

Issues in the diagnosis of sexual sadism

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Abstract

This paper summarizes our research to date on sexual sadism. Our initial review of the literature revealed confusion over diagnostic criteria. Our first empirical study showed that experienced forensic psychiatrists did not accurately employ many of the important diagnostic criteria while our second study demonstrated that internationally-renowned forensic psychiatrists could not reliably apply the diagnosis. On the basis of these observations we developed a Sexual Sadism Scale that we are now in the process of evaluating.

Key Words: Sexual sadism, diagnosis, reliability

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