



Psychiatry & Behavioral Science Section - 2016

I36 The Pseudocommando and the Terrorist: Casuistic Comparison and Analysis

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After attending this presentation, attendees will better understand the specific types of mass murderers and the differences between mass murderers and terrorist offenders.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing an in-depth psychological and criminological description of mass murderers and terrorists, including warning signs.

Both pseudocommandos and terrorists kill innocent people. Both generally kill during the daytime, plan their offenses, and generally expect to be killed during the attack.¹⁻⁶ In the first part of this presentation, and throughout the study of criminal files, this presentation proposes a causative analysis of two Belgian cases.

On December 13, 2011, at approximately 12:30 p.m. local time, a man identified as NA began lobbing grenades in central Liege, a city in the east of Belgium, not far from the borders of the Netherlands and Germany. The location of the attack is significant. It happened near a judicial courts complex where a seasonal Christmas market had been set up. The area is also a hub for the public bus system. Therefore, it was a bustling, target-rich environment. As a result, four people were killed and dozens more were injured in this attack in the center of Liege.

On May 24, 2014, a single gunman opened fire at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, Belgium. In an attack that only lasted a few seconds, the shooter was able to kill three people and seriously injure another person before escaping. The following week, French police arrested MN during a random search at a bus station in the Mediterranean port city of Marseilles. At the time of his arrest, MN was found to be in possession of an AK-47 rifle and another gun. The AK-47 was reportedly wrapped in a flag bearing the symbol of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. MN was quickly identified as the prime suspect in the Brussels shooting attack. All aspects of the psychopathology and criminology of these offenders will be discussed, including the precise offensive sequences.

The second part of this presentation will compare the psychopathology of mass murderers and terrorist offenders.¹⁻⁶ Despite their similarities, these two types of offenders also have clear differences in their psychological and social characteristics.¹⁻⁶ These differences are very important in terms of motivation, state of mind, and psychopathology. Additionally, these differences are useful for forensic evaluations.

In conclusion, mass murderers and terrorists have common characteristics; however, their basic ways of functioning, psychologically and criminologically, are quite different. These elements are important and should be considered in forensic evaluations.

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Mass Murderer, Terrorism, Psychopathology