

## The Woman in Forensic Psychiatry

C. Rio<sup>1</sup>, V. Mota<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mental Health, Centro Hospitalar Tamega e Sousa, Porto, Portugal ; <sup>2</sup>Mental Health, Hospital Magalhães Lemos, Porto, Portugal

---

### Aims

The authors propose to understand female profile involved in forensic psychiatry, once the existing knowledge is scarce and just a few papers consider gender differences.

### Methods

The authors proceeded to an intensive retrospective file reviewing 340 women (accused or victim) and complemented with an exhaustive search on Pubmed.

### Results

In 340 cases, 244 were accused and 96 were victims, with ages between 7 to 85 years old (16 to 91 in the accused group). The majority was single and unemployed. The most frequent causes of criminal charge are bodily harm (22%), theft (16%) and injuries (9%). On victims' group, sex crime (66%), bodily harm (16%) and maltreatment (10%) prevail. It varies according with the age, profession and psychiatric diagnosis. There are 8 cases of homicide and 1 connection with criminal network. There was a relationship with the victim in 80% of the cases. Psychiatric past was found in 60% of accused women and at least 37% had alcohol abuse history. The predominant diagnosis in this evaluation were mental retardation (28%) and personality disorders (24%). On the victims' group, the majority had mental retardation. 53% of accused were considered unimputable.

### Conclusions

Comparing women with general or male forensic populations, it's observed several differences, mainly on the type of the crime perpetrated, relationship with the victim and in the diagnosis. It seems to exist a superior emotional component involving the crime on women. These gender differences suggest adjusted actions for women in order to try reducing this behavior.