



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 21, 2011

Honor Murder Finally Goes To Trial

After nearly five years, the Louisville Courier Journal reports, a Somali immigrant's trial in the brutal murder of his children began this week. He also raped and beat his wife. So yet another Muslim immigrant "honor killed" yet again. So brutal was the killing in Louisville, Kentucky, on Oct. 6, 2006, that even a hardened detective, the paper reported, choked up on the witness stand when she described the killing, which Said Biyad confessed to police. The cold-blooded killer does not dispute the facts. He claims he is crazy.



His task is to convince one person. Instead of a jury, Biyad's fate hangs on whether a judge, presiding in a bench trial, will agree that his mental condition mitigates his guilt, which again, is not in doubt.

"He left them laying in pools of their own blood," [the prosecutor said](#) in her opening statement.

What He Did

Biyad killed his children in a rampage that began with attacking his wife. After raping her, then beating her senseless with a hammer, he calmly slashed the throats of his four children — Goshany, Khadija, Fatuma, and Sidi Ali, ages 2 through 8.

As the [Louisville Courier Journal reported](#):

Detective Brenda Wescott testified that three of the children were found in one room, with the youngest apparently trying to put her thumb in her mouth before she died. The other child was found in a separate room in bed, partially covered in blankets.

Wescott, who had to compose herself once during her testimony, said she arrived at the scene to find a veteran officer looking "shell-shocked."

Another policeman described Biyad's "matter-of-fact" confession at the police station. Officer James Clark told the court that "Biyad was sitting calmly in the lobby of the police station on Seventh and Jefferson streets, his hands crossed, when he first met him," the [Courier Journal reported](#).

Biyad "kept saying he had done very bad things," Clark said.

Clark testified that Biyad told his story, in broken English, "matter-of-factly."

Biyad told police he had slit the throats of his children, making a motion by sweeping his hand across his neck, and believed they were dead. He said his wife, Fatuma Amir, may also be dead. Amir was beaten and raped, but survived.

Indeed, after he committed the crime, Biyad calmly walked into police headquarters the newspaper reported. [Said Biyad](#): "I just killed my family."



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Why He Did It

The question, of course, is why the Muslim immigrant raped and beat his wife with a hammer and slashed the throats of his children. Throat slashing is a common method of honor killing, and it appears as if the quadruple murder and beating were a classic example of the practice.

Officer Clark testified that Biyad admitted as much after police arrested him, [the Courier Journal reported](#):

Clark said Biyad was angry because he believed his wife was cheating on him and he was asked to pay money to the elders to have a relationship with her.

Biyad allegedly raped his wife and beat her with a hammer before she was able to lock herself in a room.

Biyad said he then went to the rooms of each of his children, cutting their throats, before throwing the knife in a garbage can, according to court documents.

Unsurprisingly, his defense is insanity. Biyad's [lawyer told](#) the court that "Biyad has for years believed people were trying to kill him and get his money, and that he was a multimillionaire celebrity."

He said this trial will show "clear evidence of a person who is mentally ill" and provide a "peek into a brain that does not function in a normal way."

Biyad [has told](#) psychologists bizarre tales about his life, has claimed he is a celebrity and said that his wife had a "secret marriage."

Muslim Honor

Whether Biyad is really crazy, honor killings are quotidian routine for Muslim men and are becoming [increasingly common](#) in the West.

[Two recent honor killings](#) in the United States are examples. Faleh Almaleki (pictured above), an Iraqi immigrant, mowed down his daughter outside the welfare office in Peoria, Arizona. Almaleki was incensed that his daughter refused to obey his every command. She was becoming "too Westernized," he said, a common excuse Muslim men offer when they butcher or otherwise murder wives and daughters.

In Buffalo, New York, Muzzammil Hassan [admitted beheading](#) his wife at his Bridges TV station, which he founded, ironically enough, to dispel stereotypes about Muslims. Like Biyad, Hassan has an excuse, but the latter's is not insanity. Rather, it is self-defense. He actually said he feared his wife would kill him and that she abused him for years.

Whatever the excuses these murderers offer, a study of honor killing in the Spring 2010 issue of *Middle East Quarterly* revealed the sobering truth about the grisly practice.

Author [Phyllis Chesler explains](#) that honor killings follow patterns and motives that characterize nearly all of them. An example is how perpetrators kill their victims and the reasons they give: "Worldwide, more than half the victims were tortured; i.e., they did not die instantly but in agony," Chesler wrote. And they are often "too Western," as [Almaleki believed](#) his daughter was.

In North America, over one-third of the victims were tortured; in Europe, two-thirds were tortured; in the Muslim world, half were tortured. Torturous deaths include: being raped or gang-raped before being killed; being strangled or bludgeoned to death; being stabbed many times (10



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to 40 times); being stoned or burned to death; being beheaded, or having one's throat slashed.

Finally, worldwide, 58 percent of the victims were murdered for being "too Western" and/or for resisting or disobeying cultural and religious expectations.... The accusation of being "too Western" was the exact language used by the perpetrator or perpetrators. Being "too Western" meant being seen as too independent, not subservient enough, refusing to wear varieties of Islamic clothing (including forms of the veil), wanting an advanced education and a career, having non-Muslim (or non-Sikh or non-Hindu) friends or boyfriends, refusing to marry one's first cousin, wanting to choose one's own husband, choosing a socially "inferior" or non-Muslim (or non-Sikh or non-Hindu) husband; or leaving an abusive husband. There were statistically significant regional differences for this motive. For example, in North America, 91 percent of victims were murdered for being "too Western" as compared to a smaller but still substantial number (71 percent) in Europe. In comparison, only 43 percent of victims were killed for this reason in the Muslim world.

As with Biyad and Almaleki before him, some Muslim men use honor killings, [Chesler avers](#), to keep their women in line. "Tempted by Western ideas, desiring to assimilate, and hoping to escape lives of subordination," [Chesler wrote](#), "those girls and women who exercise their option to be Western are killed — at early ages and in particularly gruesome ways."

Frightening honor murders may constitute an object lesson to other Muslim girls and women about what may happen to them if they act on the temptation to do more than serve their fathers and brothers as domestic servants, marry their first cousin, and breed as many children as possible.

Unsurprisingly, Muslim men commit [almost all](#) honor killings.

Photo: Faleh Hassan Almaleki listens during his trial on Feb. 22, 2011 in Phoenix: AP Images



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