

Psychosocial and Developmental Characteristics of Civilly Committed Sex Offenders

March 2013, Vol. 34, No. 3, Pages 141-149 (doi:10.3109/01612840.2012.732193)

Issues in Mental Health Nursing

<http://informahealthcare.com/doi/abs/10.3109/01612840.2012.732193>

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A convenience sample of 38 civilly committed sex offenders completed questionnaires on selected psychosocial and developmental characteristics. More than half (61%) demonstrated an external locus of control. They had higher levels of empathy compared to normative data for the general population, and their levels of anger, aggression, and hostility were similar to male college students. Somatization was comparable to psychiatric outpatients. A high proportion reported at least one form of childhood trauma (87%), with 66% reporting childhood sexual abuse. Issues related to the use of self-report instruments with this patient population are discussed and recommendations for future studies are suggested.