

DOCTOR: KILLING 'EMOTIONAL'

Newsday - Long Island, N.Y.

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Date: Feb 8, 2006

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Christopher Reynart's gory Easter Sunday slaying of his wife and mother-in-law was the long-coming eruption of a lifetime of irrational "fear, rage and jealousy," a forensic psychiatrist testified yesterday in Reynart's murder trial in Riverhead.

"These emotions were so intense, that he exploded," said Dr. Thomas O'Rourke, of Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, who testified Monday and yesterday. "In the end these were hot-blooded, emotional - not cold-blooded and calculated - actions."

O'Rourke's analysis came from 20 hours of interviews with Reynart, 36, who is charged with first-degree murder for the 2004 stabbing of his estranged wife, Karina Reyna, 30, and her mother, Azucena Villegas, 63, inside the family's North Bay Shore home.

Reynart's attorney, Michael Brown of Central Islip, is arguing Reynart suffered an "extreme emotional disturbance" on the night of the killings, and is therefore guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter.

However, prosecutors and victims' relatives believe the killings were planned and coolly carried out by Reynart, who stopped for coffee minutes before breaking into the home.

"This crime was not committed with an emotional disturbance," Francisco Cevallos - Villegas' brother and Reyna's uncle - said outside court yesterday. "This crime was committed with premeditation and brutality."

O'Rourke said Reynart suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, rooted in his poor and abusive upbringing, which manifested itself when he learned his mother-in-law once encouraged Reyna to abort their first child.

"At this point, he began to think there was a total family plot against him," said O'Rourke.

After Reyna filed an order of protection against Reynart for beating her in January 2004, Reynart was living in Brooklyn when Reyna's new boyfriend, Alberto Gomez, called him to discuss their situation. "You have basically somebody who, on the night that this happened, reviewed

with his archival everything that was going wrong in his life,” O’Rourke said.

Reynart was kept awake that night by a fear that Gomez would harm his children, and nightmares “that people were trying to get him, coming through the windows and fire escape,” said O’Rourke.

Reynart “impulsively” drove to Bay Shore, where he kicked down the door and was soon confronted by Villegas, who slapped his face. “What you have then is a furious explosion of rage,” O’Rourke said.

In her cross-examination, Suffolk Assistant District Attorney Nancy Clifford noted that Reynart’s actions before and after the stabbings were those of a calculated killer. She said Reynart armed himself with two knives before driving to the home, and that, two days later, “justified” his actions in a Newsday interview. “Doctor, when does [extreme emotional disturbance] end?” Clifford asked. “Does it end after the sixth stabbing? Does it end after the 10th? The 12th? When does it end?”