

LAWYER: CLIENT HAD POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

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The attorney for Christopher Reynart, charged with fatally stabbing his wife and mother-in-law on Easter morning in North Bay Shore, is arguing that his client had an extreme emotional disturbance at the time of the killings.

Earlier this month, Central Islip defense attorney Michael Brown introduced the results of "extensive" psychological testing of Reynart, 35, that he said proves his client was suffering from post-traumatic stress when he kicked in the door of the home of his wife, Karina Reyna, and chased her and her mother, Azucena Villegas, through the house. He allegedly stabbed them to death while his two young sons listened from their room.

Brown maintains that Reynart had been concerned that Reyna, from whom he was separated, was dating someone who might be a threat to their children. "Things kept building up and up inside of him to the point that he just exploded," Brown said.

Reynart is charged with two counts of first-degree murder and six counts of second-degree murder. If a jury believes Reynart suffered from extreme emotional distress, it could not convict him on the murder charges but could convict on manslaughter.

Prosecutors said they intend to have another doctor review the finding of the psychological testing, and conduct testing of their own.

- ALFONSO A. CASTILLO