

Review Article

Forensic Psychiatric Expertise of an author of Femicide and Post-Mortem Mutilation

Victoria de la Caridad Ribot Reyes*, Abelardo Román Concepción Serradet, Caridad Xiomara Padrón Galarraga, and Aravidis González Quintana

Department of Mental Expertise, Legal Medicine Institute, Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de la Habana, Cuba

*Corresponding author

Victoria de la Caridad Ribot Reyes, Legal Medicine Institute. Ave. Independencia y Hernán Cortés, municipio Plaza de la Revolución, La Habana, Cuba, Tel: 55512899; Email: victoriaribot@infomed.sld.cu

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Keywords

- Femicide
- Post-mortem mutilation
- Dissocial Personality Disorder
- Psychopathy

Abstract

In a case of femicide and post-mortem mutilation, the forensic psychiatric expertise allows to establish psychopathological and criminological characteristics with respect to the author. In this case, the expert opinion established that the author had a Personality Dissocial Disorder.

ABBREVIATIONS

WAIS: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale; TAT: Thematic Apperception Test; IQ: Intelligence Quotient; 16PF:16 Personality Factor Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

The term femicide, used by Diana Russell in the 1970s, refers to the murders of women for reasons of gender [1], and includes, among others, those who have as victims those who practice prostitution [2].

It annually charges thousands of lives around the world [3]. In this regard, says Ana Carcedo: "The death of women at the hands of their husbands, lovers, parents, boyfriends, suitors, acquaintances or strangers is not the product of unexplained cases or behavior deviated or pathological. On the contrary, it is the product of a structural system of oppression. These deaths are femicides, the most extreme form of sexist terrorism, motivated, mostly, by a sense of possession and control over women [4].

On the other hand, mutilation by means of dismemberment, which constitutes separation by parts of the human body, is a relatively infrequent criminal gesture in our current society; and it obeys in general to the need of concealment of the victim's body, since without a corpse it is exceptional to demonstrate the crime, or perhaps to establish the dynamics of death [5].

In Cuba, this type of practice is extremely infrequent. That is why it is important to assess the psychopathological and criminological elements that accompany the author's behavior.

CASE PRESENTATION

Was evaluated a man, 55 years old, with no history of care

for psychiatry, secondary education, no work or children. His father died by suicide. During his childhood and adolescence he presented behavioral disorders, school indiscipline and difficulties to adapt socially. He has served penitentiary sanctions for several crimes, mainly robberies and assaults. It is evaluated by the Commission of Mental Perception of the Institute of Legal Medicine of Havana due to the murder by asphyxia and subsequent dismemberment of a prostitute with whom she had casual sex. He disposed of the corpse in several packages, in a river near his house. When asked about the reason, he explained that it did not fit in the suitcases that he had in the house and that way he weighed less.

At the psychiatric examination, it was not found sensorial alterations, delusional ideas or other proper sign of the psychosis. Memory and orientation was without difficulties. It presents coldness and affective indifference and superficial charm; he even smiles when he tells in detail the dismemberment.

The electroencephalogram shows slight signs of global cortical dysfunction.

Several psychological tests were also applied:

- Bender: Evidenced marked aggressiveness and hostility, egocentrism and elements of organicity [Figure 1]
- Machover: Graphically project difficulties between impulsivity and control, evasion of problems, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, psycho-emotional immaturity, conflicts in sexual relationships, insecurity and need for support. In addition, elements of psychopathy are appreciated, such as affective coldness and aggressiveness [Figures 2 and 3].

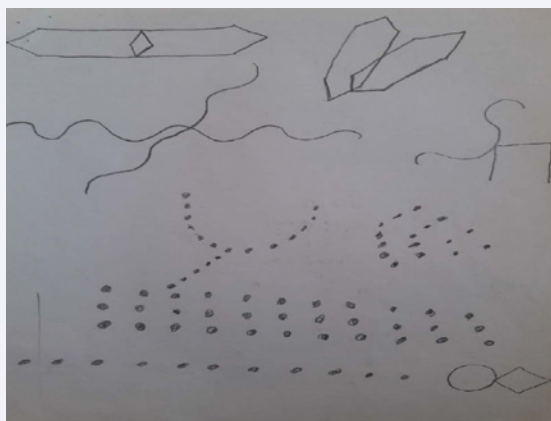


Figure 1 Bender.



Figure 2 Machover. Female drawing.



Figure 3 Machover. Male drawing.

- TAT: It does not express guilt. It is interpreted marked aggressiveness and conflicts in interpersonal relationships. Project feelings of hurt towards the other. There are justifiable attitudes and evasion of responsibility.

- WAIS: Obtain a score of 105 on the verbal scale, on the executive scale and in the general ICQ, consistent with average normal intelligence.

- 16PF: The L factor prevails, which characterizes him as a suspicious subject, obstinate, difficult to deceive, self-centered,

rigid, who does not care about others. It is followed by the Q4 factor, which refers to the energy tension. He is shown as an irritable and impatient person.

- Rorschach: It gives own responses of a subject with affective coldness and aggressiveness, with an adequate index of reality.

The diagnosis after the psychiatric assessment was Dissocial Personality Disorder, which corresponds to total imputability.

DISCUSSION

The forensic psychiatric expert's reports determined that the evaluated person had a psychopathic functioning. This finding coincides with other investigations carried out in our environment, where personality disorder is the most common diagnosis among authors of homicide and murder [6-8].

Carvajal Rodríguez E [6], states that psychopathic personalities are those that tend to commit murderous acts of great violence and are declared imputable in the culmination of their expert reports. This could correspond to the idiosyncrasies of personality disorders, in their close relationship with the commission of violent acts [9].

The inability to postpone the satisfaction of psychological and biological needs, leaving aside any consideration of the consequences that such action may have for oneself as for others, without the least concern to abide by current norms and address social morality [10], constitute factors that facilitate the carrying out of post-mortem mutilations. Although psychopaths are often the authors of sadistic acts, torture and dismemberment, there is no direct relationship between them [11].

CONCLUSIONS

Although the psychopathy does not constitute a predisposition to carry out mutilations in the corpse; the coldness and lack of empathy characteristic of these subjects, facilitate the commission of this type of crime.

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