



## Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Section – 2011

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### I34 Honor Killing and Psychiatry

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After attending this presentation, attendees will gain knowledge of the emerging phenomena of “honor killing” in the United States and learn how forensic psychiatrists may be called upon to examine defendants who commit these crimes.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by increasing awareness of the phenomenon of “honor killing,” its origins, recent cases, and how the forensic psychiatrist may be called upon in these cases.

Honor killings have become increasingly visible to the Western world in the last several years and appear also to be more prevalent in the West. A phenomenon previously occurring only in parts of the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa, now occurs in the Western world. Europe, the United Kingdom, and Canada reported the first cases, but in the last ten years, honor killings have increased in the United States. This presentation provides forensic scientists with a basic understanding of honor killings. The authors examine some of the cultural roots of honor killings, describe five cases occurring in the United States, and discuss policies toward immigrants, cultural defenses, and psychiatric aspects of the phenomenon. The careful psychiatric and cultural study of defendants will be needed to gain additional insight into any relationship that may exist between psychopathology and cultural determinants of the killing of a family member for “honor.”

#### **Honor Killing, Homicide, Family Violence**