Psychopathic and Antisocial Personalities—the Nature of Their Violence

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Violence defined:

- An intentional act of aggression toward another human being that physically injures, or is likely to physically injure, that human being.
Affective and Predatory Modes of Violence

- Intense ANS arousal
- Subjective experience of emotion
- Reactive and immediate violence
- Internal or External threat
- Goal is threat reduction

- Minimal or no ANS
- No conscious emotion
- Planned and purposeful
- No or minimal threat
- Many goals
Affective and Predatory (continued)

- Rapid displacement of target
- Time-limited behavior
- Preceded by public posturing
- Primarily emotional
- Heightened and diffuse awareness

- No target displacement
- No time limit to behavior
- Preceded by private ritual
- Primarily cognitive-conative
- Focused awareness
Raine et al., Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 16:319-32, 1998

- 41 comparisons, 15 predatory, 9 affective murderers
History of model

- Hess and Brugger, 1943
  - affective defensive behavior
  - Quiet biting attack
- Flynn et al., 1962-1977
  - Anatomical substrates in cats
- Reis, 1971
  - Neurochemistry of aggression
- Eichelman, 1981-1992
  - Application to humans and psychopharmacology
Neurochemistry

- Dopamine has mixed effect on affective aggression
- Cholinergic stimulation facilitates predation
- GABA and serotonin inhibit affective aggression
- Phenytoin inhibits affective aggression, but not predatory aggression
Executive functioning impairments in those who engage in affective aggression

No executive functioning impairments in those who engage in predatory aggression
Psychophysiology

- Heart rate deceleration among subgroup (16%) of spousal batterers: predatory violence (Gottman et al., 1995)
- EEG abnormalities among affective aggressors, but not predatory aggressors
- One neuroimaging study (Raine et al., 1998)

- Empirical basis and forensic application of affective and predatory violence.

- Available at www.forensis.org
Who engages in the most frequent affective and predatory violence?
Psychopathic and Antisocial Personality Disordered Individuals
"You just miss not having those people around. I miss not having my dog around, if I can make such a gross analogy."

Lyle Menendez
Dec. 11, 1989
Serial killer Richard Ramirez gives "devil sign" gesture to photographers outside Los Angeles Superior Court after verdict. Asked what he thought of jury's ruling, he responded: "Evil."
PSYCHOPATH

THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE BATES MOTEL.
The Research Traditions

**Personality**
- 1890’s (Germany)
  - Hervey Cleckley, MD (1941)
  - Robert Hare, PhD (1991)
  - “psychopathy”
  - “fledgling psychopath”
  - PCL; PCL-R; PCL:SV
  - PCL:YV; PSD; CPS

**Social Deviancy**
- 1960’s (US)
  - Lee Robins, PhD (1966)
  - “antisocial personality disorder”
  - “conduct disorder”
  - DSM III - DSM IV
Antisocial Personality Disorder (DSM-IV-TR)

• Current age at least 18
• Evidence of conduct disorder before age 15
• Three of the following seven criteria
  – Failure to conform to social norms
  – Irritability and aggressiveness
  – Consistent irresponsibility
  – Impulsivity or failure to plan ahead
  – Deceitfulness
  – Reckless disregard for safety of self or others
  – Lack of remorse
Lifetime Prevalence Rate ASPD (18,320 adults)

- United States 1.49-5.66% (no racial differences)
- Taiwan 0.10-0.22%
The Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (Hare, 1991, 2003)

• Two factors, four facets
• I: Interpersonal/Affective
  – Interpersonal
  – Affective
• II: Social deviance
  – Lifestyle
  – Antisocial
• Correlate 0.50
Proportion of APD Inmates and Psychopathic Inmates

Antisocial Personality Disorder (DSM-III-R)

- 75%
- PCL-R ≥ 30 (25%)
Factor I: Interpersonal/Affective

- Glibness/Superficial charm
- Grandiose sense of self worth
- Pathological lying
- Conning/Manipulation
- Lack of remorse or guilt
- Shallow affect
- Callous/Lack of empathy
- Failure to accept responsibility for own actions
Factor II: Social Deviancy

- Need for stimulation/proneness to boredom
- Parasitic lifestyle
- Poor behavioral controls
- Early behavior problems
- Lack of realistic, long term goals
- Impulsivity
- Irresponsibility
- Juvenile delinquency
- Revocation of conditional release
- Criminal versatility
Violence and Psychopathy

• Psychopaths are more violent than nonpsychopaths
• They commit more crimes
• They are more likely to use a weapon (IQ>100)
• They are more aggressive in prison
• They escape more often from forensic psychiatric hospitals
• Violence does not decrease with age
Violence and Psychopathy (cont’d)

- Violence is predatory and affective
- Stranger victims likely
- Male rather than female victims
- “Vagal reactors” in domestic violence cases
- Correlates with sadistic personality traits
- Sexual sadists are typically psychopaths
- Relatively stable across psychopath’s adult lifespan
"Well, of course I did it in cold blood, you idiot! ... I'm a reptile!"
Violence Risk and Threat Assessment

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