



D85 Forensic Analysis of Violence Against Women Murderers: Motives and Circumstances in Women Intimate Partner Violence Homicides and Their Consequences on Prevention

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After attending this presentation, attendees will better know some features and circumstances of the murderers in Violence Against Women (VAW). Usually, most of the papers and studies focus on victims, forgetting the aggressors and their motivations and circumstances to kill. The last World Health Organization (WHO) report on VAW (June 2013) established that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. This presentation also describes that perhaps as many as 38% of all murders of women are committed by an intimate partner after a history of violence and aggression. This means there is a similar percentage of men using this violence to gain their objectives.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by explaining how to approach the experts to gain information as to the motives and circumstances related to these homicides and to obtain better knowledge about VAW homicides, resulting in collaboration to improve VAW risk assessment and to prevent these crimes.

An analysis of forensic reports and other elements included in the Spanish Judicial Sentences regarding the VAW homicides committed in Spain from 2001 to 2010 (n=309) (last data available) revealed a number of characteristics related to the aggressors and some unique case circumstances. Among them were: (1) percentage of cases where the aggressor was considered "guilty" by the courts (95.3%); (2) *modus operandi* and weapons used: the most frequent was "stabbing" (52.1%) and fire arms were used in 5.4% of the homicides; (3) homicides committed at home (76.7%); (4) time of day: most frequent was from 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. (36.9%); (5) aggressors with mental disorders (9.4%); (6) alcohol and drugs: the aggressor was considered under the effects of alcohol and/or drugs (6.9%); (7) victim and murderer were married in 43.2% of the cases; (8) previous violent episodes reported (previous complaint of VAW) (18.8%); (9) an existing protection order when the homicide was committed (11.3%); (10) women killed who had children (70.7%); and, (11) percentage of cases in which children were direct witnesses of the homicide (10.2%).

This and other data were analyzed to explain and further understand the circumstances surrounding VAW homicides. The results provide better knowledge of VAW homicides through the characteristics of the murderers and the circumstances related to the crime. In addition, the data also shows some features that challenge many myths and social beliefs typically associated to VAW and intimate partner homicides (i.e., that alcohol, drugs, or mental disorders are common among these criminals). The research identifies system weaknesses that may mask VAW cases and result in a failure to protect women and prevent serious aggressions and homicides. Finally, the results offer some suggestions in performing the forensic exam and risk assessment of these cases and in adopting measures to prevent future aggressions.

Violence Against Women, Murderers, Motives