

New York Times caught in lie to protect media murder-promotion

by Anton Chaitkin

In a desperate bluff, the *New York Times* has published a knowingly false four-part series of articles purporting to show that no cultural or societal degeneracy underlies the recent spate of mass murders in the United States. The *Times* articles (April 9-12) simply blame insufficient medication of the perpetrators, and the authorities' failure to heed behavioral warning signs, for the shootings in schools and elsewhere. "Cultural" influences, such as satanic point-and-shoot video games, and violent movies and television, are explicitly described as of little weight in causing the crimes. No other factors of a change in the social environment are even mentioned in the articles.

In the April 10 article, the *New York Times* sought to lend credence to its propaganda by using the names of four psychologists, said to be experts in the field of diagnosing the causes of mass murder. Very small quotes, of an extremely general nature, are taken from each of these men and mixed in with the *Times*'s verbiage, giving the naive reader the impression that the quoted "experts" confirm what the *Times* is reporting.

But, *EIR* was able to interview three of the four psychologists, and found that their actual views on the subject are sharply opposed to what the *Times* was attempting to convey.

The *Times* quoted University of Virginia clinical psychologist Dewey G. Cornell, saying only, "This notion that someone just snaps is based on ignorance and denial. People don't just snap. Pressures build up."

Yet, Dr. Cornell told *EIR* that "environmental toxicity is the model I work with." He said, "Children are bombarded with images of violence" in our present-day society. "Most survive" this bombardment, and do not commit great crimes, but some few do not survive, perhaps those with a "predisposition to being depressed." "What has changed," he said, is that we now have "a culture with violence—especially video games, where the children learn to point and shoot." And, the children now have "access to semi-automatic weapons," which were not available before.

The *Times* article on April 10 also quotes Dr. Anthony G. Hempel, chief forensic psychiatrist at the Vernon campus of North Texas State Hospital, to support its claims. He is quoted saying only, "that in contrast to the killers who 'go postal,' gunning for their bosses, 'when someone goes and kills

strangers or they kill children, the odds of them being mentally ill are higher.' "

Dr. Hempel told *EIR* that he had actually spoken with the *Times* reporters for hours.

Killers and video games

Dr. Hempel, who has studied mass killers for many years and has published a greatly detailed treatise on the subject, said that "in studying child and adolescent cases, we frequently saw 'Doom,' the point-and-shoot video game. Many times before a mass killing, the child would be watching or playing a video game."

He specifically cited the film "Natural Born Killers" as a particular cult object for such perpetrators. "I can't tell you how many people who had thoughts of mass murder said that they watched something like that," Dr. Hempel said. In a typical case, the perpetrator would report that he had seen a particular film 40 times.

In his published work, Dr. Hempel has promoted the work of former U.S. Army Ranger Lt. Col. David Grossman, whose findings are diametrically opposed to the *New York Times* propaganda. (*EIR* interviewed Colonel Grossman in its March 17, 2000 issue.)

Speaking to *EIR*, Dr. Hempel commented vigorously on the privatization of mental health care, in which patients are treated like cattle and forced to sit for days on end in vans for transport. Hempel says of prison privatization, "We should never allow money to be made on the backs of slaves." Dr. Hempel recently worked with Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, the former boxer framed up on murder, to protest an execution by the State of Texas.

Dr. Robert Granacher, Jr., a Lexington, Kentucky forensic psychiatrist, also sharply contradicted what the *Times* conveyed in its article, which deliberately misused his name by selectively quoting him.

Dr. Granacher told *EIR* that there have been serial killers all along, into the distant past. But "I am 58 years old," he said. "When I was in school, this simply did not occur. That sort of thing never happened in the United States. This is a new phenomenon; we did not have this with our children."

He explained that he has been hired by the parents of the three girls murdered by 14-year-old Michael Carneal in Paducah, Kentucky, in their Federal lawsuit against 25 video-game, movie, and cyber-porn companies whose violent products warped Carneal's mind. Dr. Granacher has examined Carneal, and knows in depth the evidence for the effects of these products in promoting murder.

The Carneal case has been widely discussed in all the U.S. media, and Dr. Granacher is a passionate advocate of properly locating the responsibility of Hollywood and the media in these child-killer tragedies. Thus, there can be no doubt that the *New York Times* lied with malice, hoping not to be caught in misrepresenting the widely shared views of "expert opinion" contradicting its propaganda.