

I24 A Case Study of Murder and a Criminal Personality in a Trained Elite Military Man

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Learning Overview: After attending this presentation, attendees will know how to contextualize the aggressive behavior of a subject who performs elite military activities. The goal of this presentation is for forensic experts in mental health to bear in mind that elite military personnel can present “short-circuit behavior” based on the situations they see as critical to their own integrity.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic science community by informing attendees of the increase in diagnostic competence of this type of criminal conduct, as well as the ability to appreciate what type of profile can be potentially harmful (or dangerous) for civil society.

Introduction: This presentation aims to explain the basic personality traits of an expert subject of an elite military discipline who perpetrated an assassination. The accused man was a sniper specializing in special missions abroad.

A 24-year-old single male, a native of Eastern Countries, with an academic level equivalent to secondary studies who was adopted at the age of 8 years old had a history of adverse psychosocial problems during his childhood, including family domestic violence up to the age of 8 perpetrated by his biological father; violence in the boarding school where he was admitted as a result of domestic violence and violence against women by his father; low school motivation; aggressive behavior problems derived from being linked to a Neo-Nazi group; a history of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), without unrelated clinical documentation; and a deceased (biological) father due to chronic alcohol consumption.

When the events occurred (murder at the victim’s home), the conflict originated as a result of an aggressive discussion with a neighbor. The aggressor stabbed him 30 times. The aggressor worked as an elite professional soldier (soldier/sniper in La Legión) (from a Western European country), belonging to a section specializing in anti-terrorism. As a result of this act, the aggressor was admitted to a penitentiary in Madrid, Spain, for a crime against independent human life.

Method: For the development of the study of the personality of the accused person, the following methodology was followed: directed clinical-expert interview (anamnesis); administration of psychological tests; and analysis of the clinical and legal documentation provided.

Results: The results obtained are compatible with the fact that the aggressor presents: absence of serious and / or severe mental disorder; presence of a personality disorder; presence of serious dysfunctional personality traits of emotional instability (borderline-limit) on a paranoid, anankastic-obsessive and dependent basis; and Simulation Index (SIMS) not significant.

Discussion/Conclusions: At the time of perpetrating the events, the accused belonged to an elite military unit: sniper expert in anti-terrorist objectives belonging to the Army Corps of the Legion and trained in hand-to-hand combat training.

At the time of the murder, the aggressor presented an acute and critical psycho-emotional alteration moments prior to the commission of the event. This was a result of the precursor events that he experienced as harmful to his personal and physical integrity. The victim “came back with a knife and he put his right hand up to defend himself while the victim wanted to stick it in his head [sic]”, according to the statement of the detainee before the judge.

The aggressor’s behavior is consistent with him experiencing a harmful impulsivity, typical of an aggressive or hostile paranoid exacerbation (Cluster A and B personality traits). He suffered an alteration of his consciousness and his capacity for self-criticism of sufficient intensity to break the inhibitory mechanisms of their conduct. This manifested itself in the harmful conduct in which it was derived and his inability to assess, in those precise moments, the scope of the fatal consequences that the perpetration of said harmful action entailed.

Pathological Impulsiveness, Personality Disorder, Murder and the Military