diverse experiences of high-profile celebrities and victims of domestic violence. The stalking issue received national attention after John Bardo first stalked, then murdered, actress Rebecca Shaeffer in 1989. His love-obsession for her innocent character in the television series *My Sister Sam* turned to hatred and disgust when she made her film debut in *Class Struggle in Beverly Hills*, in which her character had a love scene. As a direct result of Bardo's assault, the California legislature passed a law defining a stalker as "someone who willfully, maliciously and repeatedly follows or harasses another victim and who makes a credible threat with the intent to place the victim or victim's immediate family in fear of their safety." The stalker must engage in two separate incidents to show a "continuity of purpose" and thus give credibility to the threat. By 1993, every state had enacted antistalking laws.⁵⁰

California, because Bardo killed Schaeffer there, led the way in 1990. Its antistalking law requires three elements of proof. First, the subject must

⁴⁹*Gonzales v. Castle Rock* 366 F. 3d. 1093.

⁵⁰<http://www.franksreelreviews.com/shorttakes/shaeffer/shaeffer.htm>. Armstrong, R. S. (2004). Stalking law: the statute and its interpretation, In *Investigation and Prosecution of Stalking and Related Crimes* (pp. IX-1-IX-5). Sacramento, CA: California District Attorneys Association.

willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follow or harass the target. Second, the subject must make a credible threat. Third, in making the threat, the subject must have intended to instill fear in the target or the target's family.⁵¹ The first element clearly focuses the law on activities in which hunters engage. Although hunters and stalkers are not synonymous, many stalkers easily cross over to the hunt. A stalker who intends to somehow convince his or her estranged spouse to renew their relationship is not a hunter who intends lethal violence. But when that stalker becomes convinced the spouse will not return and, therefore, should suffer, the stalker becomes a hunter. Many celebrity stalkers seek some sort of relationship with the celebrity, perhaps romantic, but at least nonviolent (from the stalker's point of view). Once rejected or, more precisely, once the stalker realizes or understands the rejection, then the celebrity stalker may decide to punish the celebrity for that transgression. At that point, the stalker becomes a hunter.

Robert Hoskins' case illustrates the ease with which stalkers can become hunters. On three separate occasions, Hoskins gained entry to the singer and actress Madonna's private residence by climbing over the wall surrounding the house. Hoskins wished only to express his undying love for the star and to ask her to marry him. Each time security guards shooed him away, however, his love turned and he threatened to kill her. On the second approach, Hoskins told the security officer that if Madonna did not marry him that evening, he would "slice her throat from ear to ear." The guard encouraged Hoskins to leave. As he walked down the road, Madonna rode past him on her bicycle. Hoskins did not recognize her.⁵²

Seven weeks later, Hoskins again scaled the wall. When a security officer confronted him near the swimming pool, Hoskins lunged for the officer's sidearm. After a brief scuffle, the officer shot the stalker twice. Hoskins survived and was convicted of a number of offenses, including stalking. While awaiting sentencing, Hoskins scrawled all over the walls of his cell "I love Madonna" and "Madonna loves me." After the jail guard chided him for the graffiti, Hoskins blamed Madonna for writing it. When he got out of jail, he promised the guard, he intended to "slice the lying bitch's throat from ear to ear." During an interview with Los Angeles Police Department psychologist Kris Mahondie, Hoskins explained that he was in love with, and had impregnated, a spirit that had inhabited Madonna's body. The spirit had since left Madonna and gone to another celebrity. Once he served his 10-year

⁵¹Ibid. p. IX-1.

⁵²Mahondie, K. (2004). Stalking: a 21st century perspective. In *Investigation and Prosecution of Stalking and Related Crimes* (pp. I-13-I-14). Sacramento, CA: California District Attorneys Association. Names obtained from <http://crimemagazine.com/stalkers.htm>. Mahondie, a psychologist for the Los Angeles Police Department, described the case without mentioning anyone's name, but the facts he relates exactly match Hoskins' case.

sentence, Hoskins intended to take up his pursuit of the spirit wherever it then resided.⁵³

Hoskins swiftly and repeatedly went from undying love for Madonna to wanting to kill her. In doing so, he exemplified the thin line separating stalkers from hunters. Indeed, stalking is an attack-related behavior in which many hunters engage as they go down the path to intended violence. What separates the two, hunters from stalkers, is their purpose and intent. Stalkers seeking romance do not become hunters until rejection convinces them to kill. As Hoskins amply showed, that intention can shift from romance to murder and back in a revolving cycle that ends either through threat management intervention or tragedy.

One of the fundamental problems the laws against stalking run up against is that, short of the attack itself, most attack-related behaviors do not involve criminal conduct. Although some states have tried to address hunter-type behaviors with stalking laws and criminal-trespass statutes, these laws, like the original California statute, usually also require some type of credible threat to make them enforceable. Legislators have found it nearly impossible to craft legislation prohibiting what for everyone else are legal activities, that is, buying a weapon, searching the Internet, asking questions, or expressing negative feelings toward someone. Adding to the law a requirement for a threat seems to be the only way to balance the subject's rights into the stalking elements of proof. Many hunters use that requirement to their advantage.

Nonetheless, the states have made great progress toward dealing with hunter behaviors, certainly more than the U.S. Congress. California's use of behaviors to substantiate credible threats should serve as a model for other states to follow. More importantly, threat managers will find useful tools hidden among the state laws addressing threats, threatening behaviors, and stalking. Making use of these laws, especially in combination with other management strategies, simply enhances the threat manager's ability to manage both hunters and howlers.

Summary

This chapter has summarized research conducted by Debra M. Jenkins to test the reliability of the intimacy effect hypothesis. Jenkins found that the research on domestic and workplace violence, school shootings, and attacks on public figures supports the hypothesis. Unfortunately, federal laws and court decisions have not taken the research into account. Fortunately, state legislatures are beginning to shift their focus away from just punishing threats and toward punishing threatening behaviors.

⁵³Mahondie, *Stalking*, p. 14.

Case Analysis: A Mother's Help

The Facts

Several years ago, a woman placed an ad in the local newspaper to sell her dog. Two days later, she received a telephone call from a man who identified himself as Richard J. After a brief conversation, Richard told her he had decided not to buy the dog. Instead, Richard brought up a current statewide controversy involving a major international corporation headquartered in their city. Richard told the woman that if the controversy was not resolved the right way, the chairman of the corporation, who was well known throughout the state, "will be dead." The woman reported that Richard seemed to get more agitated as he talked.

A day later, the woman mentioned the phone conversation to a friend. The friend encouraged her to contact the local police. The next day, police investigators contacted the security office at the corporation. Because the corporate security officers had worked with the police on previous cases, both agencies had developed a good rapport. The police investigators told the security officers that Richard J. had no criminal record or registered weapons.

Two days later, the corporate threat manager and his partner interviewed Richard at Richard's residence. They learned that Richard was 41 and living at his mother's home. He worked at a minimum wage job and seemed "slow" in his mental capabilities. He told the threat managers that he was under the care of a nearby mental health clinic.

Richard admitted making the statement about the corporate chairman. He had listened to a talk radio program discussing the issue and talking against the corporation and its chairman. Richard stated he was merely summarizing the talk radio discussion in his conversation with the woman selling her dog.

Threat Assessment

Based on the facts known at this time, Richard is assessed as a celebrity-seeking howler who poses little risk of violence to the chairman or the corporation. In talking over the telephone to an uninvolved third party, Richard got carried away by controversial rhetoric that culminated in a veiled threat to a public figure. He gave no evidence of any personal knowledge about the chairman or the corporation beyond what he heard on the talk radio program. The fact that he receives counseling from a mental health clinic on an outpatient basis suggests that he has mental problems that may be contributing to his outburst. At present, there is no evidence that Richard has engaged in any attack-related behaviors. Instead, he has focused on espousing his opinion over the telephone to a stranger.

Recommended Protective Response

Because the issue continues to receive a lot of controversial publicity, the security office, as a precaution, should issue a bulletin with Richard's picture to the corporate security officers who patrol the building. The chairman's personal assistant should also be briefed to determine whether the chairman should be briefed. The chairman's upcoming schedule includes two nearby speaking engagements, so security officers should accompany the chairman to those two events.

Recommended Threat-Management Strategy

Richard's inappropriate reference to the chairman dying may constitute a prosecutable threat. The district attorney should be consulted about the possibility of having Richard arrested and tried. In the meantime, and as an alternate strategy, a passive watch and wait would be appropriate to determine whether Richard will continue his inappropriate interest in the chairman. In addition, the report of the inappropriate communications should be given to the mental health clinic treating Richard.

The Outcome

The district attorney declined to prosecute Richard, so corporate security adopted the passive watch-and-wait strategy. They also passed the report to Richard's mental health clinic for his counselor's information. Although receptive to receiving the report, the clinic staff maintained a neutral attitude and refused to discuss Richard's case with the threat manager.

Four months later, Richard called the city unemployment office seeking assistance for job training. During two telephone calls within 30 minutes of each other, Richard brought up the chairman and used angry, profane language describing how the chairman should be dead. Officials at the unemployment office reported the calls to the police department. Investigators shared the report with the threat manager. Since the district attorney had already ruled that wishing the chairman's death was not a criminal act, the threat manager decided to interview Richard again, but this time to arrange for Richard's mother to be present. The threat manager also passed on the new report to the mental health clinic.

With his mother sitting next to him, Richard's demeanor during the second interview was very meek and cooperative. The mother told the threat managers that Richard was supposed to be seeing his counselor at the mental health clinic, but she suspected that he was not going. She also informed them that Richard had been drinking before making the two calls to the unemployment office.

The threat managers arranged for third-party control over Richard through his mother. She agreed to take him to his appointments at the clinic. She also forbade him to drive his pickup truck because of his drinking. She promised to allow him to drive only if he obeyed the rules of going to the clinic, not drinking, and not making inappropriate telephone calls.

Over the next several months, the threat manager kept in periodic contact with the mother to ensure the third-party control was working. The controversy involving the corporation and its chairman abated and no longer received any media attention. After 6 months, the threat manager put Richard's case in inactive status.

Issues of Interest

Several of the issues involved in the case of this howler raise interesting insights, such as:

1. Prosecution in threat management cases can be problematic because of differences of opinion between the prosecutor and the threat manager.
2. The threat manager was prudent to discuss the case with the district attorney before swearing out a warrant. Had Richard been arrested first and then let go by the district attorney, he may have been more difficult to manage. Since the threat manager had assessed Richard as a howler, the threat manager had other strategies to employ.
3. The threat manager shared the report on Richard's inappropriate comment with the staff at the mental health clinic treating Richard in order to alert his counselor to Richard's problem behavior. Although mental health professionals are bound to respect patient confidentiality, they are not restricted from receiving information about their patient's behavior. Prudent threat managers know to make full use of this one-way communication.
4. The threat manager first employed a passive watch-and-wait strategy, but escalated it to third-party control when Richard again communicated inappropriately.
5. Finding a trusted third party to control the howler can be an effective strategy. The mother's use of the pickup truck as a reward for good behavior acted as an inhibitor for Richard. Since the good behavior included going to mental health counseling, Richard's underlying mental health issues were receiving treatment.
6. Threat managers need to apply threat-management strategies flexibly and innovatively. When the threat manager lost the option of having Richard arrested, he had already decided on a fall-back strategy. When that strategy ultimately failed, the threat manager identified a trusted third party to use as a control over Richard. Ultimately, time, the abate-

ment of the controversy, and Richard's continued mental health treatment allowed the case to go inactive.

7. When employing third party controls, the threat manager needs to keep open good lines of communication to monitor how the controls are working. Using third party controls does not mean passing the problem individual on to someone else. Rather, it means working with the third party to manage the problem individual.

Working with the Hunter and Howler Concepts

6

Chapters 3 and 4 portrayed hunters and howlers, respectively. For hunters, we focused on the types of behaviors in which they engage as they traverse the path to intended violence. Since crossing the path requires engaging in noticeable activities, the threat manager should always be alert to any reports suggesting attack-related behaviors. Because of that emphasis on behavior, our description of hunters zeroed in on the actions they take rather than discerning the reasons prompting those behaviors. This approach mirrored the reality that threat managers confront. Frequently, the threat manager will receive reports describing suspicious behaviors without any clue concerning the subject's motive. Although the threat manager knows with certainty that the hunter has a grievance, the hunter may not choose to reveal exactly what that grievance is. As a result, threat managers often must manage the hunter without knowing what prompted the hunt.

For howlers, we described various categories in which howlers seem to fall. We could as easily have categorized hunters; indeed, they, too, fall into most of the same categories as howlers. James Kopp, for example, killed Dr. Bernard Slepian because Slepian conducted abortions. Kopp was a *crusading* hunter. Similarly, Mark Chapman, who assassinated John Lennon, was a *celebrity-seeking* hunter. Jack McKnight, who killed one and wounded two during his assault on the Topeka, KS, federal court, acted out of revenge for his arrest and imminent imprisonment for growing marijuana. He was a *self-defending* hunter. Dennis Rader, the notorious "BTK"¹ serial killer from Wichita, KS, killed 10 people between 1974 and 1991. He was a *habitual* hunter. Spouses who intend to kill their mates do so when the other spouse does not bend to their will. These spouses are *controllors*. Similarly, workplace violence frequently involves *intimidators*. Thus, the categories clearly apply to both howlers and hunters.

But while such categorizations work well for understanding howlers, they can be distracting when dealing with hunters. First, determining to which category a hunter belongs may not be so clear until the latter stages of the case. Howlers tend to self-identify their categories up front through their communications. Since hunters may not communicate anything, their

¹ BTK stood for "Bind, Torture, Kill" and was Rader's pseudonym for himself.

motives may take the threat manager longer to discern. In the meantime, the hunter continues to engage in attack-related behaviors to which the threat manager has to respond. Although the threat manager knows with certainty that the hunter has a grievance, since grievances come first on the path to intended violence, the particulars of that individual grievance may not be so clear until fully investigated.

Second, the category into which the hunter falls is less important than identifying which stage along the path to intended violence the hunter has reached. Whether self-defender, crusader, controller, intimidator, personal or impersonal, those who hunt ultimately have to engage in attack-related behaviors. Hunters in different categories do not necessarily behave or communicate differently. When Chapman shot Lennon, the act differed very little from Kopp's shooting Slepian 20 years later. Both hunters aimed and fired. Moody and the Unabomber may have had different designs for their bombs, but they nonetheless made them in such a way as to be conveyed through the U.S. mails. Ultimately, acts of violence and their outcomes resemble other acts and outcomes. Thus, we did not categorize hunters even though we recognize that many of the howler categories easily apply to them.

In this chapter, we discuss ways in which threat managers should manage both hunters and howlers. First, we present an untested hypothesis explaining the phenomenon of when a howler becomes a hunter. Although this transition frequently occurs among intimates and acquaintances, it remains relatively rare in cases involving strangers. That raises a serious, and as yet unanswered, question about the influence of the *intimacy effect*. Can we take lessons learned from the transition from howler to hunter among personals and apply those lessons to any such transformation among impersonals? Next, we offer an overview of some general principles threat managers should follow to manage both hunters and howlers.

Working with the *Last Straw Syndrome*

Throughout this book, our mantra has been that hunters hunt and howlers howl, a distinction that both distinguishes them and identifies them. By definition, hunters cannot be howlers and howlers cannot be hunters. But that definition is somewhat tautologous: howlers cannot be hunters because by taking up the hunt, they cease to be howlers. Only hunters engage in attack-related behaviors. Consequently, once a subject who had previously acted like a howler embarks on the path to intended violence, the subject becomes a hunter. Similarly, hunters cannot be howlers because, once they start acting like howlers, they simply cease to be hunters. Only howlers communicate inappropriately without taking additional actions. Thus, by definition, hunters and howlers stand apart.

Setting those semantics aside, as a practical matter howlers can become hunters. Some howlers reach a point where something happens to propel them across the line to take up the hunt. Something tips them across the great divide that separates howling from hunting. We call that tipping point the *last straw syndrome*.

Consider these ten examples:

- Thomas Wendt began threatening to kill his ex-wife and himself during their divorce in 2000. He continued making threats after the divorce became final. Vicki Keller-Wendt repeatedly asked police to protect her. “I don’t know what you can do to make him leave me alone and make me feel a little safer,” Keller-Wendt wrote to a judge pleading for a restraining order against Wendt. The judge granted the order, but included a ludicrous condition prohibiting Wendt from using a firearm for anything but hunting. That meant he maintained possession of his three firearms. Still, Wendt did nothing more than continue to threaten her; he took no action to implement his threats. Until, that is, the last straw fell. In March 2002, Wendt waited outside the Mount Pleasant, MI, courthouse for his ex-wife, her niece, and a friend of his ex-wife’s. He knew they were scheduled to testify against him for violating the restraining order. When they arrived, he shot them to death.² Keller-Wendt’s pending testimony against him proved to be Wendt’s last straw.
- Ronald Taylor believed whites persecuted him. Unemployed and receiving disability checks for mental illness, Taylor spent his days writing about how much he hated whites, Jews, and homosexuals, but like every howler, Taylor took no actions to express his hatred physically. Until, that is, March 2000 when he broke his door. He called his landlord to have it fixed, but grew impatient when the maintenance workers did not come immediately. When the two workers arrived, Taylor attacked one of them. When the other worker tried to pull Taylor away, Taylor shot him in the chest. Taylor then went on a rampage through his Pittsburgh neighborhood. He ended up killing three men and wounding two others. All his victims were white. For Taylor, the last straw came when two white men took too long to fix his door.³
- Joseph Wesbecker’s printing company refused to follow his doctor’s advice and change his job of operating folding machines. Instead, the company put Wesbecker on permanent disability leave. Over the next 13 months, Wesbecker threatened company officials. “This guy’s been talking about this for a year,” one company employee stated. “He’s been

² Associated Press, March 6, 2002.

³ Associated Press, November 1, 2001.

talking about guns and *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. He's paranoid and he thought everyone was after him." Still, Wesbecker did not approach the plant until something, whether an official notice or a paranoid delusion, made him believe the company was going to cut off his disability benefits. On September 14, 1989, Wesbecker returned to the plant armed with an AK-47, two MAC-11 machine pistols, two handguns, a bayonet, and thousands of rounds of ammunition. At first, he went to the upper floors of the building looking for bosses and supervisors. When he could not find anyone in management, he began shooting former coworkers randomly, killing 7 and wounding 15 before taking his own life. The last straw that propelled Wesbecker from making threats to actually attacking was his belief he was about to lose his benefit stipend.⁴

- The John Jay College of Criminal Justice expelled Dabrium Jones in 2000 because he had harassed a professor after receiving a failing grade. Harassing, of course, is what howlers do. Hector Ortiz, the dean of students, indicated to Jones that he might be readmitted after completing a counseling program. Jones went to the college on August 28, 2001, expecting to resume classes, but the dean refused to enroll him. The next day, Jones came back to the school armed with a knife and hunting for Ortiz. He found the dean in a hallway and began stabbing Ortiz in the torso and neck. The rejection was the last straw for Jones.⁵
- By February 1992, Michael Griffen had suffered a world of hurt. His marriage was failing; one daughter had severe and expensive neurological problems; his job was boring; and his self-esteem had fallen. After stumbling into the local antiabortion movement, Griffen became convinced that God wanted him to assassinate Dr. David Gunn, who came into Pensacola every Tuesday to perform abortions. On four separate occasions, Griffen, armed with a pistol, encountered Dr. Gunn, but could not bring himself to shoot the doctor. Instead, he warned Dr. Gunn that God wanted the abortions to stop. On March 10, 1993, Griffen went early to a scheduled antiabortion demonstration. Having worked the night shift the night before, Griffen decided to go home as soon as he saw Dr. Gunn arrive. He walked down an alley behind the clinic just as Dr. Gunn drove up. Griffen walked past the car with the doctor sitting in the front seat. When Griffen reached the trunk, he heard what he thought was a gunshot. Spinning around, Griffen pulled his pistol and saw the doctor now out of his car. Thinking someone had already killed Dr. Gunn, Griffen fired four times into what he thought was a corpse. The autopsy and physical evidence showed Dr. Gunn had

⁴ Associated Press, September 15, 16, and 17, 1989.

⁵ Associated Press, August 29, 2001.

received four gunshot wounds. All the bullets came from Griffen's gun. The last straw that turned Griffen from a howler into a hunter was the sound of Dr. Gunn's slamming the car door shut.⁶

- For about a year, Christopher Millis and his next door neighbor, Gary Hurd, engaged in angry disputes about cutting trees and complaints about Millis to the homeowners' association. Hurd called the police on Millis ten times, but the disputes never turned violent. Over the same year, Millis' life started falling apart. He lost his job, then around Thanksgiving he and his wife agreed to get a divorce, though they decided to wait until after the holidays and continued living together with their six children. On Friday night, November 11, 2005, Millis and his wife got into a last argument and he kicked her out of the house. Early the next morning, Millis got up, drove to the Keizer, OR, police station and began pouring gasoline on the officers' personal cars. He set fire to two cars before Officer Carrie Meier pulled in to go to work. Millis fled with Meier in pursuit until Millis fired two shots at Meier's car. Millis then drove back to his neighborhood where he fired seven shots at Hurd's two pickup trucks. "As soon as I heard it, I thought it was him," Hurd remembered. "I'm not surprised at all." Millis changed vehicles and literally drove his pickup truck into the Marion County Courthouse front door. He held police at bay for 3 hours until a SWAT team member wounded him. For Millis, the fight with his wife turned into his last straw.⁷
- William Strier, suffering severe back pain from an automobile accident, wanted to use insurance monies he received in a trust fund to cover the costs of a back operation. The trustee refused to release the money. She apparently failed to convince Strier that the refusal was in his interest since giving him the trust money would disqualify him from California Medicare. Outraged, Strier telephoned the trustee and threatened to kill her if she did not give him the money he needed. Distance communications, of course, are the mark of a howler. The trustee and her attorney, Gerald Curry, scheduled a hearing for October 31, 2002, to ask the court to replace the trustee and to approve their fees so they could withdraw them from Strier's trust funds. The judge approved both requests. When Curry left the courthouse, Strier approached him, asked if his name was Curry, then began shooting him. Curry took cover behind a tree as Strier shot him five times in the shoulders and arms. Knowing

⁶ Interview with Michael Griffen, *Washington Post*, March 11, 1993.

⁷ *Oregon Statesman Journal*, November 12 and 13, 2005.

the trustee and her attorney could draw from his trust fund when he could not served as Strier's last straw.⁸

- Tacoma, WA, Police Chief David Brame dominated his wife even more than he controlled his department. While keeping complete control over police promotions and policies, Brame gave his wife \$100 every two weeks for groceries and household expenses. He monitored her car mileage and made her explain any trips outside the house. Every morning, he made her weigh herself in his presence so he could track any weight gains. When they fought, as they increasingly did, he sometimes choked her and threatened her. In what became a pattern, the day after a fight he would send her flowers signed "Your secret admirer." Returning home that evening, Brame would use the flowers and note to accuse his wife of having an affair. That would bring on another fight. He pressured her to agree to have sex with him and a Tacoma police-woman (who was resisting his unwelcome advances). He told her she would be dead before she got any of his retirement benefits in a divorce. He also reminded her that their marriage vows included "until death do us part." On February 7, 2003, Brame aimed his service weapon at his wife's face and calmly mentioned that "accidents happen." But Brame held back from escalating the violence. At the end of February, his wife left him and filed for divorce. When he tried to fight it, she filed court papers detailing the choking incidents, the threats, and the sexual pressure. Still Brame controlled himself until the allegations of abuse, threats, and sexual aberration became public on April 25, 2003. That public humiliation proved Brame's last straw. On Saturday, April 26, Brame took the couple's two children on various errands. Although he normally did not carry his weapon while off-duty, that day he did. Seemingly by chance, he ran into his wife in a strip mall parking lot. Leaving the kids in his car, he approached his wife's car. First he shot her in the head, then himself. He died that day, she lived a week longer.⁹
- In 1986, Janet Geisenhagen sued her neighbor, Curtis Thompson, because she claimed Thompson's dog had bitten her 6-year-old son. Thompson won the lawsuit, but the experience engendered a bitter hatred toward the Geisenhagens. For years, Thompson would drive by their house very slowly, glaring through the car window. The Geisenhagens complained repeatedly to the police, but Toulon, IL, was a small town and the police simply advised, "You know he's crazy, just ignore him." In 1999, Thompson chased after a Geisenhagen employee driving a van. Thompson sped past the van, blocked the road, and

⁸ Interview with Gerald Curry, *Today* show, November 10, 2003; CNN, October 27, 2005.

⁹ *Tacoma News Tribune*, May 2 and 5, 2003, and May 11, 2005.

jumped out of the truck with a hammer. Although he did not strike the employee, police arrested Thompson for assault. Found guilty, the judge sentenced Thompson to 25 days in jail and 2 years' probation. He also ordered Thompson not to have any contact with the employee or the Geisenhagen family. Once he served his sentence, Thompson increased the number of times he drove past the Geisenhagen house. But though his behavior was certainly threatening, Thompson was never violent against his neighbors. In March 2002, the last straw fell. After Thompson failed to appear in court on an unrelated assault charge, a deputy sheriff went to arrest him. Thompson managed to get the deputy's pistol and shoot him. He hopped in the squad car and drove to the Geisenhagen house. He broke in and killed both the husband and the wife. He fled the scene, but was ultimately stopped at a police roadblock and wounded.¹⁰

- Russell Weston suffered severe delusions involving conspiracies, aliens, time travel, and the very real refusal of the federal government to allow him to cross federal land to dig for gold in Montana. He traveled to Washington to visit the Central Intelligence Agency because he needed to give its director an important message about the Ruby Surveillance System. In Jefferson County, MT, Weston came to the attention of both the Secret Service and the local sheriff, but his inappropriate comments never gave either agency sufficient cause to arrest him. In 1996, after 7 weeks in a Montana mental hospital, Weston moved back to Illinois to his parents' house. In July 1998, local police tried to serve a warrant on one of the Westons' neighbors. Hearing the police, the neighbor killed himself. Police found drugs in the house, which brought in the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). DEA agents plastered federal "No trespassing" signs on the neighbor's house. Seeing the signs, Weston told his father federal commandos were coming to get him. That belief proved the last straw. Weston drove to Washington. He knew the Ruby Surveillance System was kept on the first floor of the United States Capitol. On the afternoon of July 24, 1998, Weston shot his way into the Capitol, killing a Capitol policeman at the magnetometer and shooting it out with another Capitol policeman in the majority whip's office. The second policeman died, but managed to severely wound Weston.¹¹

Although hardly a scientific sampling, these ten incidents give a flavor of the variety of last straws that can transform a howler into a hunter. Like grievances, to which they contribute, last straws are unique to the individuals burdened by them.

¹⁰ Associated Press, March 26, 2002.

¹¹ *Washington Post*, January 23, 2001; CBS *Evening News*, July 25, 1998.

Sometimes the target creates the last straw that tips the howler into becoming a hunter. In August 1971, Ed Taylor began writing friendly, supportive letters to Los Angeles radio traffic pilot and popular commentator Jim Hicklin. He addressed the letters to Hicklin's home. Hicklin allowed himself to get annoyed at the fan mail. He hired private detectives to track Taylor down and make him stop.

Two detectives paid Taylor an unannounced visit and warned him to stop writing. Unfortunately, the warning had the reverse effect. It turned Taylor into a sinister howler. Rather than quit writing Hicklin, Taylor began sending the radio personality angry, accusatory letters demanding an apology. He also wrote the general manager of Hicklin's radio station and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) demanding that the former fire Hicklin and the latter take his pilot's license. Then Taylor took action, though lawful. He filed suit against Hicklin. And he continued to write, but the tone and themes of the letters escalated into more and more sinister language, with references to violence and more allegations, including a letter to FAA claiming Hicklin had flown his helicopter close to Taylor's house on a "strafing mission."

The court dismissed Taylor's lawsuit and FAA made clear it would not do anything about Taylor's allegations. Taylor, convinced he needed to defend himself, bought a pistol. Hicklin, in turn, made his own escalation. He asked the district attorney's office to stop Taylor from harassing him. Investigators interviewed Taylor, which gave him a chance to present his complaints to someone in authority. Or so he thought. Several days later, the district attorney's office dropped the last straw. Prosecutors had him arrested for misdemeanor libel. Not only did police officers arrest him, they arrested him in front of his elderly mother. That made Taylor's grievance involve both the perceived injustices done him and also the indignity of having his own mother witness the final injustice.

That final grievance, the indignity of the arrest, tipped Taylor to the next step, the idea that violence alone would resolve his problem with Hicklin. From that step along the path to intended violence, Taylor moved quickly and easily. Again, Hicklin helped by providing Taylor with information about his private plans. He talked on his radio show about an upcoming vacation cruise he and his wife would be taking on the cruise ship *Italia*, sailing April 2, 1973. Simply listening to Hicklin's radio program provided Taylor the research he needed to plan his attack. On launch day, Taylor boarded the *Italia*, found Hicklin's cabin, and shot him to death in front of Hicklin's wife and the friends who had come to wish the couple bon voyage.¹²

Not everyone who takes up the hunt first endures a last straw. Still, the last straw appears to occur frequently enough that threat managers need to

¹²de Becker, *The Gift of Fear*, pp. 140–146.

remain sensitive to the possibility. Last straws or, more specifically, the subject's reaction to a triggering event constitute simply one more behavior the threat manager should be on the lookout for. If the threat assessor has no evidence that a last straw has fallen, then that lack should have a neutral effect in assessing the chance of lethal violence since the syndrome does not always occur. However, if the last straw syndrome does come into play, it should have a profound and powerful impact on the threat assessment.

Threat managers need to be sensitive to the last straw syndrome for three important reasons. First, they should be prepared to exploit last straws that transform hunters into howlers. Finding a hunter's weakness or hesitation or second thought, the threat manager can use that information to tip the hunter toward howling. Second, in dealing with howlers, threat managers should take note of any change or new circumstance that might portend a last straw event. Third, and most importantly, threat managers should exercise special care to never create or become a last straw.

The last straw syndrome does not occur in every case for every howler. But when it does occur, threat managers need to be able to recognize it, or at least recognize that a straw has fallen. Frankly, that is easier than it appears on its face. Regardless of what the last straw may be, it prompts the former howler to take up the hunt. That means a significant change in behavior. Thus, the threat manager can identify the last straw syndrome through the subject's changed behavior.

Threat managers should interpret change as broadly as possible. Changes can take the form of new, *attack-related* behaviors or they can simply arise from the sudden cessation of previous, nonattack-related behaviors. The change can come from circumstances unrelated to the reason the howler is howling. Sudden losses, such as loss of a job or a place to stay or loss of a loved one can serve as a last straw. When managing howlers, any changes the howler makes should be taken seriously.

As a final note on the last straw syndrome, it does not belong exclusively to howlers. Frequently, a last straw type of event launches hunters to take up the hunt. For example, teenager Kip Kinkle never openly talked or threatened or made any howling communications. He clearly thought about violence and showed a great interest in firearms, even to the point of collecting several guns without his parents' knowledge. But beyond fantasies and daydreams, he did not have any specific plans to use the weapons. Kinkle's last straw occurred when his high school expelled him for having a stolen pistol at school. Too embarrassed to tell his parents of this latest problem in a long list of adolescent troublemaking, Kinkle found it easier to kill both parents when they came home. The next day, he drove himself to school at lunchtime armed with a semiautomatic rifle, two pistols, and a knife. He killed 2 stu-

dents and wounded 25 others before classmates tackled him.¹³ For Kinkle, fear of his parents' reaction to his latest troubles proved to be his last straw, and one that launched him on the path to intended violence.

Managing Hunters and Howlers

In the first chapter we briefly summarized the various threat-management strategies that threat managers can use in dealing with both hunters and howlers. In the case analyses at the end of each chapter, we showed how those strategies can be applied in real-life situations. The case analyses also offered a working format for writing a threat assessment. As the case analyses illustrated, we recommend starting the assessment with an objective, straightforward statement of the known facts. The summary should avoid adjectives, adverbs, speculations, opinions, or interpretations. Instead, it should stick strictly to the facts.

After summarizing the facts, the threat assessor should explain the threat assessment based on those facts. The assessment, obviously, is the assessor's opinion and interpretation of those facts. The assessment should be directly related to the facts. It, too, should avoid any speculations beyond the known facts. At the same time, the assessment should make clear that any new evidence or change in circumstances by the subject will need to be reassessed. The assessment should also explicitly state that the threat manager based it solely on the facts known at the time. Threat assessments have notoriously short shelf lives. New facts, new behaviors, or new circumstances should always prompt a reassessment.

Based on the threat assessment, the threat assessor should make a detailed, specific recommendation for the most appropriate protective response. This can be as simple as giving the target a quick briefing on personal security measures or it can be as complicated as arranging a security detail to physically protect the target or moving the target to a secure location. The recommended protective response should always match the assessment.

Finally, the threat assessor should recommend the most appropriate threat-management strategies for managing the subject. This can be a single strategy or a combination of strategies. Like the protective response, it should be completely in sync with the assessment.

We conclude our discussion of understanding hunters and howlers with ten general guidelines concerning the effective management of both subjects. These can serve as a set of guiding principles that threat managers will be well advised to embed in their threat-management programs.

¹³<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kinkel/kip/cron.html>.

1. Always assess and manage the subject by keeping in mind the context and circumstances in which the subject acts.

Subjects involved in threat-management cases frequently follow their own logic and live in their own world. Conventional reality may hold little meaning or relevance for them. Consequently, the threat manager has to assess what the subject believes from the subject's point of view, then design the management response in such a way as to exploit the subject's reality and perceptions. For example, if a former intimate gives evidence of believing that the previous partner will come back or still participates in their relationship, the threat manager must gauge the strength of that feeling, then find ways to wean the subject off of that perception. This could involve third-party monitoring, target transfer to the threat manager, or strict enforcement of a civil restraining order (*Castle Rock* notwithstanding). If, to cite another example, a former employee feels unjustly treated, the threat manager must understand why the subject believes that, then adopt a threat-management strategy aimed at rectifying that sense of injustice. Both the assessment and the management have to address how the subject, whether hunter or howler, sees the world. This is not to say the threat manager buys into the subject's delusions, it merely requires the threat manager to take them into account. The threat manager should also keep in mind that the subject's sense of mistreatment may be rooted in reality.

2. Always determine whether the intimacy effect is at play and, if it is, put it at the forefront of the context and circumstances in which the subject acts.

Twenty to 30 years ago, threats played too prominent a role in determining whether or not to open a case. Without an explicit threat, threat managers felt perfectly comfortable essentially ignoring the problem individual. Then research on public figure attacks prompted a whiplash-like reaction that caused a complete discounting of threats as preincident indicators of future violence. Different researchers called threats "no big deal" or described their relationship to future violence as a "myth." But this cookie-cutter approach did not take into account the different social venues in which threats and violence occurred.

The best approach appears to require reaching a balanced median. Taking into account the intimacy effect seems to achieve that balance. Threats to intimates and acquaintances have great value as preincident indicators. Threats to strangers have little or no such value. Knowing whether the intimacy effect applies to the case at hand will help the threat manager select the best management strategy. For example, if the case involves previous intimates with a history of domestic violence, the threat manager should consider employing more aggressive polices, such as confronting and warning or, if appropriate, arrest. On the other hand, if the subject appears to be an impersonal celebrity-seeking romantic howler focused on a public figure, the

threat manager might consider a passive watch-and-wait strategy to monitor the subject's future inappropriate communications. Since the research shows that the intimacy effect links threats to violent outcomes through social venues, the threat manager should always incorporate it into the assessment and management strategy.

3. Always be prepared to reassess the situation once a threat management strategy is applied, new information comes to light, or the subject acts again.

Threat assessments and, sometimes, threat-management strategies have short shelf lives. Since assessments can be made only on the facts known at the time of the assessments, new facts require new assessments. Similarly, since the application of a management strategy alters the chemistry of the case simply by being applied, that change requires a new assessment, which may lead to a new strategy. Applying the strategy also causes an action–reaction situation. Once the threat manager acts (even if that action is the watch-and-wait strategy), the subject will react. That reaction requires a new assessment and possibly a new strategy. For this reason, the threat manager will find the watch-and-wait strategy, either passive or active, a very useful follow-on strategy in most cases. Recognizing that threat management is a dynamic process will help the threat manager make continuous assessments and refinements to the management strategies employed.

4. Always avoid causing or allowing a last straw to fall.

Threat managers cannot prevent every last straw, but they can certainly consciously avoid dropping one. Many last straws are unique to the subject. In those situations, the most the threat manager can do is be on the alert for signs a last straw has fallen. At the same time, the threat manager should do everything possible to prevent last straws within his or her control. Doing so usually requires the threat manager to adopt a social worker approach to the subject. Is there a problem confronting the subject that the threat manager can help fix? These situations require using the assist strategy. For example, when an employee is terminated from a job, the threat manager should make sure that the out-processing, especially the delivery of any monies owed the employee, is processed expeditiously. From the subject's point of view, getting fired is one thing, not getting compensated for unused annual leave or any delays in receiving the last paycheck might turn into a last straw. Identifying potential last straws requires the threat manager to see the situation from the subject's point of view.

5. Always approach the problem flexibly and innovatively.

The dynamics of threat management requires flexibility and innovation on the part of the threat manager. Frequently, this can be generated through a multidiscipline team approach, with each member of the team encouraged

to bring his or her expertise and creativity to each case. Not only is there a chemistry at play between the management strategies and the subject, team approaches also generate interactions leading to better alternatives and better ideas. These should be encouraged and commended.

6. Always remember that hunters engage in attack-related behaviors and howlers engage in inappropriate communications.

The threat management process is all about observable behaviors. Potential targets, their staffs, and their families should be thoroughly briefed on the threat manager's definition of inappropriate communication or contact and trained where to report such inappropriate communications or contacts. Once reported, the threat manager should assess the subject's known behaviors, whether writing letters, stalking, telephoning, obtaining a weapon, or anything else. Since, by definition, hunters behave differently from howlers, the threat manager should move quickly to determine the category into which the current subject falls. That determination will help with the selection of the most appropriate threat-management strategy. For example, a sinister howler upset at some adverse decision against him or her may make an angry, threatening contact using some distance communication. After assessing the subject as a howler, the threat manager may use a watch-and-wait strategy for a few days, then switch to a take-no-further-action-at-this-time strategy once it becomes clear the subject intends no further contacts. In the end, everything depends on how the subject behaves.

7. Always keep your word and be prepared to do what you told the subject you would do.

Threat management holds no place for bluffing, exaggerating, or distorting, to oneself, to others, and especially not to the subject or target. In any dealing with the subject, the threat manager should again stick with the facts, keep the subject focused on the facts, and always ensure that if the subject is warned or told something will happen, the warning or the something will come to pass. Warning the subject and then not following up is worse than unenforced civil orders because the lack of action reflects directly on the threat manager.

8. Always treat the subject with respect and ensure the "dignity domino" remains upright.

In threat management, a subject's inhibitors¹⁴ act like falling dominoes. When one falls, it risks toppling over the next in line. At the end of the row stands the "dignity domino," the last and most dangerous to fall. Last straws

¹⁴Inhibitors are pieces of his or her life that have some value to the subject, such as a job, finances, family, reputation, religion, self-esteem, and, most important of all, dignity.

frequently topple the dignity domino; threat managers should never do so. Subjects often lash out over the feeling that they have been disrespected, that no one treats them as they expect, and that they need to be respected. Simply by treating the subject politely, albeit firmly if necessary, the threat manager can help prop up that last domino.

9. *Always stick to the facts as you know them and avoid playing the “What if?” game.*

The *What if?* game is always enticing because it allows the imagination full freedom to stretch as far and as frighteningly as a Stephen King horror story. Targets especially like to play the game. Threat managers should not. The best antidote is to stick with the known and avoid speculating about the unknown.

10. *Always manage the case for as long as it needs managing.*

Threat management cases tend to have long durations. Howlers may howl for years. Hunters, too, may take a long time before they try to consummate the hunt. Frequently, neither hunters nor howlers break any laws or give sufficient evidence for mental health commitments or give the threat manager any reason to institutionalize them. Thus, this type of subject must be managed on an ongoing, long-term basis. That means managing the target's expectations as well, for too often threat management offers no easy solution to handling the hunter or the howler.

Summary

In this chapter, we have discussed the fact that the various categories describing howlers also apply to hunters, though not always as quickly and readily identifiable as they are with howlers. That is because howlers rarely hide their motives; hunters frequently do. Next, we discussed the last straw syndrome. We defined that syndrome as a triggering event that can transform a howler into a hunter. We strongly recommended that threat managers be on the lookout for its possibly falling and taking care not to toss out the last straw themselves. We concluded the chapter with a set of guiding principles threat managers should use in managing hunters and managing howlers.

As a final word, threat managers can best understand both hunters and howlers by their respective behaviors. By focusing on those distinctive behaviors, the threat manager can identify, assess, and manage howlers and hunters effectively. Seen against the backdrop of intended violence, the behaviors of those who pose threats and those who make threats can be spotlighted with great precision. Concepts such as *attack-related behaviors*, *intimacy effect*, *last straw syndrome*, *sinister howlers*, and *binder howlers* offer powerful tools

for enhancing the threat- management process. By the nature of their task, threat managers need all the tools they can get.

Case Analysis: The Relentless Pursuer

The Facts

A state official contacted the state threat-management office concerning a problem at his residence. He told the threat manager that he lives with his wife, their son, and her father. The official was known nationally owing to political radicalism during the 1960s and a prior marriage to a famous activist movie star. The official expressed concern about a man who over the past year had been leaving messages in the official's mailbox. Recently, the man confronted the father-in-law on the front lawn of the residence. The man demanded a meeting with the official, stating he "didn't care how he did it."

The threat manager immediately arranged to interview the state official, his wife, and the father-in-law. They told him that Daniel B. has been communicating with them by letter and personal visits to the home for well over a year. Daniel regularly left messages in their mailbox. The messages contained poems, rambling discourses, and small, hand-drawn pictures. Daniel had even managed to talk with the wife and father-in-law in front of the house on several occasions. His conversations rambled across various political topics. Two weeks earlier, Daniel showed up at a well-publicized town meeting where the official was scheduled to speak. One of the official's assistants diverted Daniel from approaching the official.

The official decided not to report any of these encounters and communications because he considered Daniel a harmless "nut case." That opinion changed, however, after the last contact with the father-in-law and Daniel's ominous statement about doing anything to get a meeting with the official. The official now felt concerned for his family's safety, though he declined any kind of protective detail at his residence.

Threat Assessment

Based on the facts available at the time of this assessment, Daniel was assessed as acting like a hunter through his persistent approach behavior. Although his grievance was unknown at this time, Daniel researched the location of the official's residence. He also appeared at a publicized meeting that he knew the official was scheduled to attend. Daniel was persistent in his desire to contact the official. More disturbingly, his method of contacting the official changed from leaving messages in the mailbox to direct confrontations with family members and staff employees during which he exhibited

aggressive behavior. Daniel is assessed as presenting a high risk of violence against the official, his wife, and his father-in-law.

Recommended Protective Response

Since the official declined posting a patrol car outside his residence, the threat manager arranged for frequent patrols of the house and surrounding neighborhood by local law enforcement. The threat manager also briefed the family on security precautions and measures they could take if confronted again by Daniel.

Recommended Threat-Management Strategy

Since Daniel had never made clear just what he wanted or expected from meeting with the official, the first threat management strategy should be to interview Daniel for information. During the interview it might be possible to refocus Daniel onto the threat manager. Depending on the information gleaned from the interview, such other strategies as confronting and warning him to stop, obtaining a restraining order, attempting a mental health commitment, or even gaining cause for arrest might develop. Daniel's aggressive approaches rule out any of the nonconfrontational strategies. The key to this case will be to remain as flexible as possible and take advantage of new opportunities to deploy the full range of confrontational strategies.

The Outcome

The threat manager determined that Daniel lived less than a mile from the state official. The threat manager and her partner went to the front door. Daniel answered the doorbell naked. He refused to let the threat manager inside his house, forcing the threat manager to interview him through the screen door. He remained very confrontational and uncooperative throughout the interview and refused to answer most of the threat manager's questions. Daniel stated that he could talk to the official if he wanted to. Further, he denied any violent intent. He admitted to seeing doctors in the past, but claimed he no longer needed to take the medications they had prescribed for him. The threat manager finally wrested an agreement from Daniel not to attempt to contact the official again but, rather, to call the threat manager if he had a problem.

The threat manager then canvassed the neighborhood interviewing Daniel's neighbors. All of them claimed they feared Daniel because of his confrontational demeanor. He frequently prowled the neighborhood at night. On a number of occasions, he had become agitated and begun knocking on doors looking for people who did not live there. The local police knew Daniel

as a local problem involved in numerous disturbances in the neighborhood. They also had a report that Daniel had harassed a local restaurant owned by a movie star. On occasion, Daniel had gone to the restaurant demanding to meet the owner.

A week later, Daniel left another letter in the official's mailbox. Later that day, he confronted the father-in-law in front of the house. Daniel again demanded to see the official. The father-in-law, based on the security briefing he had received, quickly disengaged himself from the confrontation. Daniel left and the father-in-law immediately reported the incident to the threat manager.

Based on the information gleaned from the interviews with Daniel and his neighbors, the police report, and the latest incident, the threat manager decided to get more confrontational with Daniel. She also wanted to gather more information to justify a mental health commitment based on erratic behavior and Daniel's posing a threat to the official and his family. Over the years, she had developed a professional relationship with many of the mental health facilities in the area, so she had a clear idea of what information they would need. She also knew how to put the information in the right format.

The second interview took place in front of Daniel's house. He again claimed the right to contact the official and maintained he had done nothing wrong. He did not exhibit sufficient signs of mental illness to justify a commitment at that time. Instead, the threat manager adopted a much sterner attitude toward Daniel. She bluntly told him to stop the behavior. Daniel seemed more cooperative at the end of the interview.

Daniel stayed away from the state official for over a month. Then he again went to the residence. As the official returned home with his son, he saw Daniel pacing in front of his house acting very upset and agitated. When Daniel saw the official, he immediately threatened to "kick his ass." The official, per the security briefing, refused to be drawn into a discussion. He went into the house and called the police. Daniel left the area before the police arrived. The police checked his residence but did not find him.

At this point, the official agreed to allow a curfew watch at his home until the police could locate Daniel. An hour later, Daniel returned to the house. The officers in the patrol car took him into custody and dropped him off at a mental health facility for evaluation.

The threat manager took advantage of this opportunity to get a commitment. She gathered all the information she had collected on the case and spelled it out in chronological order in an affidavit format. The threat manager also met with the director of the clinic to express her concerns and deliver the affidavit. The doctor's evaluation of Daniel, informed as it was by the facts in the case, led to a determination to effect a mental health conservatorship. The facility arranged to send Daniel to a locked facility for long-term treatment.

Issues of Interest

The case of this hunter offers some fascinating insights:

1. Targets will not always report incidents until they actually feel threatened. The training of protectees, their staffs, and families helps alleviate this hesitation. However, since lack of reporting is not unusual, the threat manager should always ask about past incidents to get a complete picture.
2. Targets will not always accept protection, even if it is recommended. This requires threat managers to make other arrangements that are usually less effective. The security briefing and emergency plan provide a starting point for more security later.
3. Daniel's mental illness made his grievance and motive impossible to determine. However, his behavior clearly showed he was acting like a hunter. Whatever his motive, he was determined to make repeated approaches.
4. Interviews and interventions do not always work as intended. The threat manager must be prepared to employ different strategies as circumstances change. For example, the mental health strategy could not be employed at the second interview because Daniel did not meet the necessary criteria. When he again approached the official in an agitated state and made a threat, he did meet the criteria for mental health evaluation.
5. Prior liaison with the director of the mental health facility along with providing him specific information on Daniel's behaviors made the strategy work.
6. Most government officials live within the community they serve without security other than what they provide themselves. Indeed, for many government officials, the idea of seeking protection makes them uncomfortable. It may also become a political issue during election campaigns because of the high cost.
7. Public officials living in the community are accessible to people who are angry or obsessed regarding an issue. When approached, many officials feel obliged to resolve, or try to resolve, the issue themselves until they get in over their heads.
8. Hunters frequently hide their grievances or motives, since revealing them might make them more susceptible to being managed. Consequently, threat managers need to manage the hunter's behavior without regard to what is prompting that behavior.

Appendix A: When Should Threats Be Seen As Indicative of Future Violence? Threats, Intended Violence, and the Intimacy Effect

DEBRA M. JENKINS

Abstract

The refocusing of law enforcement on preventing violence rather than waiting for a crime to occur has created a need to better assess behaviors and to employ effective threat-management techniques. Equally important is the need to understand that research findings within one venue where intended violence occurs may not be generalized to other venues. This work summarizes research on four important venues of intended violence, that is, public figure, school, workplace, and domestic. It reviews important similarities as well as differences among the different venues with respect to intended violence and threats of violence. The evidence from the review points out some significant differences in the outcome of threats of violence depending on the familiarity of the threatener and the target. The research appears to support the hypothesis known as the *intimacy effect*.

Introduction

In the emerging field of threat management, law enforcement personnel and other criminal-justice professionals must assess the potential for planned or intended violence. Cases of intended violence cross various venues, that is, intimate partners, students at school, persons in the workplace, and against public figures, government officials, and members of the judiciary. In state and federal jurisdictions, the law has established punishments for those who make explicit threats of violence. This has the effect of focusing law enforcement attention only on actual threateners, as many assumed that those who make threats to public figures also pose threats (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999). For years, conventional law enforcement thinking held that threats were strong

preincident indicators of future violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein & Vossekuil, 1999).

Research has thrown that thinking into doubt—at least in certain venues (Calhoun, 1998; Dietz et al., 1991a; Dietz et al., 1991b; Fein & Vossekuil, 1999). Research on acts of intended violence has raised significant issues concerning the relationship between threats of physical harm and actual acts of physical injury. Secret Service researchers stated flatly that threats to public figures have no bearing on predicting assassination (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999). A study of threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters sent to members of Congress indicated that threateners were significantly less likely to pursue an encounter when compared with those who did not threaten (Dietz et al., 1991b). A U.S. Marshal Service researcher came to a similar conclusion in a study of threats and violence against federal judicial officials (Calhoun, 1998). These researchers all recommended discounting the value of threats as indicators of future violence toward public figures.

While these findings are important for understanding and managing the potential for violence in the venues of public figures, they may not be applicable to other venues where parties are more familiar or intimate with each other. Yet, these findings have been applied to intended violence generally—risk-related decisions about pretrial release and parole (Borum, Fein, Vossekuil, & Berglund, 1999), the workplace, (Turner & Gelles, 2003), and school violence (Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, & Borum, 2002; Reddy et al., 2001). Dr. Reid Meloy, the noted California forensic psychologist, could not reconcile the discrepancy in the findings about the threat/violence outcome in the public figure venue compared with the venue for domestic violence. Consequently, he discounted threats altogether. He wrote:

Those that pose a threat toward public figures usually do not threaten the person beforehand. On the other hand, in the stalking of private figures (usually prior sexual intimates), false negative rates (where subjects who were violent toward a target but did not directly threaten beforehand) are usually quite low. Articulated threats appear to have a positive and significant relationship to violence risk (Meloy, 2001).

Therefore, Meloy suggested that “threats are much less useful in assessing actual violence risk than we have assumed in the past” (Meloy, 2001).

However, research studies on intended violence in different venues have reached opposite conclusions. Threats of violence in domestic venues may be ubiquitous, but they should not be ignored. A tragic consequence of dismissing threats in intimate settings can be seen in the 1999 case of the Castle Rock, CO, police department’s decision to take no action after Jessica Gonzales pleaded with them to enforce a restraining order against her husband who had abducted their three daughters. Mr. Gonzales had a history of threats

(*Gonzales v. City of Castle Rock*, 307 F.3d 1258, 1261 [10th Cir., 2002]). He eventually emerged on the doorstep of the Castle Rock Police Department firing his weapon, resulting in his death by law enforcement. He had already killed his three children. The National Sheriff's Association opined that "the police could not have predicted the terrible outcome" (Meier, 2005). Of course, prophesy is not a talent we expect our criminal justice professionals to possess, but we might ask for greater understanding of the relationship of threats of violence to actual violent outcomes in various scenarios.

A study published in 2003 in the *American Journal of Public Health* suggested that there were "identifiable risk factors for intimate partner femicides," one of which was threats (Campbell et al., 2003). In addition, analysis of data from the National Violence Against Women Survey found links between individuals receiving threats and future victimization in the venue of domestic violence (Tjaden & Theonnes, 2000b). Research on school violence and workplace violence also suggests that threats, threatening statements, or talk of acting violently are linked to future violent acts in that setting (McGee, 1999; Northwestern, 1993; O'Toole, 2001; Scalora, Casady, & Newell, 2003).

In their book *Contemporary Threat Management*, Dr. Frederick S. Calhoun and California Highway Patrol lieutenant Stephen W. Weston (2003) developed an untested hypothesis they call the *intimacy effect*. They suggested that the more intimate the relationship between threatener and target, the more likely the threatening statement can serve as a preincident indicator of intended violence. As they pointed out, however, researchers have not yet fully explored this aspect of threats and their relationship to intended violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

This Appendix explores the validity of the intimacy effect by examining available research on threats of violence across several venues of intended violence. The paper will address the concept's validity from the perspective of the criminal justice system and its potential response to threats of violence. If the intimacy effect holds up, it offers criminal justice officials insight into the practical aspects of their responses to threats of violence by understanding their context within the social setting in which they occur.

A Framework for the Discussion of Threats and Intended Violence

No shortage of studies about violence exists. As a result, a variety of theories and categories have been developed. Individual, life-cycle, socioeconomic, and situational theories (Tittle, 2000) provide insight into violence and crime which, when studied together, often offer theories and explanations that overlap. Traditionally, certain criminologists have categorized violence into interpersonal and political categories (Siegel, 2000). An act of murder may

fit both categories. In 1993, the National Research Council published four volumes titled *Understanding and Preventing Violence*. As a result of the consensus by the Panel on the Understanding and Control of Violent Behavior, the council adopted a definition of violence as “behaviors by individuals that intentionally threaten, attempt, or inflict physical harm on others” (Reiss & Roth, 1993). The panel’s definition included intent, which is in line with the legal treatment of violence. Intent is the essential ingredient in establishing criminal violence. The panel also considered reactive violence as intentional (Reiss & Roth, 1993). However, by separating reactive or impromptu violence from more deliberate (intended) acts, new hypotheses may be suggested to help threat assessors detect, intervene, and prevent intended violence.

Violence and Its Intent

The bulk of the research on violence has focused on social causes, both micro-social and macrosocial, and on individual causes, both psychological and biological. The results of such research continue to provide various useful perspectives and indicators of risk. In 1993, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) reported that “it was still not possible to link [existing research] together in a manner that would provide a strong theoretical base on which to build prevention and intervention programs” (Reiss & Roth, 1993). The NAS panel, in the interest of understanding and preventing violence, referred to social phenomena and processes of criminal justice treatment or social changes. Citing the problem of school violence, Marisa Reddy et al. wrote that “while eliminating all forms of antisocial aggression and violence is a laudable goal, different types of violence have different antecedents and thus require different approaches for assessment and intervention” (Reddy et al., 2001).

Methods of violence prevention concern the understanding of processes that lead to violent events and establishing measures to prevent them. A promising field of criminological review is *symbolic interactionism*. It focuses on “sequential, reciprocal response patterns in which interactants adjust to each other’s behavior, note responses to their actions, interpret the meanings of those responses, and then adapt their next moves in accordance with those interpretations” (Tittle, 2000).

Preventive measures are often seen in hindsight. For example, on October 29, 2004, Sarah Crawford moved from the apartment she and her abusive husband shared near Charlottesville, VA, while police stood nearby. The following day, the husband called her to say that “he understands why husbands kill their wives” (Shapira, 2004). On November 1, 2004, a Prince William county judge refused her request to extend a temporary restraining order against her estranged husband. Six days later, she was found dead in a Charlottesville hotel room. Dale Crawford, her husband, was arrested and charged with abduction and first-degree murder after he was located driving

his wife's car near Jacksonville, FL. (Shapira, 2004). The lethality (murder) and deliberateness (abduction) of this event suggest that the violence was intended. Was Dale Crawford's veiled threat in this case a signal to the victim and to law enforcement to take steps to prevent this murder?

Practitioners of violence prevention need a greater understanding of the steps taken toward consummating an act of intended violence. Through this understanding, intervention strategies can be developed. The legal classifications of homicide may help point us in the right direction. The American model penal code suggests that homicide committed as part of another felony or in a premeditated fashion—first degree or capital murder—is more heinous than that committed in the heat of passion—second degree murder (Kerper, 1972). Thus, intent is an important factor in determining legal penalties. The ingredient of intent is the common denominator, whether the victims are presidents, domestic partners, coworkers, or classmates (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

Researchers and theorists have posited a variety of classifications of violence. For example, some distinguish between interpersonal and political violence (Siegel, 2000). Interpersonal violence is either instrumental or expressive. Instrumental violence is designed to improve the financial or social position of the criminal. Expressive violence vents rage, anger, or frustration (Siegel, 2000). Within this traditional breakdown, politically motivated violence by a lone individual against the secretary of state would not be interpersonal but political. Such categories look at motivation or reason for committing a violent act. Doing so may create useful concepts to support various criminal theories. However, principals responsible for security and protection are better served with studies of detectable actions and behaviors that might be helpful in interventions. Whereas actuarial and clinical approaches have dominated the pursuit of identifying the dangerous person who is likely to commit violent acts, James Clark has proposed "situational variables" to provide "useful clues in short-term assessment of dangerousness" (Clark, 1989). Clark's work has served as a springboard to other more recent research studying violent acts and their preceding processes.

In their important research report, *Protective Intelligence and Threat Assessment Investigation* (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000), Secret Service researchers offered a new type of violence. More fitting to their research approach, they focused on targeted and nontargeted violence. "Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and often discernible, process of thinking and behavior" (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000). The study offered proof that assassinations and attempted assassinations were not spur-of-the-moment acts. Attempts on the life of a public figure may initially appear as impetuous or spontaneous, but that appearance does not hold up under scrutiny. The Secret Service offered a "new way of thinking and a new set of skills for criminal justice professionals. These investigations involve analysis of a subject's behavior and examination

of patterns of conduct that may result in an attack on a particular target(s)” (Borum et al., 1999). Targeted violence includes traditional criminology’s elements of not only interpersonal (both instrumental and expressive), but political violence as well. The Secret Service’s definition enabled threat assessors to better understand attack behaviors in preventing violence.

The Secret Service’s concept of targeted violence does not account for acts of violence that appear to be deliberate, even though the targets are not clearly defined or identified. Curiously, however, this was the case in several of their study subjects. For example, John Hinckley focused his attention on the presidency and attended campaign appearances for President Carter. After the presidential election of 1980, Hinckley shifted his attention to President Reagan. On the day he shot Reagan, he had debated whether to shoot Ted Kennedy, Reagan, or himself. Reagan, Hinckley decided, was closer (Clark, 1989). In other cases, however, the opportunity to attack was the reason for the target selection. For example, a subject called “P.V.” traveled to a movie studio in Los Angeles (after killing three persons in a bagel store in another state) in order to kill a famous actor. When he failed to find the actor, he shot two security guards at a film studio gate instead (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999). In these cases, the target appeared less important than the violence intended.

In their article published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* entitled “Understanding and Controlling Violence,” authors Neil Weiner and Don Hardenburg (2001b) proposed a narrower definition for targeted and nontargeted violence. Derived from the NAS definition, Weiner and Hardenburg defined judicial violence as behavior by individuals that intentionally threatens, attempts, or inflicts physical harm on persons at work or on duty in the judiciary (Weiner & Hardenburg, 2001b). For the purpose of discussing the control of judicial violence, the authors further offered a breakdown of targeted violence as involving an “ideational and behavioral sequence—a pathway—directed at or focused on a specific person or group,” judicial officials, in their example. Nontargeted violence involved “less deliberation and focus and shorter duration” (Weiner & Hardenburg, 2001b). Again, this definition of targeted violence fails to take into consideration persons who intend to commit a violent act, but who also may not have set their sights on a particular individual or who may substitute targets of opportunity.

Borrowing from the animal kingdom, Dr. Reid Meloy has adopted types of violence he calls *predatory* and *affective*. With a decidedly psychological perspective, Meloy likens human violence to feline violence. A cat can behave in a predatory manner when stalking prey in the backyard. Yet, when confronted with an unexpected threat, the cat arches, hisses, and displays teeth and claws. Meloy’s predatory violence includes characteristics such as planned or purposeful violence, variable goals—primarily cognitive, a heightened and focused awareness, and no displacement of target (Meloy,

2000). Affective violence is autonomic and usually directed toward a prior intimate or acquaintance. According to Meloy (2001), “public figures appear to be victimized by predatory violence,” planned and purposeful. However, Dale Crawford’s abduction and murder of his wife demonstrated the same deliberation and planning shown by John Hinckley toward President Reagan and by P.V. who traveled with violent intent to meet a public figure.

Meloy’s focus on a “target” is similar to the focus of the Secret Service’s, as well as to the focus of Weiner and Hardenburg. What about the cat that stalks a mouse, but whose attention is redirected toward a moth crossing its line of vision? The cat’s predatory actions and its will to hunt remain intact while its target may change. Perhaps Meloy’s definition of predatory violence—especially the needed ingredient of “no displacement of target” (Meloy, 2000)—narrows his definition to one that is not entirely useful for understanding the process of preventing violence.

Calhoun and Weston (2003) propose another way of looking at violence that might be the most practical yet in preventing certain acts of violence. Rather than trying to forge a conceptual link through the victims, which is the problem with inserting the target into the previous definition, a concept of intended violence can be drawn from the perpetrators. Eliminating crimes motivated by passion or profit, their concept of violence links certain modes of “domestic violence, workplace violence, school violence, public-figure assaults and hate crimes” under the umbrella concept of intended violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). Someone intent on violence has already made the decision to commit a violent act. The secondary consideration then becomes target and/or opportunity (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). In a previous example given by the Secret Service, P.V. clearly intended to commit a violent act. He even had a target in mind. However, the opportunity to meet his target did not occur, so he turned a chance encounter into an act of violence toward two unfortunate security guards. Certainly, these various venues can also host violent acts that are impromptu or reactive. However, by separating intended or deliberate from impromptu or reactive, threat assessors may have a window of opportunity to detect and intervene along the path to intended violence.

In March 2000 Michael McDermott began working at a computer consulting company just outside Boston. He brought with him IRS troubles. By December, the IRS was deducting from his wages. The forced withdrawals outraged McDermott, so he directed his wrath at the company accounting department. Shortly before Christmas, he began yelling at the accountants for garnishing his wages. The day after Christmas, McDermott went to work heavily armed, the weapons hidden in a duffle bag. For his midmorning coffee break, McDermott took an AK-47, a shotgun, and a pistol from his cubicle and walked toward the accounting department. He began killing people in the reception area, then in accounting—a total of seven died (Calhoun &

Table A.1 Types of Violence

Author	Some Violence Typologies
Siegel (2000)	<i>Interpersonal versus political.</i> Interpersonal violence is either 1) instrumental—designed to improve the financial or social position of the criminal or 2) expressive—to vent rage, anger, or frustration; political violence is motivated by ideology
Reiss & Roth (1993) (NRC)	<i>Intentional versus collective.</i> Intentional is inflicting physical harm (or attempt); collective is riots, state violence, some actions by organized crime
Fein & Vossekuil (2001)	<i>Targeted violence.</i> Target is chosen by virtue of association with a certain venue, e.g., national political figures, judges
Weiner & Hardenbergh (2001a, b)	<i>Targeted versus nontargeted (specific to courthouse venues).</i> Targeted involves an individual expressly intending to engage in violence, deliberate, includes planning; nontargeted involves individuals with no preexisting intention of engaging in violence but unexpectedly acts out in courtroom or courthouse
Meloy (2001)	<i>Predatory versus affective.</i> Predatory is planned or purposeful, cognitive, and with variable goals; affective is with intense autonomic arousal, reactive and immediate violence, and the goal is defense
Calhoun & Weston (2003)	<i>Intended versus impromptu.</i> Intended is when the perpetrator is inspired to engage in violence for whatever reason; it includes 1) targeted—specific choice of victim and 2) opportunistic—general in selection of victims; impromptu is a spontaneous outburst sparked by circumstances of the moment

Weston, 2003). McDermott clearly intended to kill that day. His targets varied among people whom he perceived had wronged him as well as people who presented him with additional opportunities to exercise his intent to kill.

Table A.1 presents the various types of violence discussed in this section.

Intended violence is threaded across venues using specific definitions. Researchers have formulated operational definitions in school and workplace settings (Mohandie, 2002; Rugala, 2003). For example, intended violence in the school venue is described by Dr. Chris Mohandie. His definition from a threat-assessment point of view is that preventable school violence is perpetrated by someone who is a service recipient or customer of the school, a category which, in addition to students, may also include parents or guardians of students and those who are currently or formerly in relationships with students (Mohandie, 2000). The FBI, in concert with other researchers, has a parallel classification for the workplace-violence venue: “Violence against coworkers, supervisors or managers by a present or former employee” (Rugala, 2003). Thus, we are able to see intended violence along the spectrum of venues (Table A.2).

Table A.2 Intended Violence across Venues

Public Figure	Workplace	School	Domestic
Violence inflicted or attempted by person(s) intent on harm that may be directed at a public figure (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000; Meloy, 2001)	Violence inflicted or attempted by persons(s) intent on harm "against coworkers, supervisors or managers by a present or former employee" (Rugala, 2003)	Violence inflicted or attempted by person(s) intent on harm, that are "service recipients or customers of the school, parents or guardians of students or those who are currently or formerly in relationships with students" (Mohandie, 2000)	Violence inflicted or attempted by person(s) intent on harm, that are current or former sexual intimates
Relationship: noninterpersonal	Relationship: mixed noninterpersonal and interpersonal	Relationship: mixed noninterpersonal and interpersonal	Relationship: interpersonal
NONINTIMATE	SEMI-INTIMATE	SEMI-INTIMATE	INTIMATE

The Nature of Threats

Within the past decade, the discourse on threats and their relationship to violence has increased (Calhoun, 1998; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; de Becker, 1997; Dietz et al., 1991a & b; Fein, 1999; Meloy, 2001; Scalora et al., 2003). "In the spirit of symbolic interactionism . . . theorizing about crime-provoking situational characteristics has most often focused on events and action interpreted by participants as threatening their status or positions or their ideas about self" (Tittle, 2000). Long considered a protection of free speech, laws against threats were slow to appear. In 1993, the NAS Panel on Understanding and Preventing Violence called for additional research for preventive interventions with specific emphasis on the relationships between aggressive and violent behavior, as well as analyses of protective and aggravating conditions and factors in families, peer groups, schools, and communities (Reiss & Roth, 1993). Violence prevention can exist in several forms, one of which may come from the enlightened responses of people or institutions charged with dealing with potential violent offenders such as medical professionals, social workers, and criminal justice officials.

According to *Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language* (1989), a "threat" is a declaration of an intention or determination to inflict punishment, injury, death, or loss to someone in retaliation for, or conditionally upon, some action or course. For the purposes of this discussion, these declarations of violent intention are communicated and differentiated from

structural threats or threats from weather or disease. Communicated threats occur in many forms. A mother may make a threat to her children that a promised visit to the ice cream parlor will not occur if their behavior does not improve. A candidate for state legislator may threaten his opponent with “revealing evidence of prior sexual harassment.” A gunman may say to his robbery victim, “Give me your wallet or I will shoot you.” Most have at least heard about such scenarios where threats are used. But, when should threats be taken seriously and seen as predictive of intended violence?

A letter writer may mail a letter to the White House containing the words, “I have the President in my sights and I will shoot him on his next trip to New York City for his policy on school prayer.” This may seem similar to a husband who threatens his wife with: “I will take my hunting rifle out of the truck and kill you if you don’t listen to me next time.” But, how much do spoken or written threats mean from situation to situation? Does the Secret Service need to respond to the threat to the president differently than the local county police respond to the husband’s threat to his wife?

Communicated threats are made to convince us of an intention but, according to personal security expert Gavin de Becker, “threats actually convince us of an emotion: frustration” (de Becker, 1997). Furthermore, the threat boosts the power of the threatener from the fear instilled in the victim. As de Becker points out, threats are promises, many of which are broken—but some of which are kept.

Milburn and Watman (1981) wrote that threats are ubiquitous and that they can be explicit, implicit, and structural. Explicit threats—the focus of this study—offer the source considerable control over his or her own phrasing, clarity, and tone. However, according to Milburn and Watman, such threats have a high failure rate, usually owing to the reaction of the target. In fact, threats are effective in inverse relation to the degree of personal involvement of the threatener. Whereas the source of the threat intends to threaten and the target sees the threat, the communication is accurate. However, the farther away the target is from the source of the threat and the less the target sees the threat, the less effective the threat (Milburn & Watman, 1981).

For workplace violence venues, Drs. Turner and Gelles (2003) recommend examining aspects of the threat, looking for organized, fixed, focused, and action- and time-imperative communications as potential precursors of violence. The degree to which threatening communications deviate from these characteristics in workplace scenarios helps to determine the immediacy of the intervention or action to be taken (Turner & Gelles, 2003).

The Relationship of Threats to Intended Violence

In James Tedeschi’s (1994) work within social interactionist theory, threats and resulting physical harm are put into the context of coercive actions.

Coercive actions can be motivated by a need to ensure another party's compliance, to restore justice, and/or to project a particular social identity. Tedeschi suggests that where compliance is a motive, people who possess greater relative power than others may be encouraged to use coercion because they expect to be successful at little cost (Tedeschi and Feldson, 1994).

An application of coercion theory (part of social interactionist theory) to situations where people make threats might help to explain why threats made by people in various situations are associated with different outcomes. For example, in a domestic conflict situation, control and compliance are common motives. Over time, the male spouse, who usually has greater physical strength and aggressive tendencies, uses these as tools to maintain control (Tedeschi and Feldson, 1994).

Making threats to gain compliance, as seen in domestic violence situations, are often about a perpetual conflict between the parties. However, in matters of school and workplace violence, threats may be motivated by a desired outcome spawned by justice seeking. For example, in 1998, Robert Scott Helfer sought revenge at his workplace in Greeley, CO. He exhibited many of the characteristics of a troubled employee, but he particularly focused on a coworker, Donna Archuleta, who had altered an office furniture order he had placed. He threatened her with violence. On the morning of a disciplinary hearing over his transgressions on the job, he pulled out a handgun and began shooting, killing one person and wounding another. He left the room and began seeking out Donna. Along the way, he encountered other coworkers telling them "Don't worry. I'm not here for you." As Donna heard Helfer getting closer, she instinctively realized that he was after her. Her instincts saved her life as she hid herself from the gunman (Moffat, 2000).

In contrast, however, actors with an interest in public figures may see the act of making threats less useful than striking the victim without them. After all, if one intends to assault or kill a public official, what is the point of warning by issuing threats? The motive is more likely punitive or justice seeking. Secret Service researchers have reported that in a study of 83 public figure attackers, "fewer than one tenth of all 83 attackers and near-lethal approachers communicated a direct threat to the target or to a law enforcement agency" (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000). However, public figure attackers and near-lethal approachers were not completely secretive about their aims and intentions. John Hinckley wanted maximum attention for his actions. Although he visited the offices of a number of major Washington figures during the fall and winter of 1980, Hinckley focused his attention on the presidency. In the fall of 1980, Hinckley, traveling with a gun, attended campaign appearances by President Carter. (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999).

Alarming words contained in threats cause people to react by going into a defensive posture (de Becker, 1997). In evaluating threats, experts stress context. Rather than evaluating the words used to make the threat,

an investigation into the whole situation is required. To illustrate the difference from one case to the next, de Becker (1997) wrote that in interpersonal situations a “threat tends to actually increase the likelihood of violence by eroding the quality of communication and increasing frustration, but the very same threat conveyed to a public figure does not portend violence at all” (de Becker, 1997).

In fact, as two security experts have noted (Batza & Taylor, 1999), one of the most common misconceptions in the assessment of public figure stalking is the alarm caused by death threats. These particular security experts categorize stalkers as attachment-seeking, identity-seeking, rejection-based, or delusional. They claim, “No known modern-age, public-figure attacker threatened to kill his or her victim prior to doing so” (Batza & Taylor, 1999). This does not, however, hold true in other types of stalking situations in which threats are important predictors of future violence. Consequently, while each type may be seen in stalking directed toward public figures or in interpersonal cases, threats made are not as important when factored into assessments of public figure cases (Batza & Taylor, 1999). However, assessing direct threats is important in interpersonal cases.

The importance of the research on threats and violence toward public officials has significantly helped threat assessors realize that it is a myth that most attacks on public officials are preceded by direct threats. The findings by the U.S. Marshal Service on threats to federal judicial officials helped change the attention of threat assessors from merely direct threats to other detectable behaviors. In 1996, the U.S. Marshal Service revised its reportable behaviors from merely threats to “other less obvious language or behavior” (Jenkins, 2001).

While research has helped to advance threat management for public officials, the same findings may have had some deleterious effect on other venues where threats and violent outcomes exist. For example, in a Department of Justice publication reviewing batterer intervention programs, lethality assessments were encouraged and the process that was promoted by the Secret Service, based on its study of public figure attackers or near-lethal approachers, was referenced (Healey, Smith, & O’Sullivan, 1998). The Secret Service process may not, however, be applicable and even might be harmful if taken into account for domestic situations when evaluating direct threats to harm. Threats may indeed be important in risk assessment in venues where the threateners and their targets are more familiar with each other.

Very revealing research conducted in 1999 has provided indicators toward the effect intimacy has on dangerousness. The study compared 233 intimate and nonintimate stalking cases managed by the Los Angeles Police Department. The researchers defined intimates as married, cohabitating, dating, or having a prior sexual relationship. Nonintimates were defined as coworkers, schoolmates, roommates, neighbors, or those in professional

business relationships. No stranger relationships were noted in the definition. The results of the analysis revealed that in this data set, “intimate stalkers threatened persons and property more often, committed more violence against persons and property (including physical violence toward the victim), were more likely to ‘make good’ on their threats . . . and used more physical approach behaviors” (Palarea, Zona, Lane, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999). As noted in the report’s discussion: “The results illustrate the importance of accounting for the presence of an intimate relationship when assessing for violence” (Palarea et al., 1999).

In his discussion of stalking, threats, and violence, Dr. Reid Meloy asserts that “threats are very common, and therefore provide us with little guidance in determining how dangerous someone is” (Meloy, 2000). Meloy observed from his studies concerning prior sexual intimates that when threats were made, there was no follow-up violence 75% of the time. Meloy wrote that false negative rates among violent stalkers were typically less than 15% when the victim was a prior sexual intimate, “[but] if the victim is a public figure, false negative rates jump to at least 90% ” (Meloy, 2000). He explained this discrepancy as the difference between private stalking, which he considered affective (autonomic or impulsive) behavior, and public stalking, which he considered predatory (planned or instrumental) behavior. In another publication, Meloy reported on a review of studies of stalking, threats, and violence. The review yielded 736 subjects who stalked or attacked across various venues. Among the studies, Meloy found a positive and significant relationship between communicated threats and violence risk, with one striking exception. In the study involving public figures attacked or assassinated, Meloy cited that only one out of ten subjects “communicated a direct threat to the target or to law enforcement before they were violent” (Meloy, 2001). In his discussion, Meloy offered an explanation citing the nature of the violence:

Private targets are typically shoved, pushed, punched, slapped, choked, fondled or hair pulled by the perpetrator, and he usually does not use a weapon . . . This is a mode of violence which is *affective*: highly autonomically arousing, accompanied by anger or fear, unplanned, and an immediate reaction to a perceived threat, usually rejection by the person who is the target of the pursuit, usually a prior acquaintance or intimate. On the other hand, public targets appear to be victimized by a *predatory* mode of violence: it is planned for days, weeks or months, is purposeful (instrumental), has variable goals, and is primarily cognitively motivated (Meloy, 2001).

Apparently, Meloy does not associate predatory behavior with violence among intimates. Unwittingly, Meloy might be helping to explain the discrepancy in the likelihood of intended violence after a threat is made between intimates and nonintimates.

To explore the intimacy effect on threats, we will look at the spectrum of intended violence from nonintimates to intimates. The exploration of intended violence and threats in school and workplace venues focuses on the familiarity of the offenders and the victims. The purpose will be to try to understand why the research on threats appears to contradict itself. The goal is to develop some practical standards that law enforcement can use in evaluating threats. Essentially, the paper asks: When should threats be seen as indicative of future violence?

Findings on Public Figure Violence

While the American public was still reeling from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, deadly anthrax arrived through the mail in then Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle's office at the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. Three years later, the deadly poison ricin was discovered in the mail room for the offices of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist. These incidents are reminders that public figures are not immune to potentially deadly attacks from persons intent on violence toward them. Each year, federal, state, and local law enforcement officials and private security officers intercede with thousands of individuals who demonstrate inappropriate or unusual interest in a public official or figure. Some of these individuals were intercepted within lethal range of a target just before they attempted to mount an attack (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000).

Public officials taking positions in political debates on issues such as abortion, capital punishment, and military spending naturally garner resentment and publicity over their positions. Under these circumstances, even the most politically adroit cannot fail to alienate large numbers of individuals. The publicity that public officials receive also brings them to the attention of mentally disturbed or jealous individuals. Not surprisingly, public officials receive a steady stream of hostile and inappropriate communications in the form of mail, telephone calls, and unwanted visits (Dietz et al., 1991b). In many cases, the incumbent's title alone is enough to attract those who wish to harm a public official. John Hinckley stalked President Jimmy Carter, then switched to Ronald Reagan after Reagan's election to office (Clark, 1989). Another subject from the Secret Service sample was "FT," a lonely, angry young man who spent 18 months preoccupied with selecting and shooting a national leader (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999). Such unwanted attention poses a significant challenge to law enforcement.

Several attempts have been made to study the behavior leading up to violent approaches toward public figures. James Clark published groundbreaking research in 1981, *American Assassins* (Clark, 1982), which carefully portrayed the characteristics and actions of 16 assassins and would-be assas-

sins of American presidents or presidential candidates and Martin Luther King. Clark identified a number of significant exceptions to the then conventional wisdom concerning the motives and tactics (or actions) of assassins. Rather than accept a preexisting myth that assassins and would-be assassins commit political violence brought on by some psychosis, he discovered nuances among his study subjects that serve to enlighten us about the thinking that led up to the violence. For example, Samuel Byck, who attempted to assassinate Richard Nixon, and Lee Harvey Oswald both translated their very real domestic difficulties into political extremism. Employment problems and marital difficulties were the real reasons for their frustration and anger (Clark, 1989). Only the target selection makes Oswald any differently motivated than Charles Whitman, who in 1966 climbed a tower at the University of Texas, heavily armed, and methodically took aim at people below. He killed 12 and wounded 31 (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). Both Oswald and Whitman planned and prepared for their violent acts, leaving clues along the way. This similarity was profound. These and similar cases opened the door to the study of violence as an intended act.

In an update to his *American Assassins*, James Clark later wrote about his psychological profiles of known assassins, remarking that the characteristics of his small sample of known assassins were not dissimilar from those of millions of others who do not attempt such actions. "Most assassins are drawn to identifiable behavior patterns before they strike" (Clark, 1989). In a small portion of these cases, threats were known to have been made. However, not all threats were considered direct. Only 4 of the 17 subjects actually made threats prior to their attacks. Although from this, as Clark warned, "threats cannot be ignored," the behaviors of the assassins prior to their acts were more telling. For example, Lynette Fromme drew considerable attention to herself through her well-known attempts to publicize the alleged injustice of Charles Manson's trial. She combined these acts by wearing bizarre red robes as she waited for President Ford to pass by. In another incident, John Hinckley arrived at the Nashville airport with three handguns in his suitcase on the day President Carter was scheduled to speak there (Clark, 1989). Clark's practical contribution was to shift the research focus to behaviors and away from merely the mental condition of the perpetrator.

In 1991, a team of researchers led by Park Dietz published two articles reporting on their study of inappropriate communications sent to Hollywood celebrities and similar types of letters mailed to members of Congress. Both studies led Dietz and his colleagues to a startling conclusion. They found that explicit threats of physical harm had little bearing—even an opposite bearing—on the actual behavior of the person uttering the threat. For Hollywood celebrities, Dietz et al. found "no association between threatening and approaching." It followed, then, that "the presence or absence of a threat in the communication is no indication whatsoever of whether a subject is

going to pursue an encounter” (Dietz et al., 1991a). Their initial conclusion ran against common sense and traditional practice, both of which held that threateners were the most dangerous individuals.

The finding that emerged from the team’s study of communications to members of Congress was even more pronounced. “Subjects,” the research team wrote, “who sent threats to a member of Congress were significantly less likely to pursue a face-to-face encounter with him or her.” The team elaborated:

The finding regarding threats was particularly robust. Each of the following aspects of threats, taken alone, was significantly associated with not approaching: threatening any kind of harm toward any public figure; threatening to kill any public figure or those around a public figure; indicating that a threat would be executed by the subject or his agent; making any conditional threat; and making any implausible threat (Dietz et al., 1991b).

The researchers selected 100 cases from the Capitol Police case files. All contained some form of written communications; 50 cases indicated positive approach behavior and 50 cases indicated negative approach behavior. From this collection, a stratified random sample of 86 cases was analyzed for content of the correspondence.

Defining a threat as any offer to do harm, however implausible, the study found that in 58% of the cases, a threat was communicated (Table A.3). However, the subjects who threatened were significantly less likely to approach. “Nearly every feature of threats studied bore a significant relationship to approach behavior, always in the direction of threateners approaching less often” (Dietz et al., 1991b).

From this finding, Dietz concluded that waiting for a threat before contacting law enforcement, or law enforcement waiting for an explicit threat before opening an investigation or taking measures to thwart “dangerous encounters,” would be a serious mistake.

Subsequent research on public figure attacks has confirmed Dietz’s finding. Secret Service researchers analyzed 83 attackers and near attackers of presidents, celebrities, jurists, and other public figures. Like Dietz, the Secret Service researchers concluded that “persons who pose threats most often do not make threats, especially explicit threats.” Fewer than a

Table A.3 Threat Made and Approach Behaviors—Letters to Congress

Approach Behavior	Threat Yes	Threat No
Approach negative	84%	16%
Approach positive	33%	67%

Source: From Dietz et al., 1991b.

tenth of the 83 attackers and near-attackers communicated threats. More tellingly, none of the 43 individuals in the study who actually attacked a public figure ever made an explicit threat to the target (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000). When asked why he did not send a threat letter before he approached, one study subject responded that if he “had sent a letter, the police would have come and arrested me. I did not want to be stopped then” (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999).

From this study, the Secret Service has moved away from relying on descriptive, demographic, or psychological profiles. Furthermore, “the threat assessment approach does not rely on direct communication of a threat as a threshold for an appraisal of risk or protective action. Investigators make a distinction between people who *make* threats and those who *pose* a threat. Persons who appear to pose a threat provoke the greatest level of concern. Although some people who make threats ultimately pose threats, many do not” (Borum et al., 1999). As with Clark and Dietz, the Secret Service research discounted the value of threats while it inflated the value of behaviors.

A study of threats and assaults against federal judicial officials by Dr. Frederick S. Calhoun drew a distinction between attackers, whom he called “hunters,” and threateners, whom he called “howlers.” Between the two, Calhoun concluded,

lies a world of difference. They are extremes: one an actor, one a talker: one a doer, one a writer. Between them is a huge chasm, a clear distinction. The hunters hunt and rarely howl; the howlers howl and only rarely hunt (Calhoun, 1998).

Based on this fundamental difference between hunters and howlers, the study identified distinctive characteristics of each. Howlers communicated their threats to their targets in writing or over the telephone. Hunters did not communicate, but engaged in face-to-face confrontations or suspicious activities, including physical assaults (Calhoun, 1998).

According to Dr. Calhoun, “the courts are now imperiled in a way that no one imagined even 2 decades ago. In the last 20 years, more federal judges have been brutally assassinated than in the 175 years before” (Calhoun, 1998). This new reality exposes potential unprotected victims to violence. In 1988, Charles Koster carried his daughter’s discrimination suit to federal court in New York. He expected Judge Richard Duronco to sustain her. When the verdict affronted him, Koster tracked down the judge at his home and, without warning, shot him to death in his backyard (Calhoun, 1998).

Even though 3,096 inappropriate communications to federal judicial officials were recorded between 1980 and 1993, the vast majority of federal judicial officials end their service without intimidation, harassment, or vio-

lence. “Even among those officials who were pestered, the proportion who were physically imperiled was even smaller. Of the 2,996 reported inappropriate communications and assaults that could be rated by outcome, 242 of them posed some enhanced risk to the victim. In other words, some 91.9% of the rated cases were specious, the communications empty and ultimately harmless” (Calhoun, 1998).

Based on a career providing security services to public figures in the United States, Gavin de Becker fully embraced what the research told him. As he explained in *The Gift of Fear*:

It is a tenacious myth that those who threaten public figures are the ones most likely to harm them. In fact, those who make direct threats to public figures are far less likely to harm them than those who communicate in other inappropriate ways (lovesickness, exaggerated adoration, theses of rejection, the belief that a relationship “is meant to be,” plans to travel or meet, [or] the belief that the media figure owes them something). Direct threats are not a reliable pre-incident indicator for assassination in America, as demonstrated by the fact that not one successful public-figure attacker in the history of the media age directly threatened his victim first (de Becker, 1997).

The “demythologization” of threats to public figures as indicators of future action led several law enforcement agencies charged with public-figure protection responsibilities to shift away from waiting for a threat (Calhoun, 2003). Instead, they have broadened their investigations to include inappropriate communications or contacts between the protectees and those who might cause them harm (Calhoun, 2003; Fein & Vossekuil, 2000; Jenkins, 2001). These agencies taught their targets to report inappropriate communications or contacts even if they lacked explicit expressions of an intent to cause harm. In effect, the focus shifted from what individuals said to what they did. “Actions spoke louder than words,” Calhoun and Weston (2003) concluded.

Observations

- Public figures receive threatening and inappropriate communications.
- Public figures are attacked without first being threatened in most cases studied.
- There is little motivation to threaten a public figure if violence is the desired outcome.
- Many attackers of public figures intend to act out violently, rather than resort to violence spontaneously.
- Consequently, the research shows that threats are not good preincident indicators for violence against public figures.

Findings on Workplace Violence

Since 1986, when Patrick Henry Sherrill, a postal worker in Edmond, OK, shot and killed six coworkers and then committed suicide, workplace violence has been the focus of intense research (Layden, 1996). Workplace homicide rates have fallen along with rates of overall violent crime since the mid-1990s, but we do not know the extent to which we can attribute these decreases to industry-based prevention programs (Peek-Asa, Runyan, & Zwerling, 2001). Homicide remains the second leading cause of fatal occupational injuries for all workers and the leading cause of fatal occupational injuries for women (Merchant & Lundell, 2001). Although worker-on-worker violence accounted for about 7% of workplace homicides (Merchant & Lundell, 2001), such events leave us horrified and asking if predictive signs might have been detected to prevent such violence.

In cases of workplace violence, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management listed “direct or veiled threats of harm” among the warning signs of potential coworker violence (OPM, 1998). The Workplace Violence Research Institute advised employers in 1998 that “one of the most important elements in any prevention program is a zero tolerance policy for threats, harassment, intimidation and weapons possession” (Mattman, 1998). The institute analyzed more than 200 incidents of workplace violence and found that coworker violence was associated with a number of changed behaviors. One such “preincident indicator” included individuals who threaten or verbally abuse coworkers and supervisors (Mattman, 1998).

In an early work, James Alan Fox and Jack Levin (1994) steered away from the purely mental state of the workplace violence perpetrator. While recognizing mental anguish and possible mental and personality disorders, Fox and Levin saw episodes of workplace violence as a process. They found that most vengeful, violent workers do not act spontaneously and “just explode,” but deliberate and engage in well-planned ambushes to gain revenge. “Workplace killers may be despondent, disillusioned, disappointed and even clinically depressed—but generally [are] not deranged” (Layden, 1996). Other researchers have also developed a baseline profile but found a “secondary but crucial set of risk factors [including] . . . threats of physical assault” (Layden, 1996).

Workplace violence is now recognized as a specific category of violent crime. In a recent publication, the FBI announced that specialists have come to a consensus that workplace violence falls into four broad categories. These are:

- Type 1—violent acts by criminals who have no other connection to the workplace, such as robbery.

- Type 2—violence directed at employees by persons for whom an organization provides services, such as customers or students.
- Type 3—violence against coworkers, supervisors, or managers by a present or former employee.
- Type 4—violence in the workplace by someone with a personal relationship with an employee, such as a domestic partner. (Rugala, 2004).

According to data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, coworker-on-coworker violence has been notably more deadly than violence directed at employees by customers or clients (Duhart, 2001). The data suggests that these events, motivated by revenge—not profit—are planned, purposeful, and intended (Table A.4).

This section of the paper focuses on the FBI's Type 3 workplace (coworker-on-coworker) violence to maintain the concept of intended violence. Although domestic violence is a certain problem at the workplace, it is addressed in this paper in the section reviewing the research on domestic violence.

In 1994, James Alan Fox and Jack Levin wrote that workplace violence—referring to the Type 3 category above—typically originated from the “vengeful employee.” They elaborated by suggesting a profile of a middle-aged, white male facing termination or perceived injustices on the job. While aggregated characteristics resulting in profiles are interesting and may even describe the typical workplace attacker today, such profiles may not be practical for prevention efforts. “Given the relative infrequency of events such as workplace violence . . . the vast majority of people who ‘fit’ any given profile will not engage in that behavior” (Borum et al., 1999).

Where the potential for preventing intended violence exists is in the detection of behaviors indicating that an individual is on a “pathway to violent action” (Borum et al., 1999). A subject's appearance or profile is less important than his observable behaviors. In the workplace, threats appear to be part of a continuum of escalating behaviors that may help to predict the potential for violence.

A review of the literature on workplace violence reveals a growing interest in learning causes and prevention. The making of threats and its relationship to violent outcomes is not obvious. Some of the research treats threats as separate victimizations. Regardless, a pattern does emerge indicating that the making of threats among coworkers is prevalent and, as some data show,

Table A.4 Distribution of Workplace Homicides by Relationship (*n* = 130)

Homicides—coworkers (more familiar)	67	65%
Homicides—clients (less familiar)	36	35%

Source: From Duhart, 2001.

associated with physical violence (Northwestern, 1993; Scalora et al., 2001; Tjaden & Theonnes, 2001).

For the purpose of helping employers solve workplace violence problems and identify future trends, the Northwestern National Life Insurance Company, Minneapolis, MN, conducted its own research and published its findings in 1993. Northwestern surveyed a representative sample of 600 full-time American workers conducted during 15-minute telephone interviews. The workers polled were from a national random sample excluding military personnel and the self-employed. The sample was drawn to accurately reflect the male-female ratio as well as the distribution of the workforce among the four census regions in the United States (Northwestern, 1993).

The survey made distinctions among threats, harassment, and physical attack at the workplace. Harassment was defined as the act of someone's creating a hostile work environment through unwelcome words, actions, or physical contact not resulting in physical harm. Threats were defined as expressions of the intent to cause physical harm. Physical attack was aggression resulting in a physical assault with or without the use of a weapon (Northwestern, 1993).

The study addressed the broader scope of workplace violence, including violence from strangers, clients, and coworkers. Key findings, however, give a glimpse of the intimacy effect on violence in the workplace. For example, one key finding of the study indicated a strong relationship between job stress and workplace harassment and violence. Highly stressed workers experienced twice the rate of violence as less stressed employees. Threats of violence were linked with higher burnout rates. The intimacy effect may also be seen as another key finding of the study that claimed that harassers are usually coworkers or bosses, while attackers are more likely to be customers. Victims identified interpersonal conflicts with coworkers as the most likely reason they were harassed or threatened as compared with attacks by clients or patients precipitated by irrational behavior. Coworkers and bosses accounted for 86% of all harassment at work, one third of threats, and one fourth of workplace attacks. Forty-six percent of workplace harassment victims and 27% of workers who had been threatened identified job-related interpersonal conflict as the likely cause (Table A.5).

Threats among current and former workers in this study exceeded rates among less intimate or less familiar types.

Forty-seven-year-old pressman Joseph Wesbecker of Louisville, KY, was furious about his perceived mistreatment by management at the Standard Gravure Printing Plant. He was so angry that he told a coworker that he planned to get even with the company and even showed him the gun with which he intended to carry out his plan of attack. Months later, Wesbecker roamed the corridors with his AK-47, systematically seeking out his intended targets. He killed eight and wounded a dozen others. (Fox & Levin, 1993).

Table A.5 Results of the Northwestern Survey

Perpetrator	Workplace Attack Victims, %	Workplace Threat Victims, %	Workplace Harassment Victims, %
Coworker other than boss or former employees	30	43	88
Customers/clients	44	36	15
Stranger	24	16	2
Other	3	7	2
Total	101	102	107

Source: From Northwestern, 1993.

Wesbecker preceded his attack with a threat of his intent, leading to the devastating lethality of this event.

Research published as *Nonfatal Workplace Violence Risk Factors* (Scalora et al., 2001), involved incidents of workplace violence from January 1, 1997, through June 30, 1998, investigated by the Lincoln, NE, Police Department. Using a workplace violence definition that required workplace location, offense type (threats and attacks), and only employees as victims, yielded the researchers 281 reported incidents. The sample was bifurcated according to who posed the danger—sources either external or internal to the workplace. Internal threat cases involved conflicts between coworkers, but also included domestic partners. External threat cases were classified as originating from strangers or clients (Scalora et al., 2001).

Across the total sample, nearly one third of the perpetrators threatened their victims before the violent incident. The researchers claimed that prior threat was inversely related to the presence of subsequent assaultive behavior. For both external and internal situations, perpetrators of threats were significantly less likely to have engaged in assaultive behavior. However, when the data were analyzed separately for external and internal circumstances, the results appeared to support the intimacy effect. For the internal circumstances group, discriminant analysis revealed that coworkers were more likely to engage in threats and violent behavior than the other victim-offender types (Table A.6).

Although the authors described their analysis as revealing that prior threatening behavior was inversely related to violent behavior in a workplace, comparing these results to the results for the external circumstances group reveals that the association of threats preceding violence was greater in closer relationships compared with stranger relationships

In a review of survey results published in *Coworker Violence and Gender* (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001), analysts using data collected as part of the National Violence Against Women (NVAW) Survey reviewed coworker violence. The review was undertaken to further the understanding of coworker

Table A.6 Percentage of Cases Where Prior Threat Was Made

External Threat w/ Assault	External Threat w/ No assault	Internal Threat w/ Assault	Internal Threat w/ No assault
10%	40%	21.6%	55.6%

Source: From Scalora et al., 2001.

violence compared with violence in other venues and by other perpetrators. While the analysis of the NVAW data indicated that 193,455 people 18 years old or older suffer annually from coworker violence, the phenomenon is relatively rare compared with other violence, such as that committed at home or by strangers (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001).

Workplace victimizations were classified into rapes, physical assaults, stalking, and threats. The type of violence experienced by males and females differed significantly. For women, stalking and rape were reported in greater numbers than by men. Men reported significantly greater numbers of physical assaults. While both genders reported that they were threatened with violence by coworkers, men reported that they were threatened with violence the most (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001) (Table A.7).

Although this study did not specifically address threatening statements and their relationship to violent outcomes, the analytical results indicate that threatening statements and violent behavior are certainly present among coworkers (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001).

According to *Violence in the Workplace, 1993-99*, about 900 work-related homicides occurred annually between 1993 and 1999 and an average of 1.7 million violent victimizations per year were committed against people aged 12 or older who were at work (Duhart, 2001). Workplace violence accounted for 18% of all violent crime over the 7-year period. While most of the nonfatal violence was perpetrated by strangers against workers in high-risk occupations, that is, police officers, mental health workers, and taxi drivers, some of this violence was committed by coworkers against other coworkers involved

Table A.7 Distribution of Female and Male Coworker Violence Victims by Type of Victimization as Measured by the NVAW Survey

Type of Victimization	Female Victims (n = 86)	Male Victims (n = 184)
Rape	26.7	3.8
Physical Assault	33.7	79.3
Stalking	39.5	6.5
Threat	8.1	15.8

Source: From Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001.

in interpersonal circumstances (Duhart, 2001). In fact, according to data from the U.S. Department of Labor presented in Duhart's publication, an annual average of workplace homicides involving coworkers was 67, or 7% of the total of all workplace homicides. "Coworkers or former coworkers committed a higher percentage of homicides in the workplace when compared to customers or clients" (Duhart, 2001). The assumed familiarity among coworkers compared with client-worker relationships coupled with the greater lethality in the coworker-on-coworker group may suggest a certain intent. For example, a client may lash out at a worker who denies a certain expected service by slapping or kicking. However, the murders using firearms and other weapons require some preparation and planning.

Data available from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (2003) revealed that threats to harm frequently preceded violent action among coworkers. In an estimated 53,540 nonfatal victimizations among coworkers and employees, both current and former, 4,661 current and former employees threatened harm before they attacked compared with 3,628 who attacked without threatening. Although threats from current and former coworkers were present in this survey, the percentage of threats prior to attack was somewhat less (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003). The NCVS data does not differentiate between intended and impromptu violence (Table A.8).

On February 9, 1996, Clifton McCree arrived at the trailer where Fort Lauderdale, FL, beach maintenance workers gathered at the beginning of the workday. McCree entered the trailer and began shooting. One employee, Nancy Ann Ellers, escaped through a rear door as McCree fired in her direction. A total of six employees were killed. However, one employee, Ivan McDonald, survived because he remembered McCree's threats. Practicing his own personal security routine, he rarely went into the trailer. Rather, he would greet fellow employees, clock in, and wait in his vehicle to join the crews as they left for their maintenance tasks. On the day of the shooting, McDonald was waiting in his vehicle as he observed Ellers running from the trailer (Moffatt, 2000). Believing McCree's threats probably saved his life.

In 2002, the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAV) conducted a symposium on workplace violence resulting in the monograph *Workplace Violence: Issues in Response* (Rugala, 2004). For this

Table A.8 Comparison of Means in Attack Incidents Where Threats Were Made or Not

Type	Threats before Attack	No Threat before Attack
Employee (current or former)	56.2	43.8
Coworker (current or former)	27.7	72.3

Source: From NCVS, 2003.

project, the FBI focused on nonstranger workplace violence, that is, coworkers, clients, and intimates.

When violence comes from an employee or someone close to an employee, there is a much greater chance that some warning sign will have reached the employer in the form of observable behavior. That knowledge, along with the appropriate prevention programs, can at the very least mitigate the potential for violence or prevent it altogether (Rugala, 2004).

Threats may be an important starting point in the prevention efforts. As part of an overall program that reinforces employee trust and ensures responsible employer response, the FBI has identified homicidal and suicidal comments and threats at the workplace as a significant risk factor. "Many times, a violent act is preceded by a threat" (Rugala, 2004). Threats can be explicit or veiled, verbal or written, even vague. For example, the FBI monograph cited the case of a 46-year old subject who exhibited inappropriate behavior while engaged in a worker training program. After several months of this behavior and several management-approved leaves of absence, the worker's focus began to crystallize on five specific coworkers, then on one in particular.

While the police investigation was under way, the subject made threats against five former female coworkers. A threat assessment was conducted analyzing letters, voice mail, reports from EAP, and interviews with various individuals. The subject's communications were organized and contained specific threats. For example, he wrote . . . 'I will in my own time strike again, and it will be unmerciful.' The material suggested that he was becoming increasingly fixated on the targets and his communications articulated an action imperative which suggested that the risk was increasing (Rugala, 2004).

The threat assessment and legal review resulted in the arrest of the subject, who was eventually found not guilty by reason of insanity. The arrest may have prevented a violent attack on his coworkers. The monograph suggested that further research was needed to study threats, different patterns of threatening behavior, different forms of threats, and threat evaluation procedures to better help determine validity.

Drs. James Turner and Michael Gelles (2003) examined threats in their published risk management approach to threat assessment. In the workplace, threatening statements are often the triggering events that set into motion evaluations, assessments, and interventions, if necessary. In fact, in cases studied by the authors, 99% included threats or verbal abuse preceding a violent act. Although vast numbers of threats occur without leading to physical violence, the level of risk associated with threatening behavior and verbal abuse must still be determined. "Almost every published paper or report on incidents of workplace violence involving known perpetrators shows the

same information—a pattern of threatening behavior and verbal abuse prior to physical acts of violence” (Turner & Gelles, 2003). Turner and Gelles have developed a five-tiered approach to threat assessment. The first tier is high risk calling for immediate intervention in the form of arrest, hospitalization, or major organizational response (e.g., bomb threats requiring emergency resources and evacuation of employees). In this category, threats are characterized as repeated threats of intent to do harm, threats accompanied by actions that will likely bring harm, and bomb or biological threats or written or e-mail threats (Turner & Gelles, 2003).

Turner and Gelles also qualify conditional threats. If the threats contain qualifications or conditions in a workplace setting, that is, if some event does or does not occur in the future, then the threat would be carried out; immediate intervention may not be necessary. Such scenarios call for prompt evaluation, but may be mitigated through organizational channels. Likewise, threatening statements that provoke fear in targeted individuals, but which are not accompanied by approach behavior, deserve prompt attention, but can often be resolved through human resource processes such as removals or transfers of the employees. Threats made by individuals in the workplace that are isolated and not clearly distressful to the receiver fall into Turner and Gelles’ tier calling for evaluation with a view toward communication training or employee assistance. Their lowest tier involves the false reports of threats in the workplace. Clearly, this research points to the importance of threatening statements in the predictability of workplace violence (Turner & Gelles, 2003).

A review of research on workplace violence in *Violence, the Emotionally Enraged Employee, and the Workplace* (Layden, 1996) concluded that employers must have “policies and procedures for handling threats.” Several warning signs of violence were identified. A common risk factor found by most researchers was the occurrence of threats toward the potential victim(s). From his research, S. Anthony Baron concluded that most workplace violence perpetrators exhibited severe psychoses. He outlined three levels in the forms that violence may take. Level 1 is mostly a mildly belligerent state whereas Level 3 is actual violence. Level 2 was described as increased belligerence including “verbalizing wishes to hurt co-workers and/or management” (Layden, 1996).

A series of writers claiming expertise or stakes in workplace violence have asserted that violence was not a spur-of-the-moment occurrence, that observable behaviors, including threats, were often present (Batz & Taylor, 1999; Carll, 1999; Duncan, undated; Merchant & Lundell, 2001). Stanley Duncan’s article “Death in the Office: Workplace Homicides” (undated) reported that current or former employees accounted for the majority of workplace homicides compared with perpetrators who were strangers, customers, or clients. The fact that most homicides of this type involved the use of firearms indicated that “these crimes reflect extensive planning by the offender . . .

[who] usually have plenty of time to prepare” (Duncan, undated). Duncan advised that management must take any threat of violence seriously.

In workplace venues, particular attention should also be paid to inappropriate communications to coworkers and supervisors and repeated accusations of other people’s causing one’s problems (Batza & Taylor, 1999). “One of the most common misconceptions in the assessment of public-figure stalking is the alarm caused by death threats,” wrote David Batza and Michelle Taylor (1999) in their article “Stalking in the Community and Workplace.” They added that it does not hold true for interpersonal stalking situations. As security and threat assessment professionals, Batza and Taylor held that factors to be considered in interpersonal stalking cases include “use of threats, intimidation, or manipulations” (Batza & Taylor, 1999).

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management published *A Guide for Agency Planners* (1998) in which it stated that a major component of any workplace violence program is prevention. While no one can predict human behavior and no specific profile of a potentially dangerous individual exists, there are indicators of increased risk which include “direct or veiled threats of harm” (OPM, 1998).

In a review of workplace violence intervention research, James Merchant and John Lundell (2001) declared that “despite existing research, significant gaps remain in our knowledge of the causes and potential solutions” to violence in the workplace. For worker-on-worker violence, part of the research agenda called for includes

- Determining the importance of corporate culture, organization, and security in workplace violence
- Discovering how surveillance data on threats and violence can be improved
- Assessing effectiveness of zero-tolerance policies and profiling (Merchant & Lundell, 2001)

Dr. Elizabeth Carll (1999) wrote that workplace violence prevention plans and policies are in the same position as sexual harassment polices were several years ago. Comprehensive prevention strategies included training for employees and managers to recognize impending and escalating problems. Cautioning against identifying people as dangerous simply because they match a list of characteristics, Dr. Carll encouraged a review of signs that could alert employers to possible trouble. Among the myriad factors that help identify a potentially violent personality, Dr. Carll included intimidation of others and “threats toward company or another employee” as important (Carll, 1999).

The reactions of people to threatening statements made in the workplace differ. However, threatening statements made at work have been touted as one

of several warning signs that should be reported and evaluated, especially considering their association with violent outcomes in this venue (Batz & Taylor, 1999; Carll, 1999; Rugala, 2003; Turner & Gelles, 2003). In contrast to threats directed at public figures, threats in the workplace appear to have considerable relationship to violent outcomes.

Observations

- Coworker or ex-coworker violence can take the form of intended violence.
- Threats are more prevalent among coworkers than from other sources in the workplace.
- Researchers should investigate the familiarity among study subjects before coming to conclusions about the relationship of threats and violence outcomes.
- Although threats are indeed separate victimizations, they are also part of a violence continuum.
- Workers suffer attacks of greater lethality from coworkers than from clients.
- Most threat assessment professionals believe that threats among coworkers are important in determining level of dangerousness.
- Consequently, the research suggests that the intimacy effect may obtain in coworker workplace violence.

Findings on School Violence

In the wake of infrequent but highly publicized and deadly events, school administrators, mental health professionals, law enforcement professionals, and policymakers have come under increasing pressure to take steps to prevent school violence in their communities (Reddy et al., 2001). The number of deaths in school settings may have declined over the past decade, but the number of violent incidents involving multiple victims has increased. These highly publicized lethal incidents may be attributable to increased concerns about school safety (McCann, 2002; Mohandie, 2000). In addition, FBI researchers have acknowledged that adolescent violence in general, and homicides in particular, have “decreased since 1993 but that . . . trend has been . . . obscured in the nationwide wave of concern over school shootings of the type examined in the NCAVC’s study.” (O’Toole, 2000).

Violence occurs in and around schools in various forms. While eliminating all forms of antisocial aggression and violence is a laudable goal, different types of violence have different antecedents and thus require different approaches for assessment and intervention (Reddy et al., 2001). School

violence ranges from such events as the 1996 Dunblane, Scotland, shooting, in which an adult with no apparent ties to a primary school opened fire on a crowd of school children to the mass murder at a school in Bath, MI, where the perpetrator rigged and detonated explosives in the basement of the school in retaliation for a tax levy (Mohandie, 2000). While these acts were clearly intended, the perpetrators were not associated with the school and could not have been observed in the school setting. However, Dr. Mohandie provides us with another type of school violence. It is a “lethal and non-lethal event that occurs at school, and since it most often involves students, offers significant opportunity to observe early warning signs and the developing problem” (Mohandie, 2000). According to Dr. Mohandie, these events are perpetrated by someone who is a service recipient or customer of the school, a category which, in addition to students, may also include parents or guardians of students and those who are currently or formerly in relationships with students (Mohandie, 2000). McGee (1999) has described the same category of school violence as unlike the more conventional adolescent shooting incidents. He labeled the actors “classroom avengers” whose motives are “personal vengeance and achievement of notoriety rather than being drug, inner city, or juvenile-gang related.” Examples of this type of school violence include the March 2005 shooting by a 16-year-old in Red Lake, MN, that killed 10 people; the April 1999 shootings by two 17-year-olds in Littleton, CO, that killed 13 people; the October 1997 shooting by a 16-year-old in Pearl, MS, that killed two students and wounded seven; and the March 1998 shootings by a 13-year-old and an 11-year-old that killed four students and one teacher in Jonesboro, AR.

The FBI studied noninner-city school shootings—although such incidents are quite rare—to help prevent similar incidents in the future. Their research began with an analysis of 18 school shooting cases around the country. They also drew from a small number of cases on which they had been asked to conduct a threat assessment. The findings of the analysis were used to formulate questions and topics for discussion at a symposium in 1999. Their report, published in 2000, drew from their own analysis as well as from expert opinions provided by symposium participants. The FBI concluded that, among other things, “easy access to weapons is not the most significant risk factor and that school shootings are exclusively revenge motivated” (O’Toole, 2000). Violence motivated by revenge is intended violence. From such examples of intended violence in schools, assessment of threatening and potentially violent behavior in school settings might best be based on a process-oriented approach. The focus is on behavior, patterns of behavior, and situational factors (Reddy, 2001). Threats of violence in school settings may be an important part of this process toward violence. For example, Columbine shooter Eric Harris “posted death threats against fellow students on his web site” (Pisciotta, 2000). In a more recent incident, talk and warning

signs preceded the Red Lake Indian Reservation school shootings. More than ten other adolescents knew about the plot (Hedgpeth, 2005). An example of this type of event occurred in 1992 in Yuba, CA, at a high school where a 21-year-old former student shot and killed three students and one of his former teachers and wounded ten others. He eventually surrendered to the police, but one of his friends had called police during the standoff identifying the gunman because the gunman had talked about his plans and fantasies beforehand (*Houston Chronicle*, 1992).

The limited research on school shootings suggests that threats and talk of violence frequently precede the violence (McGee and DeBernardo, 1999; Mohandie, 2002; O'Toole, 2000;). An FBI report on noninner-city school shootings highly recommended that schools establish a threat assessment procedure "managed by properly trained staff" (O'Toole, 2000). In a study of selected school shootings, Secret Service researchers found many instances in which the eventual school shooter had discussed his plans with friends (Reddy et al., 2001). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education compiled a list of "early warning signs" for school violence. The list included "expression of violence in writings and drawings" and "serious threats of violence" as behaviors school officials should be on the lookout for (O'Toole, 2000).

Eric Harris, one of the Littleton, CO, shooters, posted his threats on a Web site:

Dead people can't do many things, like argue, whine bitch, complain, narc, rat out, criticize or even fucking talk. So that's the only way to solve arguments with all you fuckers out there, I just kill! (Mohandie, 2000).

The recent swift responses to threats of violence in schools suggest a greater concern or even awareness that threats are closely associated with violent and lethal acts. In January 2005, two boys were arrested in Ocala, FL,

for making pencil-and-crayon stick figure drawings depicting a 10-year-old classmate being stabbed and hung, police said. The drawings depicted the victim identified with initials and pictured with knives piercing the drawn body. Another drawing showed a stick figure hanging, tears falling from his eyes, with two other stick figures standing below him. Other pieces of scrap paper listed misspelled profanities and the initials of the boy who was allegedly threatened. The children, charged with a felony, were taken from school in handcuffs (AP, 2005).

The boys, ages 9 and 10, were also suspended from school. They were charged with making a written threat to kill or harm another person. The boys' parents said they thought the children should be punished by the school and families, not the legal system (AP, 2005).

The criminal justice system responded in much the same way when, in 2001, New Bedford (MA) High School students revealed discussions among them to “smuggle guns under black trench coats, detonate explosives and kill as many students and faculty as possible” at the school. Police learned of the plan from one of the conspirators who tipped off her favorite teacher, as well as from a note discovered by a school janitor (AP, 2001). All the student conspirators were arrested. Clearly, law enforcement perceived a connection between threats at schools and violence at schools, but what does the research say?

Based on their research on assassinations and attacks on public officials, Secret Service researchers developed a “threat assessment approach.” They reported that the approach holds some promise for assessing the risk of targeted violence in schools (Reddy et al., 2001). While this may be true for certain aspects of assessing approach behavior, a conflict may arise in the context of threats in the different venues. The defining element of targeted violence “is that the perpetrator selects a target prior to the violence incident” (Reddy et al., 2001). The Secret Service took its finding from public-figure research into the school violence arena and asserted that threats (direct, indirect, conditional, and otherwise) should be taken seriously but they are not the most “reliable indicators of risk” (Reddy et al., 2001).

Indeed, a youth who is committed to mounting an attack may be less inclined to threaten a potential target directly, particularly if he or she does not want to be stopped. The youth may, however, discuss ideas of harm among friends and peers (Reddy et al., 2001).

In the same report, the Secret Service researchers admit, however, that they “recognize that although the threat assessment approach is based upon empirical research on targeted violence [public-figure research], it too lacks the benefit of comprehensive empirical knowledge on targeted violence in schools” (Reddy et al., 2001).

Kipland P. Kinkle shot and killed his parents and went on a shooting rampage the next day at his high school. Kinkle left a note expressing sorrow for having to kill his parents (Bernstein, 1999). Kinkle’s diary indicated his prior expression of desire to commit violent acts.

I feel like everyone against me, but no one ever makes fun of me, mainly because they think I am a psycho. There is one kid above all others that I want to kill. I want nothing more than to put a hole in his head. The one reason I don’t: Hope. That tomorrow will be better. As soon as my hope is gone, people die (Kinkle, K. 1999).

According to the FBI’s 2000 report, threat assessments should be initiated once a threat is made. A threat was defined as an expression (written, spoken,

or symbolized) of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. While all threats are not the same, all “must be taken seriously and evaluated” (O’Toole, 2000). The motivation for making threats in the school environment can be for a variety of reasons ranging from warning signals to reaction to fear of punishment to a demand for attention to a strike-back for a perceived injustice. As a possible signpost preceding school violence, “a threat is one observable behavior among others that may be less obvious, i.e., brooding, conversations or writings about violent revenge” (O’Toole, 2000).

The FBI has described threats as direct, indirect, veiled, and conditional. In order to assess threats made in the school environment, the FBI ranked the risk as high, medium, and low. With such classifications, “schools [would] be able to recognize and act on the most serious threats, and to address all other threats appropriately and in a standardized and timely fashion.” (O’Toole, 2000). For example, a note stating:

At eight o’clock tomorrow morning, I intend to shoot the principal. That’s when he is in the office by himself. I have a 9 mm. Believe me, I know what I am doing. I am sick and tired of the way he runs this school (O’Toole, 2000).

Per the FBI’s report, this is a “high level of threat” since it is direct, specific, and plausible, and it indicates concrete steps that may have been taken toward carrying out the threatened act. Medium level threats may be as “direct” as those seen in high-level threats; however, other evidence indicates that the threatener has not taken preparatory steps toward a violent act and there may be less specificity of intent. Low-level threats were described by the FBI as vague and indirect and that information contained within the threat is inconsistent or implausible, or it lacks detail (O’Toole, 2000).

Once a threat of violence has been made in the school environment, according to the FBI report, a four-pronged examination of the student should be made. The four prongs include: 1) personality traits and behavior, 2) family dynamics, 3) school dynamics, and 4) social dynamics. Perhaps the FBI has made an important breakthrough in the collective thinking about threats of violence in schools. Within the personality traits and behavior category, the FBI addressed a phenomenon it termed “leakage.” This occurs when a student intentionally or unintentionally reveals clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act. At the FBI’s NCAVC Symposium held in 1999 to support its research, experts developed recommendations that leakage should be further studied for its relevance in predicting future violence. The FBI’s report stated that “leakage is considered to be one of the most important clues that may precede an adolescent’s violent act” (O’Toole, 2000). The fact that ten or more adolescents associated with the Red Lake High School knew about the attack in advance may be an example of leakage.

The Secret Service, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Education, has conducted its own research. From its analysis of a sample of 37 school shootings, the service concluded that “most attackers did not threaten their targets directly, but did engage in pre-attack behaviors that would have indicated an inclination toward the potential for targeted violence had they been identified” (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, & Borum, 2002).

According to the Secret Service, most perpetrators of the school shootings it studied did not make a threat prior to a violent act. However, in most cases, other people knew about the attack before it took place. In over three quarters of the incidents, at least one person had information that the attacker was thinking about or planning the school attack. In nearly two thirds of the incidents, more than one person had information about the attack before it occurred. In nearly all of these cases, the person who knew was a peer—a friend, schoolmate, or sibling. Some peers knew exactly what the attacker planned to do; others knew something “big” or “bad” was going to happen, and in several cases knew the time and date it was to occur. An adult had information about the idea or plan in only two cases. Almost all the attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the attack that caused others—school officials, parents, teachers, police, fellow students—to become aware of the plot. In one example cited by the Secret Service report, a school shooter submitted a series of poems to his English teacher prior to his attack. They read, in part:

Am I insane
 Wanting to spill blood like rain
 Sending them all to Hell
 From humanity I’ve fell.

In most of the cases, at least one adult was concerned by the attacker’s behavior. In three quarters of the cases, at least three people—adults and other children—were concerned by the attacker’s behavior. In one case, for example, the attacker made comments to at least 24 friends and classmates about his interest in killing other kids, building bombs, or carrying out an attack at the school. A school counselor was so concerned about this student’s behavior that the counselor asked to contact the attacker’s parents. The attacker’s parents also knew of his interest in guns (Vossekuil et al., 2002). The Secret Service recognized this phenomenon and termed it “signaling the attack,” which is a summation of any threatening communications or warnings made by most school shooters studied, described previously (Vossekuil et al., 2002).

While the Secret Service report encouraged a school threat-assessment process based primarily on an “appraisal of behaviors, rather than on stated threats,” threats may have more importance than realized when looking at intended violence rather than targeted violence in the school venue.

The Secret Service focus on targeted violence, that is, an act carried out targeting a specific preidentified individual or thing and targeted threats of violence, distracts the Secret Service researchers from the importance of recognizing the threat-assessment potential using threats in the form of signaling the attack or leakage as preincident indicators. Although the majority of their sample of school shooters did not directly threaten the victims they targeted, by defining the violence as intended, a broader view of persons who have a violent intent signaled by threatening communications with or without a particular target emerges. In fact, the Secret Service reported that 75% of their sample-subject school shooters had a history of suicidal thoughts, threats, gestures, or attempts and in almost all incidents a peer or sibling was informed of the planned attack (Vossekuil et al., 2000).

While many threats of violence are made among school students that are never carried out, to dismiss a threat as not a preincident indicator of intended violence in the school environment may risk leaving out an important ingredient in assessing risk. "Verbal behavior" by adolescents in the school environment is communication that has an expressive or instrumental function. Dr. Kris Mohandie (2002) wrote that "violence in many school-associated circumstances represents a desire to express a feeling, or to influence some course of events. The talk of violence represents the individual's attempts to 'get their point across'" (Mohandie, 2002). Another way of looking at this is to identify this behavior as "breakthrough behavior" or leakage. Threats and leakage are breakthrough behaviors that can be observed by others and used as a signal to be reported, evaluated, and addressed (Mohandie, 2002). A retrospective view rather than a prospective view of threats and their outcomes is needed. Although the Secret Service reported in both its public figure and safe school research that most individuals who threatened violence do not attempt it, the data in most studies indicate that those who did carry out an attack in the school venue did, in fact, make threats. In school settings, this often took the form of leakage (Mohandie, 2002).

In a review of 18 school shootings resulting in homicide(s), explicit threats were made by the perpetrator(s) prior to the incident 100% of the time (McGee & DeBernardo, 1999). Verbal or written expressions of intent to kill or commit suicide or do something highly dramatic within the very near future, when made in this context and in the presence of the other primary variables of this profile, were highly predictive of an imminent attack. The authors presented a hypothetical behavioral composite of the "Classroom Avenger." This was a depressed and suicidal, usually Caucasian, adolescent male from a rural, suburban, or small community who perpetrates a nontraditional, multivictim homicide in a school or classroom setting. Classroom Avenger shootings are evolving over time in the direction of greater com-

plexity and sophistication, and a media-based copycat or contagion effect is almost certainly present. Seasonality was also a factor, with most of incidents studied occurring between December and May.

According to a report published by the U.S. Department of Education (Dwyer, Osher, & Warger, 1998), idle threats are common in response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward himself or others is a detailed and specific threat to the use of violence. Recent incidents across the country clearly indicate that threats to commit violence against oneself or others should be taken very seriously. Steps must be taken to understand the nature of these threats and to prevent them from being carried out (Dwyer, 1998).

Interestingly, the concept of leakage gives further credence to the intimacy effect. The concept depends on the fact that students who notice the leakage all know the student or students doing the leaking. The recipient students go to school with the plotters, hear them talking, read their writing, or observe their actions. From this interpersonal relationship, the leakage occurs. The intimacy effect explains why leakage takes place in school settings, but not in public figure settings.

Observations

- Researchers are conflicted about how important threats are in the assessment of potential violence in the school venue.
- Schools and criminal justice officials must choose between punishment for threats presenting liability risks or risk violence actions.
- Threats of violence in the school venue may more likely be in the form of leakage.
- Leakage supports the intimacy effect hypothesis since it occurs within interpersonal settings.

Findings on Domestic Violence (Intimate Partners)

According to *Crime in the United States* (FBI, 2003), murders among intimates in 2002 numbered 1,320. This included victims who were related to the offenders as husbands, wives, boyfriends, and girlfriends. Seventy-eight percent of the victims were women. Although the rate of intimate partner murder from 1976 to 1996 dropped by 36%, the decline was due primarily to the drop in the number of male victims. The murder rate for female victims of intimate murder remained relatively steady over the same period of time (BJS, 1998). While most intimate lethal violence occurred in or near the victim's home, reports of nonlethal violence locations included another's home, commercial places, schools, and parking lots (BJS, 1998). The distance

from the home may indicate a determined purpose or some planning to the attack, which are parts of our definition for intended violence.

For years, local law enforcement well understood the importance of threats as preincident indicators of domestic violence. The Danvers, MA, police department has put threats of homicide or suicide at the top of its list of various warning signs of potential domestic homicide. Similarly, the Nashville police department has emphasized the importance of taking intimidation and threats against a domestic partner seriously (Calhoun & Weston, 2003). In a study of criminal justice strategies toward intimate partner violence, Kerry Healey and Christine Smith (1998) reported that “prior threats to kill” and suicide threats were among the most important warning signs of potential domestic abuse.

Unfortunately, not all jurisdictions take threats of violence in domestic or intimate venues seriously. In 1996, in Brooklyn, NY, after a 2-year history of stalking, beating, and threatening his estranged girlfriend, Galina Komar, a judge allowed the release of Benito Oliver, jailed for violating his restraining order. After Oliver’s release, he walked into the Koeppel Volkswagen dealership where Ms. Komar worked and shot her once in the head with a .44-caliber revolver. Mr. Oliver then shot himself in the head. Three weeks earlier, Oliver had been arrested for placing three threatening phone calls from his jail cell. (Van Natta, 1996).

Studies of domestic violence bring forth various theories and classifications, none of which are specifically designed to make a distinction between intended and impromptu violence. Domestic violence is often seen as a quagmire of abusive and assaultive behavior rather than a clear sequence of events. However, “findings from a variety of sources indicate that woman abuse among separated women is a more serious problem than abuse experienced by married women living with their husbands” (Ellis, 1992). For violence to occur between former intimates, planning and travel are required to successfully accomplish it. Such planning and travel indicate that this category of domestic violence is intended violence. Intended, and therefore more lethal, violence in domestic situations can be brought about by stress, revenge, anger induced by loss of attachment, or perceptions of betrayal, jealousy, or challenges to male hegemony (Ellis, 1992). Whatever the motive, the key to intended violence is that it is planned beforehand.

Author Gregory Moffatt has developed the “principle of least interest,” which he contends operates in every relationship. A woman in an abusive relationship may decide “she has had enough and choose to leave. When she leaves, the husband discovers that he has lost power or control, and even though she may not realize it, the wife has gained immense power in the relationship. In an attempt to regain power or control, the husband will make promises, beg forgiveness, or threaten. The more he sees that he cannot regain the power in the relationship, the more desperate he becomes” (Mof-

fatt, 2000). An early study of families involved in divorce proceedings also revealed that males who behaved violently suffered from feelings of underachievement and felt deficient in certain status characteristics relative to their wives. These findings provided further evidence that violent behavior most often involved the use of coercive force by a person of superordinate status at times when he found his stature threatened (O'Brien, 1971).

For 16 years, Steven and Janice Lancaster maintained a happy marriage, living in southern Maryland with their two children. Things changed, however, when Steve took a mistress, yet refused to give Janice a divorce. He began to beat her, and Janice had him arrested. She dropped the charges the first time, but had him arrested again. In February 1999, Steven told Janice that he would kill her and himself. After months of more threats, abuse, and battering, a Maryland court issued a protection order compelling Steve to move out of their house and to keep away from his wife. On January 3, 2000, Steve parked a mile from his wife's house just before dawn. Dressed in dark clothes and a stocking cap, he walked to the house carrying a shotgun. He killed Janice and himself. Their son heard the shotgun blasts while waiting at his school bus stop and said, "I think that came from my house" (St. George, 2000).

As part of the NAS study of violence, Jeffrey Fagan and Angela Browne (1994) reviewed the research on physical aggression between men and women in intimate relationships. Harmful behaviors in intimate relationships include "psychological abuse, economic deprivation, threats to others in the family, and threats as a method of coercion . . . which are part of the 'ecology of aggression' that characterizes marital violence" (Fagan & Browne, 1994). The closeness of intimates makes it particularly challenging to discern the difference between intended, or planned, violence and the more emotive, spontaneous, impromptu violence often seen in the dynamics of the domestic venue. The ongoing forms of victimization seen in domestic violence may prove challenging in discerning temporal order or defining "discrete and definitionally tidy events" (Mirrlees-Black, 1999).

An 11 U.S.-city study sought to identify risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships. Proxies of 220 intimate partner femicide victims identified from police or medical examiner records were interviewed, along with 343 abused women who served as controls. Preincident risk factors associated in multivariate analyses with increased risk of intimate partner femicide included perpetrator's access to a gun and previous threats to kill, perpetrator's stepchild in the home, and estrangement, especially from a controlling partner. Table A.9 is an excerpt from the Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships study.

The difference is striking when threats of violence are compared with nonlethal violence. These findings were incorporated into recommendations for medical professionals who assess the potential for lethal violence among battered women. "It is important to assess perpetrators' access to guns and

Table A.9 Partial Results: Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships

	Abused Control Women (<i>n</i> = 343)	Homicide Victims (<i>n</i> = 220)
Partner threatened to kill woman	50 (14.6%)	142 (73.6%)

Source: From Campbell et al., 2003.

to warn women of the risk guns present. This is especially true in the case of women who have been threatened with a gun or another weapon under conditions of estrangement” (Campbell et al., 2003).

An analysis of NCVS data (Felson & Messner, 2000) indicated that men who assault their female partners were more likely to issue threats beforehand than offenders in assaults involving other relationships or other gender combinations. The study used a multivariate statistical model to examine whether violence by men against their female partners was more likely than other violence to involve a control motive. The approach of the study was based on the assumption that assailants who issued threats before attack were more likely to have control motives than those who did not issue threats. In a subset of incidents from the NCVS, 2,597 cases of physical attacks without the ambiguities of weapons involvement, other crimes, or multiple victims or offenders were selected. Within the set of variables for gender and relationship, the variable of whether or not a threat was made before the attack was applied. The results of logistic regression analysis supported the hypothesis about control motive in partner violence. In fact, the analysis indicated for this data set that the odds of a threat before the assault were three and one-half times greater for men who assault their female partners. The analysis revealed that for this sample set, females were less likely to threaten before an assault (Felson & Messner, 2000).

In a study designed to look at psychological aggression and its relationship to physical assault and gender, researchers found evidence that certain behaviors—including threats of violence—associated with conflict among couples can help to discriminate between “common couple violence” and “patriarchal terrorism” (Hamby & Sugarman, 1999). In this study, a sample of male and female undergraduates (*n* = 374) completed the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales about a courtship relationship. Behaviors were categorized as minor or severe forms of psychological aggression. The hypothesis proposed was that individuals who engage in instrumental, malicious, and explicit acts of violence are more likely to be physically aggressive, especially severely physically aggressive, toward their partners than those who do not engage in such acts. The findings of the analysis indicated that destroying the property of a partner, malicious name calling, and threatening physical violence all

Table A.10 Partial Results of Analysis. Means or Averages for Perpetrating Specific Forms of Psychological Aggression as a Function of Severity of Physical Assault

	No Physical Assault	Minor Physical Assault	Severe Physical Assault
Threatened to hit partner	0.02	0.12	0.52

Source: From Hamby & Sugarman, 1999.

occurred more often with severe physical assault than other forms of psychological aggression (Hamby & Sugarman, 1999). The significance of the data was shown in the finding that threats to harm were rarely associated with minor physical assault and even less with no physical assault (Table A.10).

Findings from a British Crime Survey (BCS) self-completion questionnaire administered in 1995 indicated that “frightening threats” were prevalent in domestic violence situations. In fact, “women were far more likely than men to have experienced both assault and threats” (Mirlees-Black, 1999) than merely assaults or threats alone. These findings suggest that the experiences of female victims are qualitatively different from those of most male victims. The survey revealed that for women and men the lifetime prevalence of domestic violence where threats, assaults, and threats combined with assaults were delineated, threats combined with assaults occurred a greater percentage of the time—26% of women and 17% of men (Table A.11).

The findings suggest that threats were closely associated with violence among the study subjects.

Threatening statements and intended violence are not exclusive to male perpetrators. In a study of female stalkers, Meloy and Boyd (2003) list anecdotally two cases where two women intentionally killed three victims in San Diego County, CA. Both women were prior sexual intimates of their victims and “committed acts of predatory violence that were planned, purposeful, and emotionless.” They reported:

A 26-year old woman threatened and intruded on her former boyfriend for more than a year, rented an apartment near him, and shot him to death with a .357 magnum revolver in front of his apartment.

Table A.11 Lifetime Prevalence of Domestic Violence: BCS Self-Completion Questionnaire

	Women Aged 16–59	Men Aged 16–59
Threats only	16	5
Assault only	23	15
Threats and assaults	26	17

Source: Mirrlees-Black, 1999.

In the second case,

A 41 year old woman engaged her former husband in five years of vandalism, threats, telephone calls, trespassing, property damage, and financial and child custody disputes. She then shot and killed him and his new wife with a .38 caliber revolver in the early morning hours as they lay sleeping in their bed.

Meloy and Boyd (2003) studied an assembly of sample cases of stalking by females from the archival records of mental health and law enforcement professionals. Threats by the subjects were defined as written or oral communication that implicitly or explicitly stated a wish or intent to damage, injure, or kill the target. Although the study confirmed that most female stalkers were not former intimates, the authors assert that the female stalkers threatened their victims at about the same rate as the males and that there was a greater likelihood of violence if a threat was communicated by the female stalker to her victim. The strength of the relationship was mild, underscoring Meloy's belief that in private stalking cases, threats are so common that they do not predict violence (Meloy & Boyd, 2003). That may well be true if one looks only at domestic violence cases. However, compared with public figure cases, the ratio of threats to assaults in domestic violence cases is striking.

An analysis of survey data reported in *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence* (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000a) found evidence that violence committed against women by intimates tends to be more threatening and severe than violence committed against men by intimates. In addition, women were significantly more likely to employ the use of restraining orders, even though at least half of them were violated. Injuries suffered by victims ranged from scratches to being knocked unconscious. Women who were physically assaulted by an intimate partner were significantly more likely to be injured if their perpetrator threatened to harm or kill them or someone close to them and if the perpetrator was using drugs or alcohol at the time. Male victims of physical assault were also significantly more likely to be injured if their perpetrator threatened to harm or kill them (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000a). These findings imply that threats of violence should be taken seriously. Violence prevention strategies, including law enforcement's response, should emphasize this fact.

Dr. Elizabeth Carll provided warning signs of impending violence in intimate relationships. She wrote that among other predispositions in personality and thinking, four behavior traits actually indicate the beginning of battering in a relationship and may signal the onset of more extreme violence to come. These include throwing, breaking, or striking objects; abusing or killing pets; using force during an argument, such as shoving or holding up against a wall; and making threats of violence (Carll, 1999).

While much domestic violence is heated and impromptu, some is clearly planned and clearly intentional. Researchers need to think about future studies to determine how to recognize indicators of preventable violence.

Observations

- Threats of violence are common among intimate partners.
- It is possible to discern intended (planned) violence from impromptu (impulsive) violence in the domestic venue.
- Separation of an intimate couple may trigger more lethal intended violence.
- Female intimate partners are less likely to threaten prior to violent attack.
- Control motive is prevalent in male intimate-partner threats.
- Loss of control may prompt male intimate partner attacks.
- Intimate partners who are severely or lethally violent are likely to have made prior threats of violence.
- The research on threats and violence in the domestic violence venue supports the intimacy effect.

General Observations

- Threat assessors may be able to evaluate direct threats differently depending on familiarity of victim and target.
- There is a stronger relationship between threats and intended violence in the domestic violence venue than in the public figure violence venue.
- The enforcement of laws against threats of violence is less likely in the domestic venue than when directed toward public figures.
- If threat assessors wait for direct threats to occur against public figures, they may be misdirecting their attention away from real dangers.
- Within the domestic violence venue, the separation of intimates may be the most lethal stage of the relationship.
- Workplaces and schools provide social environments of familiarity where threats and talk of violence before an attack are common.
- In workplaces and schools, others are likely to know or suspect an attack is likely or imminent.
- Research drawn from the various venues for intended violence supports the intimacy effect hypothesis that the value of a threat as a preincident indicator increases in proportion to the degree of familiarity between subjects and targets.

Conclusions

The intimacy effect postulates that the more intimate the relationship between someone making a threat of violence and the target of that threat, the more likely the threatening statement portends future violence against the person threatened. No one has tested the validity of the intimacy effect through original or primary research. However, this review of the major recent research on the various venues of intended violence found considerable support for the hypothesis, especially at the extreme ends. That is to say, the hypothesis holds up at the most interpersonal of all relationships, domestic violence. It also can be validated at the opposite end—public-figure violence.

Findings from the research in the workplace and school venues are not quite as striking in support of the hypothesis. However, that may be due to the fact that the various research studies reviewed did not specifically address the role of threats as prevalence indicators. Still, many of the studies give credence to the view that threats in interpersonal settings did frequently portend future violence. That strongly suggests that research specifically designed to test the intimacy effect hypothesis would provide further support for the hypothesis.

These findings have important implications for threat assessors who must evaluate various behaviors and whether they associate or not with severe forms of physical violence. As many as 20 teenagers may have known ahead of time about plans for the shooting spree that resulted in the deaths of ten people at the hands of a former student on the Red Lake, MN, Indian reservation (Hedgpeth, 2005). Had law enforcement known what those 20 knew and accepted that knowledge as credible, lives may well have been saved. If the Castle Rock, CO, police department had acted on Jessica Gonzales' request for help, three murders and one suicide might have been prevented (Table A.12).

Today, criminal justice officials are presented with information and concerns about a possible future violent crime, yet the law and the research on threats are out of sync. Currently, law enforcement officials react quickly and decisively to threats to public officials. They do not react nearly as quickly nor as decisively to threats against domestic partners. The findings drawn from this research review suggest that threats need to be assessed within the social setting in which they are uttered. By taking into account the relationship between the threatener and the target of the threat, the assessor can determine the seriousness of the threat. The rule is simple: the more intimate the relationship, the more serious the threat.

This is not to say that threats of violence toward intimates always portend violence. The field of threat assessment knows no such absolutes. Rather, the research suggests that threats precede violence at a much higher rate in

Table A.12 Threats of Intended Violence and Outcomes across Venues

Public Figure	Workplace	School	Domestic
Violence inflicted or attempted by person(s) intent on harm that may be directed at a public figure (Fein & Vossekuil, 2000; Meloy, 2001)	Violence inflicted or attempted by persons(s) intent on harm "against coworkers, supervisors or managers by a present or former employee" (Rugala, 2003)	Violence inflicted or attempted by persons(s) intent on harm that are "service recipients or customers of the school, parents or guardians of students and those who are currently or formerly in relationships with students" (Mohandie, 2000)	Violence inflicted or attempted by person(s) intent on harm that are current or former sexual intimates
Relationship: noninterpersonal	Relationship: mixed noninterpersonal and interpersonal	Relationship: mixed noninterpersonal and interpersonal	Relationship: interpersonal
Threats of violence not associated with violent outcomes	Threats of violence associated with violent outcomes	Threats of violence associated with violent outcomes	Threats of violence associated with violent outcomes

interpersonal settings than threats toward public officials. Conversely, the research also indicates that violent outcomes and threats are not probable when made by strangers toward public figures. Those probabilities have a profound impact on how law enforcement should respond to a threat.

Threats made in social settings are ubiquitous, and laws have arisen over the years to deal with this behavior. Enforcement efforts vary among jurisdictions. For example, threats to the president receive intense scrutiny from the Secret Service and federal prosecutors. Local officials exercise considerable discretion when complaints of being threatened are reported in domestic violence settings.

According to Capitol police authorities, in the summer of 2004, 70-year old Gerry Dunphy shouted at them while pointing at the U.S. Supreme Court building that his son was "going to use the [Amtrak] train and tunnel to blow up that building" (Leonnig, 2005). Dunphy, frustrated by the increasing security on Capitol Hill that hampered his travel, railed against public figures and their structure. He was charged and subsequently convicted of making a false threat and ordered to pay \$15,328. The largest portion of Mr. Dunphy's fine went toward restitution for Amtrak. In response to Mr. Dunphy's threat, Amtrak had evacuated Union Station, thus causing considerable train delays. Friends and defenders of Mr. Dunphy claimed that the government overreacted (Leonnig, 2005). Compare the reaction of the criminal justice sys-

tem in Mr. Dunphy's case with the reaction in the cases of Sarah Crawford (Shapira, 2004), Janice Lancaster (St. George, 2000), and Galina Komar (Van Natta, 1996), all three of whom were slain by intimate or former intimate partners after threats of violence were made known to law enforcement and the courts. Neither law enforcement nor the courts did anything in response to the threats directed at these women. Armed with a better understanding about how threats can be assessed in context with the social setting, law enforcement may avoid delaying travelers unnecessarily in some venues while saving lives in others. The intimacy effect provides an excellent barometer for law enforcement to use when assessing threats of intended violence.

Researchers should continue to evaluate and refine violence prevention programs to determine which strategies appear most effective in decreasing rates of violence. This includes "a study of threats, including the analysis of different patterns of threatening behavior, different forms of threat, and methods of evaluating when a threat is likely to be carried out" (Rugala, 2003). With more comprehensive, reliable, and detailed data directly related to threats, intended violence, and the intimacy effect, researchers may develop more sophisticated tools to help create or improve prevention techniques and programs.

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T hreat Assessment and Management Strategies

A crucial step in any successful threat management process is knowledge of the players involved. Some individuals truly intend violence (known as *hunters*), while others merely want to threaten or draw attention to themselves (*howlers*). ***Threat Assessment and Management Strategies: Identifying the Howlers and Hunters*** helps those who interact with questionable populations to identify problem behaviors and determine the appropriate preventative action.

A successful threat management process does not necessarily depend on large staffs or huge resource commitments, but, instead, on attention to detail and a thoughtful approach. Through actual case studies and case analyses, this volume explains the best practices for assessing problem individuals and recommends the optimal protective response and management strategy. The authors provide key indicators of hunters and howlers, comparing and contrasting their behaviors and motivations. An entire chapter is devoted to analyzing the *intimacy effect* and demonstrating how it applies to law enforcement, specifically to interpersonal relationships involving targets of intended violence.

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