

Psychological profile of sex offenders using weapons in their crimes

DOI:10.1080/13552600.2013.769636

Ronald Langevin & Suzanne Curnoe

Published online: 25 Feb 2013

Journal of Sexual Aggression

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13552600.2013.769636#.UZ4tUrUQZOE>

Abstract

A sample of 1533 sex offenders was examined for clinical characteristics associated with weapon use in their crimes. A total of 24.9% used weapons, most often knives (50.1%), with 13.6% using multiple weapons. Weapon-users were a very disturbed group, who showed a significantly higher prevalence than non-users of psychoses, suicide attempts, alcoholism, drug addiction and abuse, personality disorders, psychopathy, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, cognitive impairment and violent criminal histories. The weapon-users recidivated more often than non-users and appeared in court on 8.7 separate occasions compared to 2.9 for non-users in an average follow-up of 21.5 years. The best predictors of weapon use were total violent offence convictions, sadism diagnoses and adult versus child victims. The importance of examining weapon use in assessing sex offenders is discussed.