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Dangerous Information: Product Tampering and Poisoning Advice in Revenge and Murder Manuals

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ABSTRACT: This paper reviews 18 publications that advocate the use of product tampering and other poisoning methods as techniques for exacting revenge against individuals and corporations, as methods of committing murder, and for other criminal purposes. Several of the particular techniques recommended in these publications subsequently have been used in criminal tampering incidents. The published sources of technical guidance for the would-be tamperer and poisoner are examined in detail to alert forensic scientists, law enforcement authorities, and the food and drug industry to the particular techniques that are being advocated. Possible criminal and civil liability of the publishers and authors is discussed. The author suggests that food and drug retailers consider the wisdom of selling magazines that advertise the availability of revenge and murder manuals advocating product tampering and poisoning, that food and drug manufacturers test the effects on their products of the contaminants that are being recommended, and that investigators be alert to the existence of such manuals and mail-order suppliers of poisons.

KEYWORDS: criminalistics, product tampering, poisoning, toxicology, food and drugs, terrorism

Homicidal poisonings and the adulteration of foods and healing potions are as old as civilization. Professional poisoners plagued ancient Rome and Greece [1], and at least since the time of Philip of Macedon, who allegedly arranged the poisoning of Aratus the elder [2], there have been poisoners among us, sometimes wreaking great damage. Public fear of poisoning was rampant at the time of the great plagues, which the public attributed to poisons, and throughout the late 18th and the 19th centuries [3]. Consider the title of a work published in England in 1830: *Deadly Adulteration and Slow Poisoning: or, Disease and Death in the Pot and the Bottle: in which the Blood-empoisoning and Life-destroying Adulterations of Wines, Spirits, Beer, Bread, Flour, Tea, Sugar, Spices, Cheesemongery, Pastry, Confectionery, Medicine, &c., are laid open to the Public . . . By an Enemy of Fraud and Villainy* [4].

Before the 19th century, the most notorious poisoners of multiple victims were women—most of whom were regarded as old hags or witches, but a few of whom were attractive women of high social standing—who provided poisoning services to political conspirators or

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criminals for a fee. The innumerable published case studies of 19th and 20th century homicidal poisoning—most of which involve the poisoning of specific, targeted victims—suggest that those who poison multiple, targeted victims are most often physicians, nurses, or women who poison others for whom they are supposed to be caretakers (such as patients, children, or the elderly) [5]. Recent cases of serial poison murders by nurses fit this pattern. If there is a novel aspect to the tampering incidents of the 1980s, it lies in neither homicidal poisoning nor product adulteration, but rather in the intentional use of consumer products as a vehicle through which to kill indiscriminately (for example, in the seven Tylenol murders in Chicago in 1982), to produce public fear, and to cause corporate financial losses.

This paper calls attention to a series of publications that appeared on the scene before the current wave of product tampering and that recommend the use of product tampering for these criminal purposes. These sources of technical guidance for the would-be tamperer are examined in detail to alert forensic scientists, law enforcement authorities, and the food and drug industry to the particular techniques being advocated in this segment of the extremist and criminal underground.

Access to Revenge, Crime, and Murder Manuals

A sizable number of books is currently published in the United States giving advice and technical information on techniques for exacting revenge, inflicting harm, and committing every crime from car theft to murder. Unlike true crime reporting and crime fiction, which also sometimes provide technical information that would be useful to criminals, these materials directly advocate illegal acts while hiding behind disclaimers on the copyright page and in the introductions of some of the manuals. Such books form a segment of what I have come to call the violence industry, which includes paramilitary, weapon, and detective magazines; manufacturers and distributors of weapons, explosives, and related items; schools for training civilians in armed combat, sniping, demolitions, and other military skills; and a host of related, profit-making activities.

Most Americans have never seen any of these manuals; they are not sold in ordinary bookstores, and the publishers do not advertise on television or radio or in the most widely read periodicals. At nearly any newsstand, convenience store, supermarket, or drug store, however, the attention of the malcontent, the angry, the violent, and the paranoid is drawn to periodicals such as *Soldier of Fortune* and *American Survival Guide*, which seem to offer means of destruction and self-protection. Wisely, the publishers of revenge and murder manuals target their advertising to the readers of these and like magazines. For example, the most important publisher and distributor of murder, crime, and revenge manuals, Paladin Press, regularly runs at least one full-page display advertisement in the following magazines: *Soldier of Fortune* and *Guns & Action* (both published by the Omega Group of Boulder, Colorado, which also publishes occasional titles with these advertisements, including *Defense Weapons*, *Fighting Elite*, *American Soldiers of Fortune*, *Terrorism*, *Back to Battle: Vietnam*, and *Fight Back*), *American Survival Guide*, *Combat Handguns*, *Eagle*, *Firepower*, *Gung-Ho*, *New Breed*, *Ninja: The Deadly Warrior*, and *Special Weapons and Tactics*. Books published by Paladin Press and other publishers that recommend tampering and poisoning and give guidance to would-be tamperers and poisoners are also sold through publishers' catalogs (both their own and such mail-order violence book suppliers as Delta Press, Ltd., of Eldorado, Arizona, and Magnum Press of Lettsworth, Louisiana), specialized bookstores (such as the Survival Store in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Survival Books of North Hollywood, California), and mail-order suppliers of fighting knives, firearm accessories, and military equipment (such as Brigade Quartermasters of Kennesaw, Georgia, and the Parellex Corporation of Elk Grove Village, Illinois).

Paladin Press, the leading publisher of books offering instruction on the commission of crime, is located in Boulder, Colorado, which is also the home of the Omega Group. (Robert

K. Brown, founder and owner of the Omega Group, was once an owner of Paladin Press.) From the books of Paladin Press one can learn all manner of martial arts; how to pick locks; how to smuggle; how to exact revenge; how to construct silencers; how to convert one's semi-automatic pistols and rifles into machine pistols and submachine guns; how to build incendiary devices, explosives, and boobytraps; how to kill with bare hands, knives, guns, and every other means imaginable; and how to tamper with products and poison unsuspecting victims. Paladin Press also distributes books by other publishers of like materials, such as Loompanics of Port Townsend, Washington. (The second-most important book publisher in the violence industry appears to be Desert Publications. Although it is part of the same publishing group as *Firepower* and *Special Weapons and Tactics*, I have not found any advocacy of tampering or poisoning in books published by Desert Publications.)

Guidelines for Product Tampering and Poisoning²

The earliest overt recommendation of product tampering that I have identified appears in the 1972 *Poor Man's James Bond* [6] (distributed by Paladin Press and others, and advertised in many gun magazines) by Kurt Saxon, who claims that the antigun movement forced "militants" such as he to look for alternative weapons. Saxon gives detailed information on obtaining and producing various poisons—including cyanide and strychnine—and advice on ordering chemicals in a manner that will not arouse suspicion (p. 2). He suggests, among other scenarios, adding sufficient ethylene glycol to a punch bowl to kill everyone attending a party (p. 19); adding poisonous plant leaves to salad (pp. 21–22); and testing poisons on winos to ensure that one has developed a lethal agent and the correct concentration (p. 22). Among his more noteworthy inspirations is advising his readers to add poison to an enemy's medication capsules (p. 22):

If you have access to his bathroom look for capsules, especially prescription so you know he's the only one taking them.

I saw the capsule trick on "Ironside." Clever.

Paladin publishes a six-volume series by John Minnery entitled *How to Kill*, in which various techniques for murder are detailed. In Volume 1 [7], published in 1973, Minnery favors cyanide or strychnine (p. 41) and suggests poisoning food, drinks, salt shakers, or sugar bowls (p. 42). He recommends adding sulfuric or muriatic acid to mouthwash, eyedrops, or eardrops, or adding powdered glass to the water in an icecube tray before freezing it (p. 42). In an appendix, he lists 41 categories of recommended poisons (pp. 87–88). Minnery's general advice is (p. 43):

With poisons always give the double amount necessary to kill; this will insure that there's no chance of survival.

Used properly, poisons can be one of the most effective weapons in an assassin's armory. They're to be used in situations requiring quiet, rapid death.

In Volume 3 [8], Minnery gives an expanded list of plant poisons (pp. 19–21) and introduces his readers to dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), a chemical agent that facilitates poisoning through skin contact (p. 25).

The anonymous author of *The Black Bag Owner's Manual* [9], a guidebook to assassination under the guise of a "special operations" manual, suggests substituting one drug for another as a method of clandestine attack (p. 88). The second volume, published in 1979, borrows liberally from *The Poor Man's James Bond* in providing complete instructions for

²Some of the tampering recommendations reviewed in this section name particular manufacturers or product brands. These identifiers have been omitted here wherever possible to avoid the further victimization of these corporations by associating their names with such outrageous and irresponsible conduct.

the production of cyanide from simple chemicals (pp. 70–71) and suggests obtaining other drugs and poisons through “raids or clandestine passes” at chemists, doctors, or drug-dealers (pp. 72–73). The manual gives technical information on capsule sizes, rates at which capsules dissolve, and techniques for creating an enteric coating (pp. 73–74). It suggests inserting a smaller capsule containing the poison inside the larger, original capsule, so that the appearance of the outer capsule is unchanged (p. 74). and states, “In the case of belted or sealed capsules, these may be cut apart and then recemented with tinted gelatin or a chemical adhesive” (pp. 74–75). To induce apparent intoxication before death, the author suggests adulterating alcoholic beverages or soft drinks with ethylene glycol (pp. 78–79). To kill a smoker, he says, one need only scrape Teflon® chips from a kitchen skillet and add them to a cigarette or other inhaled tobacco product. When burned, Teflon chips evolve a “methane gas” or “nerve gas,” he claims, which will kill quickly if the victim is not treated with atropine (p. 81). Alternatively, tobacco products can be adulterated with concentrated nicotine or the insecticide nicotine sulfate, for each of which he gives preparation techniques (pp. 84–85). For adulterating food, he favors plant poisons and lists a great variety (pp. 82–84). Ironically, the author believes that professional killers should not poison springs, water fountains, or products because such acts resemble the atrocities of Communist forces (p. 66).

The 1980s saw the advent of less explicitly homicidal revenge manuals. The best known of the revenge writers, George Hayduke, provides a somewhat more convincing disclaimer than most when he urges his readers not to do the things he recommends. Most of his suggested techniques are unpleasant but not lethal, although others would be lethal under certain circumstances. Hayduke assumes the posture of a still-disgruntled Yippie resentful of authority, corporations, government, and the successful. In his first book, published in 1980, *Get Even: The Complete Book of Dirty Tricks* [10], he advises substituting a depilatory agent for hair conditioner, adding abrasives or sugar to gasoline, adding soaps or detergents to food to induce diarrhea, adding cascara sagrada to orange juice to induce diarrhea, and adding ipecac syrup to alcoholic beverages to induce vomiting (pp. 15–18). To pollute someone’s water well, Hayduke recommends dumping dead animals or large quantities of bleach or vomitus in the well (p. 188). To sour large quantities of milk, he proposes adding lemon concentrate (pp. 172–173).

In his sequel volume, *Get Even 2: More Dirty Tricks from the Master of Revenge* [11], Hayduke’s “dirty tricks” include secretly administering sedative-hypnotics, caffeine, or toad toxins (pp. 1–5), substituting vegetable oil for hair conditioner (p. 4), administering Antabuse to unsuspecting alcoholics (p. 35), adding mealworms to cereal boxes (p. 37), switching labels between cans of soup and dog food with similar appearances (p. 73), and substituting urine for beer (p. 37) and stale beer for apple juice (p. 37). Hayduke quotes one of his readers as suggesting that the latter strategies could be applied in a supermarket (p. 37):

Just load up a few apple juice bottles with one of your substitutes and place it back on the shelf. Security people look for you sneaking food out of a store. but who looks for you sneaking it in!

Another technique Hayduke suggests for exacting revenge from supermarkets is tampering with polishes (p. 151):

. . . one of my disciples suggests buying . . . pump bottles of such things as furniture and car polish, taking them home, then replacing the original contents with harmful acids and corrosive contents . . . smuggle them back into the store, or directly into your mark’s home . . . depending on who or what your mark is.

In *Up Yours!* [12], his third book, Hayduke continues his litany with recommendations for adding mineral oil to coffee to induce diarrhea, adding jimsonweed root to soup to induce an atropine poisoning syndrome with psychosis, adding Superglue® to a best-selling hemorrhoid medication (pp. 8–9), and adding spearmint oil to douching solutions or tampons to

induce painful burning (p. 78). In restaurants, he suggests, dead rodents can easily be added to items in a salad bar or buffet (pp. 179–180), and a pitcher of pancake syrup can be replaced with a pitcher of motor oil (pp. 180–181). His suggestions for contaminating candy include dipping dead insects or feces in molten chocolate and substituting these for the chocolate-covered cherries in a box of assorted chocolates (pp. 36–37). For revenge on certain malfunctioning vending machines, Hayduke suggests inserting a dead mouse in a bottle and returning it to the machine (p. 213).

This book, like other Paladin Press revenge and murder manuals, carries a disclaimer (p. iv):

Neither the author nor the publisher assumes any responsibility for the use or misuse of information contained in this book. It is sold for entertainment purposes only. Be warned!

Nonetheless, the authors of these books recognize that people are following their advice. Hayduke observes that “many readers *do* use these stunts, putting my suggestions to ‘good purpose,’ whatever that means” (p. 5).

In *The Revenge Book* [13], Bob Smith provides some general principles for the revenge-seeker:

. . . fit the punishment to the crime. Strike back with a severity equal to the offense against you—or as the Bible notes: “an eye for an eye.” (p. 9)

When you go for revenge, *do not feel sorry for your victim*. He is, after all, the person who screwed you without mercy, and therefore deserves the same treatment.

Use every means at your disposal to strike back. . . . when it comes to getting even. “no means are [sic] too venomous, too underhand [sic], too underground and too petty.” (p. 12)

Smith recommends surveillance of the target, cautions against leaving fingerprints, and gives techniques for learning confidential information (pp. 8–10). For revenge techniques in which telephone calls play a part, he suggests using a pay phone and playing tape-recorded background sounds to add to the realism of the call and to defeat efforts to analyze the location from which the call originated (p. 10). Where letters are used, Smith suggests techniques for acquiring corporate or other business letterheads (pp. 10–11). Smith proposes baking cookies according to a recipe for chocolate chip cookies, substituting bits of chocolate flavored laxative for the chocolate chips. One can mail these to an enemy in a package indicating that they are from his grandmother (p. 44).

Although Michael Hoy, the author of *Exotic Weapons: An Access Book* [14], is not particularly fond of poisons, he does suggest putting ammonia in a nasal spray container for “vicious animals” (p. 137). In *The Death Dealer’s Manual* [15], martial arts instructor Bradley Steiner recommends potassium cyanide (pp. 70–71) or nicotine (p. 70) for drinks or anti-freeze for tea or salad dressing (p. 71). Each of the books mentioned thus far in this article was published before the 1982 Tylenol tamperings in Chicago.

The Tylenol tragedy was referred to the following year by the author of another Paladin Press book, *Hit Man: A Technical Manual for Independent Contractors* [16], by Rex Feral. In his words (p. 62),

The Poor Man’s James Bond published by Paladin Press, gives recipes for potassium cyanide and sodium cyanide. . . . Effects of these poisons were tested for us by a few previous users of Extra Strength Tylenol.

Poisons offer a quiet alternative to things that go boom in the night . . .

Feral gives technical advice on several means of carrying out a murder for hire. If murderers were capable of following Feral’s advice, the proportion of homicides that result in no arrest would be considerably higher than the current level of about 25% [17]. With respect to poisons, he writes (pp. 58–59):

Poisons are sweet, silent and effective, and some leave no traces. Poison is one of the hit man's best friends.

If you know your mark's habits well enough, the desired result can be achieved while you are sitting miles away.

To obtain poisons, Feral claims to have written to chemical suppliers under the guise of a research and development firm for which he had letterhead printed, asking them their minimum ordering requirements and prices for a list of chemicals of interest. He even gives his readers a form letter for doing likewise (pp. 58-59). Feral also suggests bribing hospital laboratory employees to steal poisons (p. 60). He favors soaking teabags in poison or substituting poison for medication in capsules (p. 62).

A 1983 pamphlet entitled *The Joy of Revenge* [18] (advertised as "Miss Nasty's get even book" [19], but containing fewer than 14 pages of text, stapled together in the wrong order) seeks to justify revenge manuals as a means of informing readers of the risk of product tampering and notes (p. 8):

No student of revenge oriented literature was surprised by the product tampering incidents that caused injury and death to the users of certain "health" items. Note that most health and sundry manufacturers still have not done much to protect their products from tampering.

In *I Hate You! An Angry Man's Guide to Revenge* [20], Nelson Chunder quotes the recipe of a correspondent from Australia for creating candy containing dog feces and concealing it in a manufacturer's candy box for the purpose of giving another person intestinal parasites (p. 24). Chunder recommends adding methylene blue to the victim's drink to turn his urine blue (p. 1), burying a match head in the middle of a cigarette (p. 35), adding fluorescein dye or potassium permanganate to a water fountain, bottled water, or a private water supply (pp. 46-47, 57, 107), adding inedible and disgusting objects to the food in a buffet line (p. 59) or to ketchup bottles in restaurants (p. 72), adding simple incendiary concoctions to chemistry sets in toy stores (p. 107), and adding Elmer's Glue® or Nair® to cream colored shampoos (p. 123). Chunder provides a list of sources of equipment and names a particular Canadian supplier for chemicals (p. 131).

In his sequel volume, *Mad As Hell* [21], Chunder recommends using dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) as a vehicle for poisoning people through the skin by coating doorknobs, steering wheels, or other objects with a mixture of DMSO and horse liniment or, in the case of alcohols, Antabuse or "the chemical of your choice" (p. 1). He suggests grinding cat-worming pills into food to induce nausea and diarrhea (p. 1), grinding niacin tablets into food to induce flushing and hot flashes (p. 3), grinding morning glory seeds into food to induce delirium (p. 38), adding magnesium citrate, phenolphthalein, or soap to drinks to induce diarrhea (pp. 2, 105), adding lobelia herb to food to induce vomiting (p. 38), slicing psilocybin mushrooms into salad to induce hallucinations (p. 38), or surreptitiously administering medroxyprogesterone acetate to produce impotence (pp. 2-3).

In *Techniques of Harassment: How the Underdog Gets Justice* [22], Victor Santoro proposes harassing one's enemies by sending them adulterated promotional samples of products with the original promotional literature. He recommends substituting glue or a depilatory agent for shampoo, adding a grinding compound to an engine oil additive, adulterating engine oil with abrasives, epoxy resins, sugar, or corn syrup, mixing fabric dye with laundry detergent, and adding laxatives to edible products (p. 120). In an appendix (pp. 141-144), he lists agents that he favors for product tampering. He states that these "contaminants," "when introduced into or substituted for certain commonly used products, will cause varying amounts of destruction" (p. 141).

In another of his books, *Disruptive Terrorism* [23], Santoro claims that he avoids giving technical details "so as not to serve as a blueprint for potential terrorists" (pp. 1-2), yet he provides a description of a tampering scheme that could easily lead to the collapse of a man-

ufacturer. One of his schemes requires only access to a poison, collaboration among people in several cities, and one conspiratorial stock clerk in a grocery store (pp. 9–11). Santoro suggests that the most vulnerable point in the food distribution chain for disruption by terrorists is the retail outlet, despite the wider distribution of products contaminated at processing plants or distribution centers. Retail outlets are most vulnerable because of public access and ineffective security, and meat and produce will prove especially difficult to protect through packaging. Moreover, employee screening can never be completely valid or universal. Lethal contamination is unnecessary to effect disruption, as long as the threat to health is sufficiently credible to result in withdrawal or destruction of the product (pp. 86–89). In his words (p. 89),

It only takes one terrorist to contaminate the output of a food or drug processing plant. Depending on the type of operation involved, he need not even be in a key position. Fruit packers, for example, employ unskilled help at minimum wage. . . . There is . . . virtually no screening of applicants.

There is no sign that revenge and murder manuals are merely a passing phase of publishers' experimentation with the limits of the first amendment. In 1987, Paladin Press published two new Hayduke titles: *Screw Unto Others: Revenge Tactics for all Occasions* [24] and *Make My Day! Hayduke's Best Revenge Techniques For the Punks in Your Life* [25]. *Make My Day* features LSD in mayonnaise (p. 61); nasal mucus on a hamburger (p. 71); feces, insects, and dead rodents in motel ice machines (p. 110); salmonella in restaurant egg and tuna salads (p. 136); saltpeter and sugar in cigarettes (p. 158); vomitus in salad dressing (p. 205); and liquid soap in water fountains (p. 207). *Screw Unto Others* recommends urine in soup (p. 37); human feces in chocolate or coffee ice cream (pp. 79–80); toe nails, mouse paws, rabbit tails, or mole faces (yes, faces) in hors d'oeuvres (p. 87); switching labels between tuna and cat food in a supermarket (pp. 208–209); and replacing toothpaste with library paste, hot sauce, soap, or biological fluids (p. 220).

Possible Harms and Potential Remedies

No proof is available that any of the known product-tampering crimes was inspired by or facilitated by the works reviewed above. Nonetheless, the temporal relationship between some of the advice given and some of the crimes committed is consistent with the hypothesis that one or more product-tampering crimes has been inspired or facilitated by these manuals, as illustrated by the following examples.

Example 1

The recommendation that cyanide be inserted in medication capsules and that these poisoned capsules be returned to the container in which they were sold for the purpose of committing murder was published at least as early as 1972 in the *Poor Man's James Bond* [6] and was repeated in *The Black Bag Owner's Manual* [9] in 1979 with additional technical details. The first murder ever known to have been committed through this means was in 1982, and ten murders are believed to have been committed through this means to date: seven in Chicago in 1982 [26], one in Yonkers, New York, in 1986 [27], and two in Seattle in 1986 [28]. Other known capsule poisonings—including attempted murder [29], suicide [30], and attempted suicide [31]—have all occurred since 1982.

Example 2

In 1973, *How to Kill* [7] suggested adding sulfuric or muriatic acid to eyedrops. In the late 1970s, an Alabama pharmacist allegedly laced eye drops with carbolic acid and shipped these to another pharmacist with whom he had been engaged in a business dispute. Civil

suits filed on behalf of four children and an adult allegedly injured by the products were settled out of court after a trial resulted in a hung jury [32]. In the autumn of 1982, a woman falsely claimed to have been the victim of eyedrop tampering that she had performed [33]. In 1986, a man who had accidentally injured his eyes with drain cleaner similarly faked a tampering of eyedrops [34].

Example 3

In 1981, *Get Even 2* [11] recommended substituting urine for a beverage and returning the bottle to a supermarket shelf. In 1985, urine contamination of a bottled beverage in Santa Clara, California, that reportedly caused one man to become ill, prompted a chain of 200 stores to remove the product from its shelves [35].

Example 4

In 1983, *Hit Man* [16] suggested soaking teabags in poison and referred the reader to *The Poor Man's James Bond* [6] for instructions on making cyanide. In 1987, a man in Princeton, New Jersey, prompted a major investigation when he claimed to have placed cyanide laced teabags in a grocery store. He was convicted of having done so [36].

Every audience I have ever addressed concerning these manuals has asked why publications that facilitate and encourage crime are permitted and has expressed the view that such publications should not be allowed. In fact, at least one of the titles reviewed above (*How to Kill* [7,8]) has been banned in Canada. Under general principles of criminal law it is conceivable that the publishers and authors of such crime manuals could be prosecuted for complicity in the crimes that were committed by their readers using techniques recommended in the manuals. However, it would be difficult to prove that the offender who implemented the last stage in the crime had actually read the material and that the publisher or author had the purpose of encouraging or facilitating the commission of the crime. This might suggest that a more specific statute could be drafted to prohibit the publication of this specific type of dangerous information.

A statute drafted specifically to deal with dangerous publications could increase the possibilities of imposing criminal liability. The chief difficulty in drafting such a statute would be that of distinguishing publications that urge the commission of crime and assist the criminal with technical information from those that merely illustrate the techniques for committing crimes through a factual description or a fictional portrayal. Surely it would not be desirable to inhibit the communication of intelligence about criminal activities to law enforcement personnel or to stifle the creativity of novelists, yet if these were the only lawful or immunized channels for conveying the information, the same people who publish and write revenge and murder manuals could call their works law enforcement manuals or could build a thin fictional plot around their more technical messages. Any statute that permitted these loopholes would only briefly retard the purveying of dangerous information. To close the loopholes, however, probably requires some language analogous to that clause of the *Miller* standard of obscenity requiring a jury to find whether the material taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value [37]. Even with such a statute, there would be constitutional questions of vagueness and overbreadth. Moreover, according to prevailing constitutional doctrine, it appears that a conviction of a publisher or author for publishing such material could not stand unless it were proved that the publisher or author intended to cause immediate unlawful conduct and that circumstances made that harm likely to occur [38].

Without new legislation, the only remedy available for persons who have been harmed through these books or others like them would be to pursue civil litigation by filing a tort action claiming that the publication recklessly created the risk that a reader would engage in

the prescribed conduct. The theory of the suit would be that the publisher foresaw or ought to have foreseen that someone would engage in the prescribed conduct even though the particular offenders and victims were not identifiable in advance, a theory which has proved successful in analogous product liability claims. The foreseeability of harm should be obvious to anyone who has read the foregoing illustrations of the advice in these manuals, but that does not necessarily mean that the plaintiff would prevail in such a case, for the defense would point to the first amendment, the disclaimer the books carry, the intervening actor who ignored the disclaimer and committed the crime, and the "misuse" of the information by that actor.

Even though these books may enjoy first amendment protection from government suppression, even though they might well escape criminal or civil liability, and even though the extent of the harm that they in fact cause is unknown, it would be prudent of food and drug retailers to consider whether they wish to continue facilitating access to these publications. Each of the regularly published magazines referred to above that carries the advertisements for these books was purchased for this study at a retail outlet that also sells over-the-counter medications and food products (chiefly chain-operated grocery stores, convenience stores, and drug stores). These chains—some of which have been the victims of tampering related crimes—are, of course, free to make a corporate decision to stop carrying these magazines in company-owned stores and to recommend that their franchised outlets consider doing likewise.

It is important for food and drug manufacturers to test the effects on their products of the contaminants recommended in publications such as those reviewed here. I have advised corporate clients of the particular contaminants that have been recommended for their products, and some have tested the effects on the appearance and odor of their products. In one instance, it was determined that the proposed contaminant would not have the lethal effect claimed by the author of one of the books cited above and that the recommended contamination would be readily apparent to the consumer.

Criminal investigators must also be alert to the existence of the manuals described in this paper so that they can be specified in applications for search warrants, so that the manuals and magazines that advertise them will be noticed in executing searches, and so that the publishers and suppliers can be contacted as a source of investigative leads. In this connection, it is noteworthy that one of the suspects in the Chicago Tylenol murders possessed cyanide and a manual detailing capsule poisoning. According to news articles, the suspect, Roger Arnold, worked at a warehouse that supplied Tylenol to two of the five stores at which the poisoned capsules were purchased [39]. A search of his apartment disclosed cyanide, four firearms [40], "literature describing how to kill people by stuffing poison into capsules and two one-way tickets to Thailand" [39]. Although never charged in the Tylenol murders, he was convicted of killing a man whom he mistakenly believed had led police to suspect him of the Tylenol murders [40].

Not all publishers of revenge and murder manuals will prove cooperative with investigators. Kurt Saxon, author of *The Poor Man's James Bond* [6], publishes a monthly tabloid, *The Survivor*, through his company, Atlan Formularies, in which he sells his books, cutting and stabbing instruments, tear gas, stun guns, hypodermic needles, and poisons, including potassium cyanide (1 oz for \$10), nicotine sulphate (2 oz for \$5), and dimethyl sulfoxide (8 oz for \$10). The order form is preprinted "FILL ORDER AND DISCARD" [41], thereby promising to destroy the record of any books, weapons, or poisons ordered by the customer.

Conclusions

The readership of these books is unknown, but is probably similar to the readership of the periodicals in which they advertise. From my research into the violence industry, I know that the magazines in which these books are advertised attract a varied audience that includes

such overlapping groups as law enforcement officers, combat veterans, active duty military personnel, mercenaries, weapons enthusiasts, survivalists, militant radicals, criminals, the "yuppie" submachine gun crowd, Caspar Milquetoasts, Walter Mittys, disgruntled losers, angry or frightened citizens, and the mentally ill. With respect to Paladin Press books and others like them, I have only met seven people whom I knew to read them. One is an FBI agent who specializes in solving bizarre serial crimes; one is a forensic pathologist who is a nationally prominent expert on injuries from unusual weapons; two are paramilitary enthusiasts with large collections of weapons; one sells such books for a living and gives a different biography every time I see him (once he was an M.D.; another time he was working undercover for the CIA but could not discuss it); and the other two are mass murderers: George Banks, who killed 13 people in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and Sylvia Seegrist, who shot 10, of whom 3 died, in Media, Pennsylvania. Whether tamperers in fact use these books as a source of technical information remains to be determined.

Despite the inappropriateness and potential criminal and civil liability of the revenge and murder manuals, there is some indication that they are being "mainstreamed" into ordinary circulation, rather than marketed solely to the high-risk audiences mentioned above. Hayduke's *Up Yours! Guide to Advanced Revenge Techniques* [12], for example, has been reprinted by Lyle Stuart as *Revenge: Don't Get Mad, Get Even* [42]. Both this book and Hayduke's *Make 'Em Pay! Ultimate Revenge Techniques from the Master Trickster* [43] were offered repeatedly in 1987 through the Publishers Central Bureau mail-order catalogs. Initially offered in two small, separate advertisements, the latest catalog shows larger pictures of both books under the caption: "VICIOUS TRICKS . . . UNDERHANDED STUNTS . . . GET MAD AND GET EVEN!" (received in December 1987) [44]. *Revenge* has also shown up on the sale tables at national chain bookstores.

Some of the advice in these manuals is so off-base that any toxicologist or physician will recognize the impossibility of achieving the purported effects. Nonetheless, other suggestions in these manuals, as described above, are for techniques that not only could prove lethal or injurious, but have already done so. No proof is yet available that injurious product tamperings have been inspired by these manuals. But it will not be surprising if and when tamperings are proved to have been encouraged and assisted by these books. The mainstreaming of tampering advice is evidenced by the appearance in a mass circulation catalog of the edition of *Revenge* [42] published by Lyle Stuart, the publisher who brought us *The Anarchist Cookbook* [45] (and who, by the way, is a self-proclaimed personal friend of Fidel Castro [46]). Such mainstreaming greatly increases the number of readers exposed to such works and thereby greatly increases the risk of criminal enactment of the crimes described. A large number of bombings and other crimes is now known to have been committed by readers of *The Anarchist Cookbook*, some of whom followed its advice to the letter. I expect that some tamperers and other poisoners are equally good students.

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