

## **Psychological Characteristics of Female Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Murders of Men in Slovenia**

**Ula Tomaduz, M.A.**, Doctoral Student, Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. E-mail: [ula.tomaduz@gmail.com](mailto:ula.tomaduz@gmail.com)

The article focuses on the psychological characteristics of female perpetrators of murder, manslaughter and involuntary manslaughter, including those attempts made against their intimate partners. The analysis is carried out on a sample of 31 cases, which were legally concluded in the period between 1991 and 2020, from all district courts in Slovenia. The aim is to determine the state of responsibility of female offenders *tempore criminis*, with an emphasis on those who were previously themselves victims of violence by their partners, whether they suffered from any mental, personality or behavioural disorders and whether there was an addiction or abuse of alcohol and/or psychoactive substances among them and whether these psychological characteristics influenced the execution of previous intimate partner violence by both the victim and the perpetrator. The results showed that most female offenders (52%) had significantly diminished responsibility *tempore criminis*, and this proportion is even higher (75%) in those who were previously victims of partner violence. The mental disorders of the perpetrators manifested themselves mainly as various psychoses and mental underdevelopment. In one-quarter of the cases, personal or behavioural disorders were manifested, especially in the form of immature and impulsive emotions. The excessive use of alcohol among female offenders was found to be an important risk factor as well. The psychological characteristics of female perpetrators have not been shown to be statistically reliably related to the perpetration of previous intimate partner violence, but state and informal policies should nevertheless adequately address them and thereby reduce the risk of the occurrence of the mentioned criminal acts.

**Keywords:** women, perpetrators, intimate partner murder, responsibility, mental disorder, alcohol abuse

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