

## The Radicalization of Nidal Hasan- From Medical Student to Mass Murderer

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It has been nearly seven years since the Fort Hood Massacre. For those of us who were there, targeted, and lived to tell the tale, it occurred 7 minutes ago. Or 7 seconds. The glaring memories, replete in living color, return to haunt at all the most inopportune moments. And to date, there are few answers to how this event was allowed to transpire and absolutely no accountability for those who did just that and roam the earth sans guilt or remorse. Least of them is the shooter, who still awaits his 72 virgins on death row at the US Army Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Some analysts say it was his deepening sorrow and angst regarding his military service and strong desire to depart an Army that waged war against his Muslim brothers. Others have excused his motives as an indication of his gradual and venomous hatred against the United States, stemming from war stories told to him by those returning veterans and his alleged traumatization from what they brought to the psychiatrist's couch. Others claim that Nidal Hasan became increasingly devout in his Islamic beliefs after the passing of his

parents, in 1998 and 2001 respectively (Lieberman and Collins, 2011). Those of us who witnessed his systematic assassinations and their aftermath know the genuine truths of the matter. His objective was to methodically murder as many American Soldiers as his magazine-filled cargo pockets of his uniform would allow, by targeting deploying troops in the unit to which he was assigned and anyone else that had the terrible misfortune to be in his line of sight. In fact, in August of 2009, he stated directly to one of his psychiatrist colleagues at Darnall Army Community Hospital, that if he was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, “he would make them pay” and “make them sorry” (eyewitness testimony delivered during the Hasan court martial August, 2013). She did nothing with this information and simply looked the other way.

During Hasan’s internship and psychiatric residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and two-year prestigious fellowship in Disaster and Military Psychiatry at USUHS (U.S. Uniformed University of the Health Sciences), he exhibited actions of increasingly dire concern to his fellow students and faculty who were reportedly deeply perturbed. Hasan’s behaviors were described as “disconnected, aloof, paranoid, belligerent, and schizoid” (Lieberman and Collins, 2011). During some of his required presentations (lectures and grand rounds), he openly advocated for the burnings, beheadings and suicide bombings of American Soldiers. Two of his colleagues referred to Hasan as a “ticking time bomb” who had become obsessed with violent Muslim extremism. Not only were his Officer Evaluation Reports sanitized by his superiors, who feared for their careers and eligibility for promotion far more than the welfare of military personnel, but Hasan’s unmistakable potential for violence and fratricide “was on full display”, his required seminars were re-assessed as “praiseworthy research on counterterrorism” (Lieberman and Collins, 2011). He even advocated for revenge as an appropriate defense for the 9-11 attacks against the United States. Despite a significantly substandard performance throughout his residency and fellowship and progressively more irrational and bizarre thought processes, no actions were ever taken to levy discipline against Hasan or to discharge him from the military, though he was very clearly and patently unfit for military service. In fact, he was promoted to the rank of major for the significant body of research he had conducted with respect to violent extremism as having wide applicability to counterterrorism, regardless of the fact that was referred to by a faculty member as a “lazy religious fanatic, unfit to graduate” (Lieberman and Collins, 2011). This amounts to dereliction of duty among both military and civilian faculty members, all of whom went to extraordinary lengths to uphold the doctrine of political correctness to preserve their own professional careers, rendering them no less than accomplices to mass murder. To date, all eight have gone unpunished.

## References

**Lieberman, S. I., & Collins, S. M. (2011). A Ticking Time Bomb - Counterterrorism Lessons from the US Government's Failure to Prevent the Fort Hood Attack.**