



### I35 Family Murders: An Explorative Analysis of Psychological Risks Factors

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After attending this presentation, attendees will better understand what the psychological risk factors are that could help the family murder cases.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by preventing family murder cases.

The goal of this research is to analyze the system of relationship and interaction of murder and victim, before and during the crime.

The goal, therefore, is to identify where within the control strategies of relational dyad murder-victim risk factors for homicide can be traced. In order to find them, are examined eleven trial files taken from the Court of Rome. These files relate to family and close murders occurred from 1992 to 2004.

For the quantitative and qualitative text analysis are created some categories. These are used to describe and make clear the relationship among the examined subjects. These categories are also useful to shed light on the critical situations emerged into such relationship. Trial files were examined by two judges, and the data analysis highlights some risk factors. In particular, the following results emerge: most of the examined subjects are married; they have a five-years or longer relationship and they used to live together every day. Moreover, most of the subjects have not had any psychological/psychiatric counseling relating to the problems the couple had experienced; many of them live in stressing conditions (i.e., changes in the social-economical status, modifications in the relationship with the partner, etc.). The stressing environment influences the relationship, which made them more vulnerable and aggressive. The relationship is usually of the rigid-complementary kind: in absence of critical events, one subject always tends to prevail over the other, in an unbalanced division of powers and roles. The relation script most frequent, in absence of critical events, is *getting hold* (murderer) – *protecting* (victim). This means that in absence of critical events the murderer usually gets hold of the victim and look for the protection of the victim. The majority of the victims do not ask for help or the family or the social support services, tending to close in themselves. Many have no contact with the police or with the judicial authorities.

In most relationships, there are critical events which break the balance between the subjects. The relation pattern relevant to the critical event is *attack* (murderer) – *submit* (victim). This means that during the critical event the murderer tends to attack the victim, which is dominated by the murderer. The most relevant conflict is *care versus self-sufficiency*, which means that the conflicts within the relationship are mostly caused by a need of care and love. The traditional, more frequent pattern concerning the murder behavior are the following: *controlling* (murderer) – *asserting one's authority* (victim), *asserting one's authority* (murderer) – *controlling* (victim), and *offending himself* (murderer) – *asserting one's authority* (victim). Almost all the subjects look for some change in the relationship. In almost all the examined cases, the murderer's expectations in the relationship are disappointed.

Four created categories are considered particularly important. These categories were compared among themselves and showed that often the patterns that are found during the murder are already present during critical events. The murder is often due to the exacerbation of patterns are already in the murderer-victim relationship. The individualization of such risk factors could be extremely important for the forensic community for prevention of family murders.

**Family and Murders, Psychological Risks Factors, Relationship Murderer - Victim**