



PSYCHOLOGY OF CRIME

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PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
PSY 264 PSYCHOLOGY OF
CRIME
WEEK 4



CRIME AND PSYCHOPATHY



CRIMINAL PSYCHOPATH

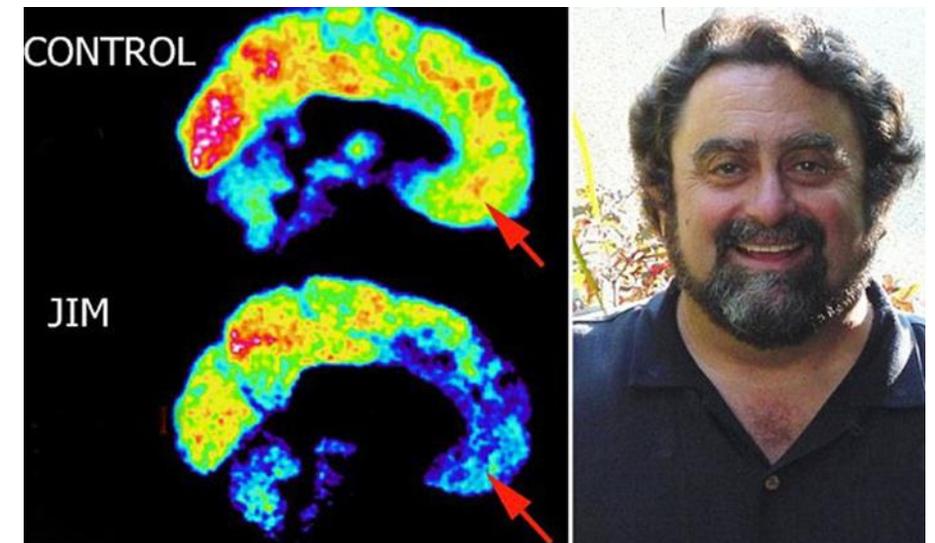
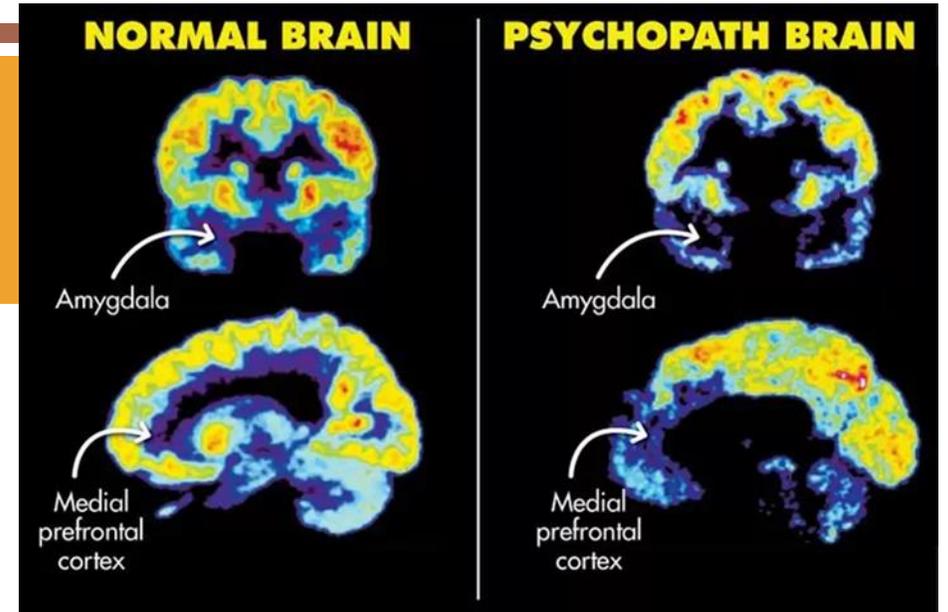
- Psychopaths are often described in criminal sources as a small group of people who are **incurable and resistant** to any form of treatment.
- Many appear to be prone to **lawbreaking and violence**.
- Researchers estimate that about **1% of the general population** meet the criteria for psychopathy, and the rate is **higher among incarcerated** offenders.

RECIDIVISM

- Psychopaths, who make up about **20% of the prison population**, reoffend at much higher rates and faster rates than the other 80%.
- The average convicted psychopath commits **four violent crimes** before the age of 40.
- The typical psychopath returns to a life of crime, **often violent and sexual** – impulsively, selfishly, and without regard for the rights of others, rights that he or she may **not even recognize**.

PSYCHOPATHY AND THE BRAIN

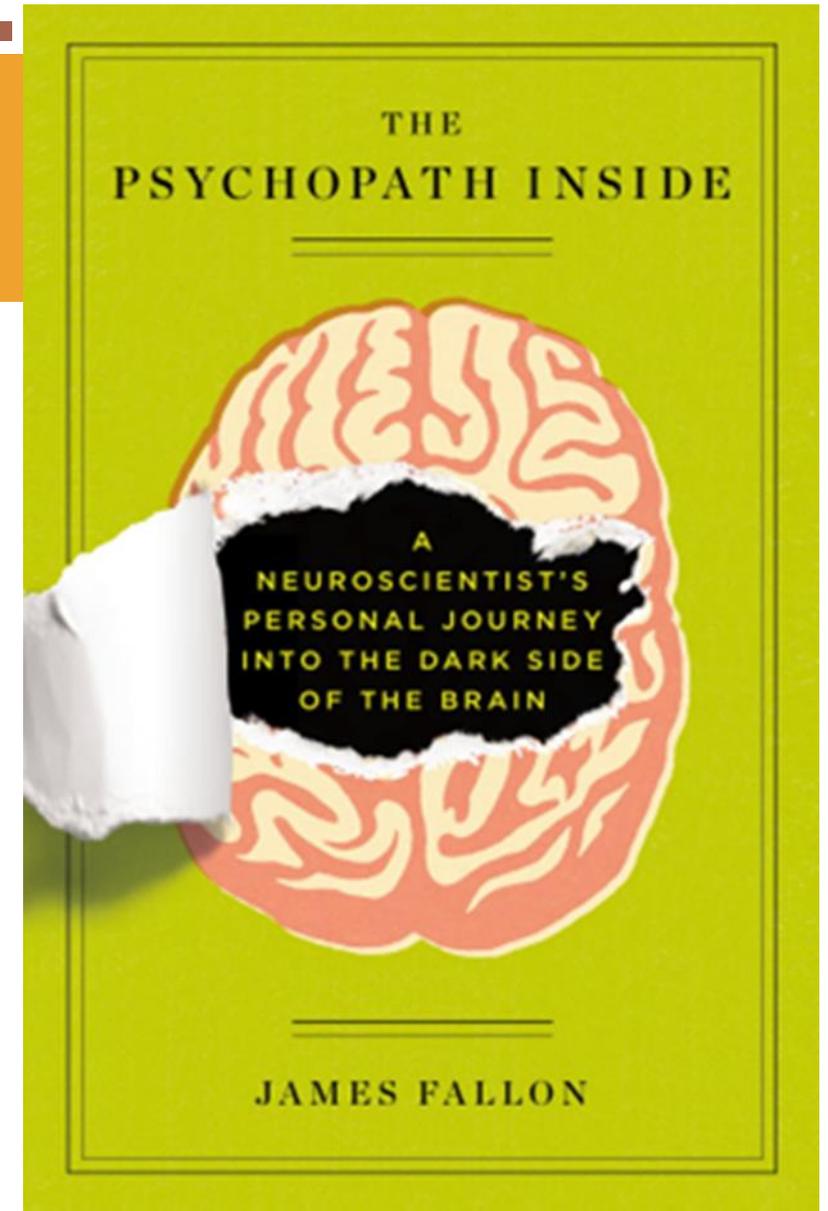
- October 2005
- The brains of these killers share a rare pattern of **low brain function** in certain parts of the **frontal and temporal lobes**, commonly associated with **self-control and empathy**.
- This makes sense for those with a history of inhumane violence, because **reduced activity** in these regions suggests a **lack of normal moral judgment and the ability to restrain impulses**.



GENES OR ENVIRONMENT?

- «For decades I have believed that we have very little control over what we do and who we are. **Nature** (genetics) determines about **80 percent of our personality and behavior**, in my opinion, and **nurture alone determines 20 percent** (how and in what environment we grow up)...
- ...Humans are inherently **complex creatures**. We are not simply good or bad, right or wrong, kind or cruel, benign or dangerous. We are **not simply the product of biology**, and science can only tell us part of the story.»

FALLON, J. (2013). THE PSYCHOPATH INSIDE: A NEUROSCIENTIST'S PERSONAL JOURNEY INTO THE DARK SIDE OF THE BRAIN. PENGUIN GROUP.



GENETIC BASIS OF PSYCHOPATHIA

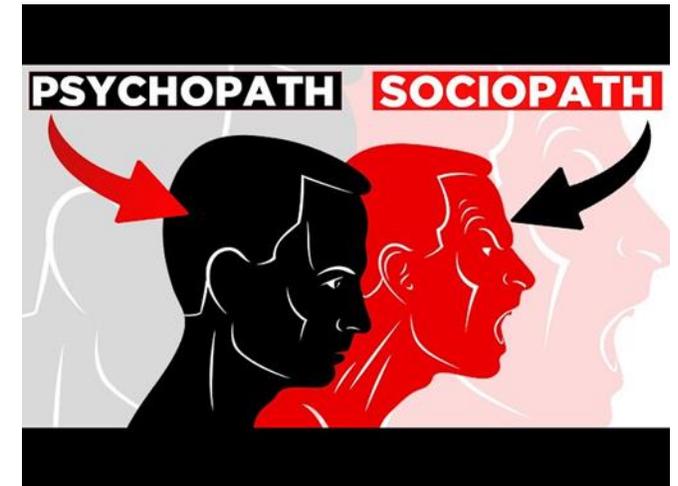
- Karpman (1941) suggested that **basic personality** traits may be **hereditary**.
- Recent studies have supported this idea with several studies showing that **callous and irresponsible traits** may be **heritable**.
- The results of a study examining **psychopathic traits in 353 male twins** revealed that when **genetic and environmental contributions** are considered, **genetics has a general effect** on the following factors:
 1. **interpersonal** relationships,
 2. **affective** traits,
 3. **behavioral/lifestyle** traits.

WHO IS A PSYCHOPATH?

- **The DSM** classifies a wide range of disorders, from anorexia to schizophrenia, but psychopathy is **not one of them**.
- The definition of **antisocial personality disorder**, as Macciardi points out, is **similar**.
- Despite advances in our understanding of how **the brain** works, this organ is **still largely a mystery** to us.
- We are trying to define psychopathy with just a **checklist of traits**.

SOCIOPATH? PSYCHOPATH? ANTISOCIAL?

- Robert Hare stated that **sociologists** prefer the term **sociopathy**, while **psychologists and psychiatrists** prefer the term **psychopathy**.
- Since 1994, **antisocial personality disorder** has been used **synonymously** with sociopathy and psychopathy by the American Psychiatric Association (APA).



PSYCHOPATHS

- Psychopaths need almost **constant stimulation**. As one might expect, such a trait does not fit the boredom of prison.
- If something is not happening around them, psychopaths will often make it happen.
- Their **need for stimulation and impulsivity** drives many of the other **Factor 2 criteria**, including **promiscuity, excessive marriages**, and even **criminal tendencies**.
- They **quickly get bored** with their lover, spouse, and types of crime; **commitment is meaningless**, and they **impulsively move** on to the next level.
- Rage is **never far** from the psychopath. A common response to something so **trivial** is, "I don't know, he just got on my nerves."

EVALUATION OF PSYCHOPATHIA

- There are a variety of tools available to assess psychopathic traits in individuals.
 1. Psychopathy Checklist - Revised (PCL-R; Hare, 1991, 2003)
 2. semi-structured interviews and
 3. information records kept

HARE CHECKLIST PCL-R (PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST)

- The most famous and widely used test is the Hare Checklist PCL-R (Psychopathy Checklist, Revised), developed by Canadian psychiatrist Robert Hare.
- The PCL-R consists of **20 items**, each scored 0, 1, or 2, indicating whether psychopathic traits are absent (0 points), partially present (1 point), or definitely present (2 points).
- A person who scores **40 is a full categorical psychopath** on this scale.
- The normal **cut-off** for diagnosis is **30**, although **25 is sometimes** used.
- The test is usually **scored by a trained person** during a session where the **clinician interviews** the subject, sometimes **supported by legal and medical records** and third-party references.

HARE CHECKLIST PCL-R (PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST)

- The items are grouped into **two broad factors**:
- **Factor 1** assesses the **interpersonal/emotional** aspects of psychopathy,
- **Factor 2** measures the **lifestyle/antisocial features** of the disorder.
- Later research suggests the existence of **three** (Cooke & Michie, 2001) or even **four** (Hare, 2003) separate factors or facets.

HARE CHECKLIST PCL-R (PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST)

Factor 1 – interpersonal/affective features

Glibness/superficial charm (Interpersonal)

Grandiose sense of self-worth (Interpersonal)

Pathological lying (Interpersonal)

Conning/manipulative (Interpersonal)

Lack of remorse or guilt (Affective)

Shallow affect (Affective)

Callous/lack of empathy (Affective)

Failure to accept responsibility for own actions (Affective)

Factor 2 – lifestyle/antisocial features

Need for stimulation/proneness to boredom (Lifestyle)

Parasitic lifestyle (Lifestyle)

Poor behavioural controls (Antisocial)

Early behaviour problems (Antisocial)

Impulsivity (Lifestyle)

Irresponsibility (Lifestyle)

Juvenile delinquency (Antisocial)

Revocation of conditional release (Antisocial)

Criminal versatility (Antisocial)

HARE CHECKLIST PCL-R (PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST)

- Variants of the PCL-R have also been developed.
 - PCL-Youth Version
 - the PCL Screening Version
 - the Psychopathic Personality Inventory
 - the Levenson Self Report Psychopathy scales

Additional items (not loading on Factors 1 or 2, sometimes referred to as orphan items)

Promiscuous sexual behaviour

Many short-term marital relationships

PCL-R (CRITICISM)

- There is **skepticism** about the **clinical reliability of diagnosing and scoring** emotional factors.
- Some critics have raised the issue of **whether psychopathy is a mental condition**.
- There is also concern that the criminal justice system **may label people**, especially **young people**, as psychopaths because of the PCL-R's predictive ability in youth.
- Nevertheless, Hare's tools are **reliable enough** to be used to **identify the most severe psychopaths** in the system, **manage** them appropriately, and direct them to the **best possible practices for treatment**.

DISSOCIATING PSYCHOPATHY FROM ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

- The clinical condition of psychopathy bears a **strong overlap with** the construct of **antisocial personality disorder (ASPD)**, though the two disorders are **dissociable**.
- ASPD is a **diagnostic category of the DSM-5**; which is based predominantly on the **behavioural profile** of an individual.

DISSOCIATING PSYCHOPATHY FROM ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

- ASPD is characterised by a **disregard for societal norms and rules** that can take the form of a **persistent pattern** of antisocial behaviour, **impulsivity** and **irresponsibility**.
- ASPD is highly **prevalent in offenders**, with 60–70% of all **male offenders** receiving a diagnosis.
- Unlike psychopaths, individuals with **ASPD do not necessarily show callous and unemotional traits**.

DISSOCIATING PSYCHOPATHY FROM ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

- Although many offenders with a diagnosis of **psychopathy** would also be labelled as suffering from ASPD, only **a third of those with a diagnosis of ASPD** would meet the diagnostic criteria for **psychopathy**.
- Offenders **with a diagnosis of ASPD** and without psychopathy are also **distinguishable in terms of brain structure** with psychopaths, but not those with ASPD in the absence of psychopathy, showing **structural abnormalities in areas associated with empathy and morality**.

DISSOCIATING PSYCHOPATHY FROM ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

- One of the still-to-be-resolved debates whether **antisocial behaviour** represents:
 1. a core trait of **psychopathic personality**, or
 2. a **behavioural consequence** that is expressed as a product of having a **specific collection of personality traits**.

I SAY GOODBYE AND
GOODNIGHT.
POLICE- LET ME
HAUNT YOU WITH THESE
WORDS;
I'LL BE BACK!
I'LL BE BACK!
TO BE INTERPRETED
AS- BANG BANG, BANG,
BANG, BANG - UGH!!
YOURS IN
MURDER
MR. MONSTER

PSYCHOPATHIC SUBTYPES

- Karpman described variants of the condition as **primary and secondary**.
- **Primary psychopaths**, in keeping with the original formulation of the disorder, show a **lack of nervousness** and **an inability to experience fear and anxiety**.
- **Secondary psychopaths** appear **neurotic and anxious**.

PSYCHOPATHY AND AGGRESSION

- Psychopathy is associated with **high levels of violent behaviour**.
- However, the relationship of psychopathy and violence is **not straightforward**.
- Acts of aggression can be classified as either **reactive or proactive/instrumental**.
- **High levels of instrumental aggression distinguish psychopaths** from sufferers of other disorders that are similarly linked with elevated levels of aggression or violence.

PSYCHOPATHY AND AGGRESSION

- **Reactive aggression** refers to an **unplanned or impulsive** act of violence in response to some form of provocation, threat or danger.
- By contrast, **instrumental aggression** is characterised by **goal-directed** acts of violence (for example, to gain money or drugs) that are typically executed in a **predetermined and calculated** manner.

CORRELATES OF PSYCHOPATHY IN ADOLESCENTS AND CHILDREN

- There has been much debate over **whether adolescents** can be diagnosed as psychopaths.
- There have been concerns that any **apparent callous and unemotional personality** features seen in adolescence may in fact be **transient and not enduring** traits.
- The term “**conduct disorder**” (CD) is applied to adolescents and children who show persistent **antisocial behaviour** and whose actions appear **impulsive and irresponsible**.

FAMILIAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOPATHY

- **Early traumatic experience**, whether it is via **neglect or abuse**, is often considered to be a **predictor of antisocial behaviour** in later life.
- The **relationship** of early adverse experiences and psychopathy, however, is **complex**.
- The **affective deficits** that are **fundamental to psychopathy** are assumed to be **inherited** and therefore should be relatively immune to the influence of **societal and environmental factors**.

FAMILIAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOPATHY

- The lifestyle and antisocial features of the disorder, that are related to **Factor 2** on the PCL-R, are assumed to be acquired and may constitute **an emotional response to a harsh environment.**
- These environmental factors would include
 1. **parental conflict,**
 2. **rejection,**
 3. **neglect and**
 4. **harsh or inconsistent punishment.**

ATTACHMENT, PSYCHOPATHY AND OFFENDING

- Children who had experienced **early physical abuse** tended to show an **avoidant attachment** style whereas **neglect** was associated with **ambivalent attachment**.
- **Physically abused** children showed **greater levels of aggression** and **antisocial behaviour** than neglected and control children.
- **Attachment** difficulties are **associated with criminality and drug abuse** and a **dismissive style of attachment** has been associated with **antisocial personality** traits.

FACIAL EXPRESSION RECOGNITION

- Psychopaths have the **inability of to detect facial expressions** communicating distress, **notably fear and sadness**.
- **The amygdala** has been assumed for some time as being the neural structure that is most critically involved in the **processing of emotional facial expressions**, and expressions of **fear in particular**.
- Patients with **bilateral amygdala** damage show **impaired recognition of fear** face affect.
- Patients with **unilateral amygdala** damage, typically show **intact recognition of fearful faces**.

A NEUROBIOLOGICAL MODEL OF FEARFUL FACE RECOGNITION DEFICITS IN PSYCHOPATHY

- The **abnormal amygdala functioning in CU children** when processing fearful facial expressions appears to be linked to CU traits rather than ADHD or generally antisocial behaviour. (Callous-Unemotional=CU)
- Children with CU traits show a tendency to **look at the mouth region** of faces rather than the eyes.
- This deficit correlates with a **failure to be able to detect facial expressions of fear**, potentially because the eyes represent the major source of facial information relating to this emotion.
- A **similar lack of attention to the eye region** has also been noted in relation to the interpersonal/affective, but not the lifestyle/antisocial features of psychopathy **among adult male non-offenders**.

PSYCHOPATHY AND AVERSIVE CONDITIONING

- Neuroimaging-based experiments have likewise demonstrated that the **amygdala** is central to the formation of **conditioned emotional responses** in humans.
- These **deficits**, which are thought to be present **in childhood**, **limit the ability to learn** that one's actions are **causing distress to another**, and thus compromise **early moral socialisation**.

NEUROCHEMISTRY OF PSYCHOPATHY

- One noticeable exception has been a study on **oxytocin levels in offenders**.
- Oxytocin seems to **enhance both prosocial and antisocial emotions**, depending on the specific situation and context in which the participant is placed.
- The levels of intracerebral **oxytocin can be raised** by taking the neuropeptide **intranasally**.
- In **convicted serious offenders**, the **oxytocin levels were highly correlated** with **Factor 2 scores on the PCL-R**, indicative of **raised oxytocin levels** in relation to the **lifestyle and antisocial features** of the disorder.

PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

- appear outwardly normal,
- nonetheless extremely callous,
- unable to express remorse or guilt,
- seem to be devoid of human emotion,
- typically of above average intelligence
- seemingly charming,
- lack the capacity for love,
- social behaviour is distinctly antisocial,
- show a notable lack of anxiety or neuroses



Ted Bundy-36



Milwaukee Cannibal-
Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer-17



Monster-Aileen Wuornos-7



Son of Sam-David Richard
Berkowitz-8



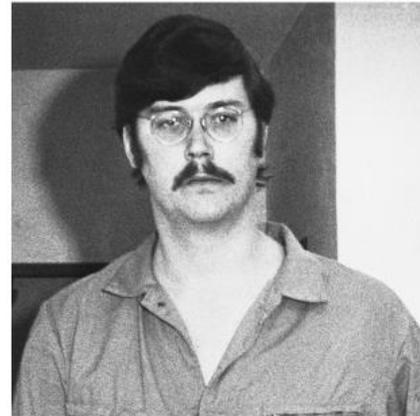
Killer Clown-John Wayne
Gacy-34



Green River Killer-Gary
Leon Ridgway- 48



Old Lady Killer-
Juana Barraza-16+

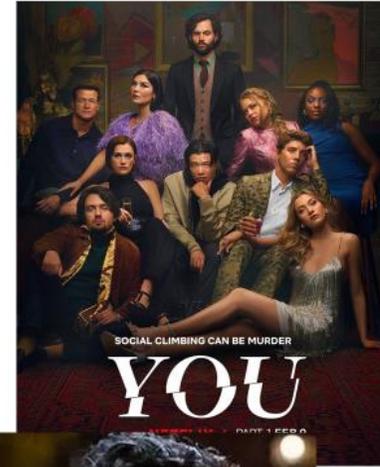


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Kemper-10

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PSYCHOPATHY AND THERAPY

- Psychotherapy normally requires patients to be actively involved in their own treatment. But psychopaths typically **do not feel that they are suffering from any particular problem.** They see themselves as **superior beings in a world of inferiors.**
- Not only does treatment not seem to work, there is evidence that some types of treatment make the condition worse.
- As one psychopath put it, "These programs are like finishing school. They teach you how to squeeze people."
- They may even use **group therapy** to tactical advantage, particularly to **manipulate mental health professionals.**



Dr Hannibal Lecter



Whitechapel Katili-
Karindeşen Jack-5



Joe Goldberg



THE CURIOUS APPEAL OF SERIAL KILLERS

- Why are so many **people fascinated by serial killers** and spend their money on books, movies, and other forms of entertainment to be horrified by tales of horrific atrocities?
- "I discovered that serial killers are frightening and fascinating to the public because some, like Ted Bundy, are highly educated, attractive, successful and could **easily be your next-door neighbor.**"

