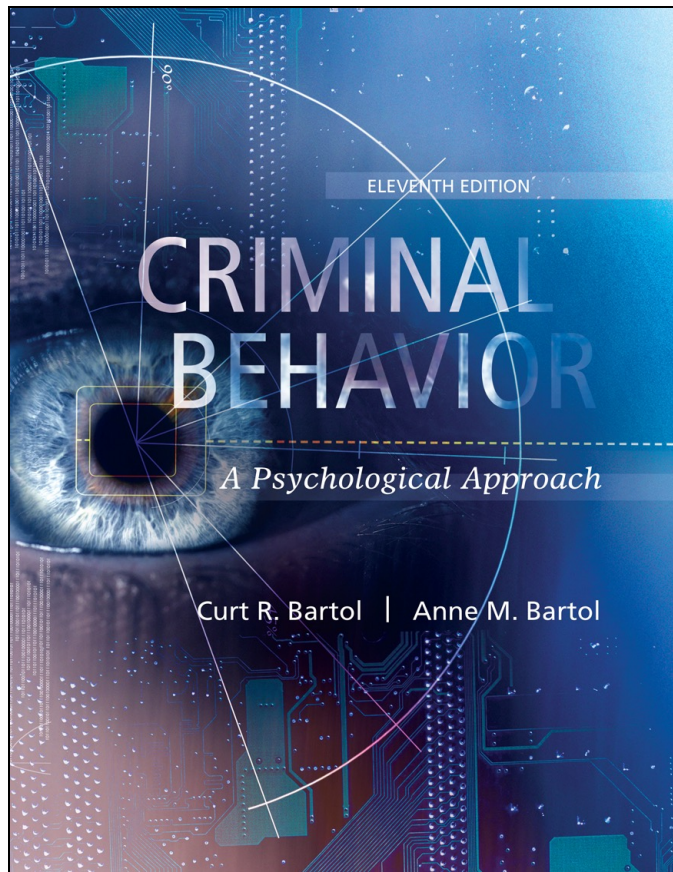


Criminal Behavior

A Psychological Approach

Eleventh Edition



CHAPTER 7

Psychopathy

Chapter Objectives

- Present a special type of offender (the criminal psychopath), who differs emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally from other offenders.
- Review the various measures of psychopathy.
- Summarize the original four core factors and two new core factors of psychopathy.

Chapter Objectives

- Review the evidence for juvenile psychopathy.
- Identify the ethical dilemmas that juvenile psychopathy presents.
- Examine the neurobiological aspects of psychopathy.

Chapter Objectives

- Introduce the dual-process model of psychopathy.
- Discuss representative research on treatment strategies used with adult psychopaths and juveniles with psychopathic features.

What Is A Psychopath?



Robert Hare



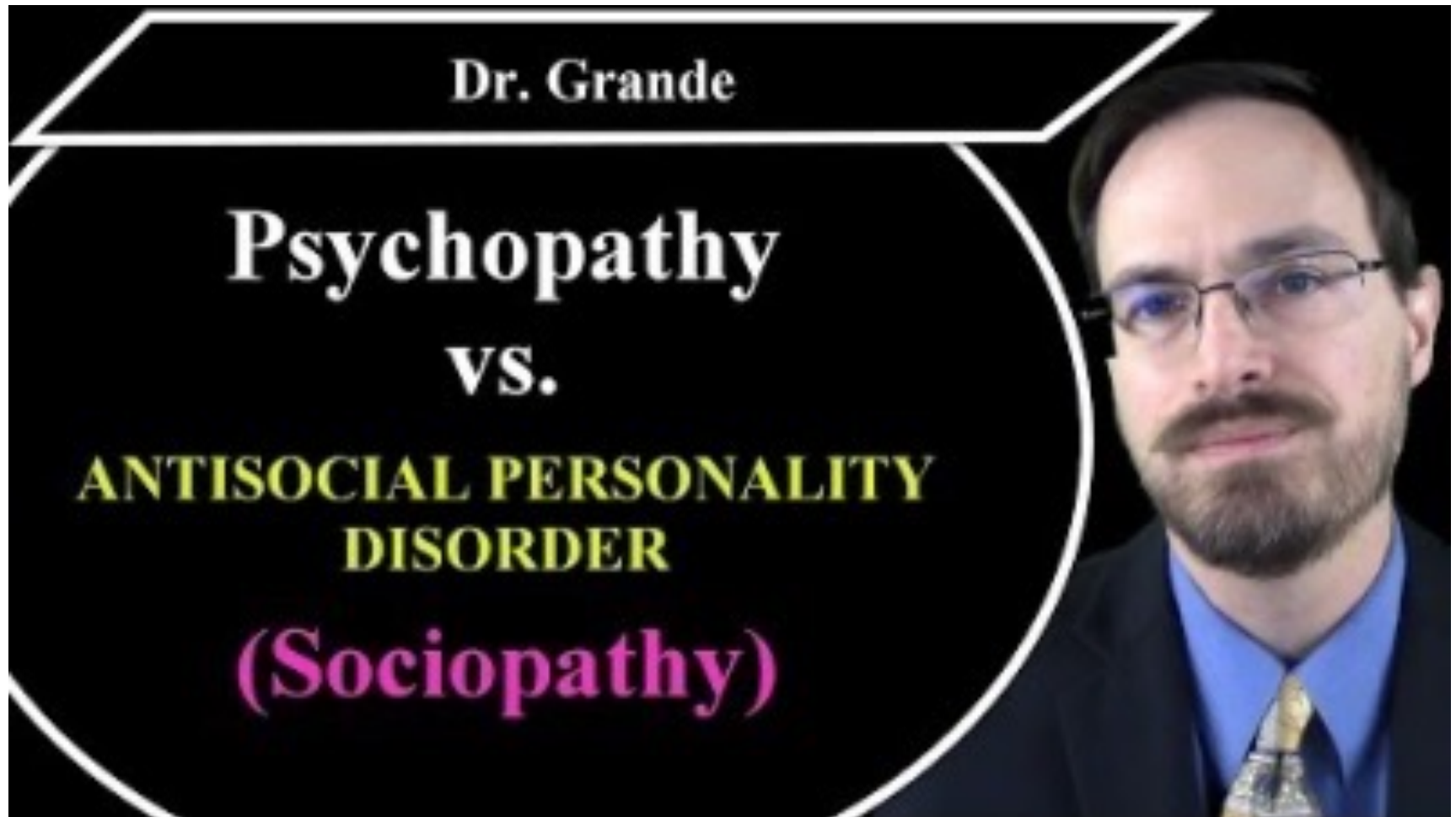
What Is A Psychopath?

- A person who demonstrates a discernible cluster of psychological, interpersonal, and neurophysiological features that distinguish him or her from the general population
 - Robert Hare: Social Predators who charm their way through life.
- Neither psychopath nor sociopath are diagnostic criteria in the DSM 5.

What Is A Psychopath?

- A Lacking:
 - Conscience
 - Empathy
- Selfish
- Callous-Unemotional Trait
- Subset of Antisocial Personality Disorder.

Psychopathy v Antisocial Personality Disorder



Antisocial Personality Disorder?

- **A. Disregard for and violation of other's rights since age 15, as indicated by one of the seven sub features:**
 1. Failure to obey laws and norms by engaging in behavior which results in criminal arrest, or would warrant criminal arrest
 2. Lying, deception, and manipulation, for profit or self-amusement,
 3. Impulsive behavior
 4. Irritability and aggression, manifested as frequently assaults others, or engages in fighting

Antisocial Personality Disorder?

5. Blatantly disregards safety of self and others,
 6. A pattern of irresponsibility and
 7. Lack of remorse for actions (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, DSM 5)
- **B. The person is at least age 18,**
 - **C. Conduct disorder was present by history before age 15**
 - **D. and the antisocial behavior does not occur in the context of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)**
 -

What Is A Psychopath?

- APD ALWAYS involves criminal behavior/violating the rights of others
 - Psychopathy does not
- Robert Hare's 3 types of psychopaths:
 - Primary psychopath
 - A true psychopath
 - Secondary psychopath
 - Severe emotional problems
 - Dys-social psychopath
 - Learned behavior from their subculture

What Is A Psychopath?

- Examples of primary psychopaths
 - Ferdinand Waldo Demara Jr.
 - The Great Impostor
 - Neville Heath
 - Charles Manson

Demara



Behavioral Descriptions

- Behavioral characteristics
 - Superficial charm
 - manipulation
 - Average to above-average intelligence
 - Friendly and outgoing
 - With a purpose
 - Display many interests
 - Verbally skillful
 - Talk their way out of anything

Behavioral Descriptions

- Psychological testing differences
 - Higher scores on intelligence tests
 - Successful and unsuccessful psychopaths

Behavioral Descriptions

- Psychopaths and mental disorders
 - Most do not exhibit symptoms of mental disorder.
 - Cool and calm under pressure
 - Some argue that psychopathy and schizophrenia are on same spectrum.

Behavioral Descriptions

- Other principal traits
 - Selfishness
 - Inability to really love or gain affection
 - They may fake it if it gains them something
 - Egocentricity
 - ALWAYS there in a psychopath
 - Very narcissistic

Behavioral Descriptions

- Flat affect
 - Unless it benefits them to show emotion
 - Emotion will be artificial and purposeful
- Do not respond in kind to acts of kindness
- Impulsive
 - A hallmark characteristic of a psychopath
 - Cyclical and not there all the time
 - BTK Killer
 - Responsible citizen, on surface, for months on end

Behavioral Descriptions

- Other principal traits
 - Disregard for truth
 - Unreliable, irresponsible, unpredictable
 - Lack of remorse or guilt
 - H H Holmes: “I never slept better in my life” before he was executed
 - Stimulation seeking

The Criminal Psychopath



The Criminal Psychopath

- Prevalence
 - About 1% of general population
 - 15 to 20% of prison population
 - Rates may be inflated
 - A lot is self-reporting
 - But maybe not, psychopaths lie a lot

The Criminal Psychopath

- Offending patterns
 - Impulsive risk takers
 - Responsible for disproportionate amount of crime
 - But many are not criminals
 - Most violent and persistent offenders
 - Sadistic and brutal murders
 - And they do not bother the psychopath
 - More sadistic than non-psychopathic criminals
 - Psychopathic rapists often do not have any sexual desires for the victim
 - Anger, vindictiveness, sadism as motives

The Criminal Psychopath

- Recidivism
 - High rates
 - You cannot fix personality disorders for the most part
 - Reoffend faster
 - Violate parole sooner
 - Adult and juvenile offenders

Psychological Measures of Psychopathy

- Psychopathy Checklist (PCL-R)
 - Most frequently used instrument
- Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version
- Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version
- P-Scan: Research Version

What Is A Psychopath?



Psychological Measures of Psychopathy

- The PCL-R
 - Distinguishing criminal psychopaths from criminal non-psychopaths
 - Risk assessment

Psychological Measures of Psychopathy

- Criticisms of the PCL-R
 - May not identify psychopaths who don't engage in criminal behavior.
 - Antisocial behavior v. criminal behavior
 - Criminal behavior as a core feature

Psychological Measures of Psychopathy

Psychopathy in Business

- Persons with psychopathic traits usually get good personnel reviews
- Corporate crimes
 - Are these related to psychopathy?

Psychopathy in Corporations?



Core Features of Psychopathy

- The meanness factor
 - Extreme arrogance
 - Defiance of authority
 - Pleasure and satisfaction without consideration for others
 - Directed at hurting others
 - Not all mean people are psychopaths, nor do they all have mental disorders

The Female Psychopath

- Less prevalent than males in both the general population and among criminals
- Lower scores on PCL-R
- Lack of realistic long-term goals
- Numerous marital relationships
- Wide range of crime

The Female Psychopath

- High levels of callousness
- Emotional abnormalities different from males, though some may be the same such as low levels of empathy and callousness.
- Relational aggression
 - Batter their spouse/significant other
- History of environmental deprivation
- History of physical and sexual victimization
- Recidivate less than male criminal psychopaths
 - This is a normal trait for all female criminals

Racial/Ethnic Differences

- Minimal differences between blacks and whites
 - Blacks were less impulsive
- No significant differences between Hispanic inmates and non-Hispanic inmates.

Juvenile Psychopathy

- Can juvenile psychopathy be identified?
 - Changing developmental patterns across lifespan, but particularly in adolescence.
 - If psychopathy is a subset of APD, it cannot occur in a juvenile by definition – subject must be 18+ years old (personalities still developing)
 - Must have conduct disorder
 - But not all conduct disorder turns into APD
 - Some features, such as impulsiveness, may be normal adolescent development.
 - Coping mechanisms in situations of abuse
 - Even if APD cannot be formally diagnosed, can we find patterns?

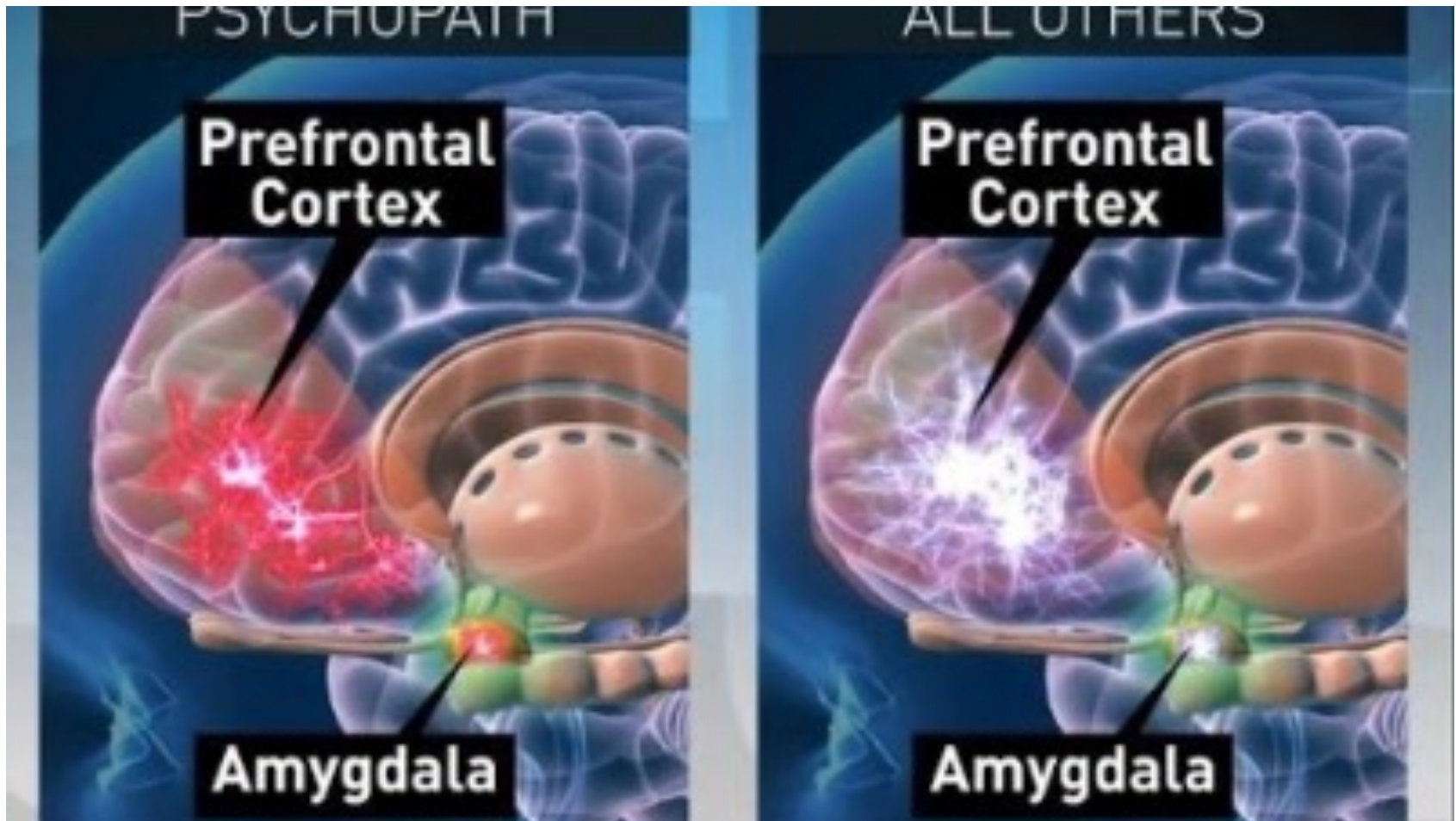
Juvenile Psychopathy

- Ethical considerations
 - Misuse of the label
 - Psychopathy is very resistant to treatment.
 - Should this label be used to send young persons to adult courts?
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Labeling theory
 - Should they get a lifelong label
 - Why try to treat them at all?
 - Hopeless cases?
 - There is a reason juveniles cannot have personality disorder diagnoses
 - Treatment options

Juvenile Psychopathy

- Measures of juvenile psychopathy
 - Psychopathy Screening Device
 - Childhood Psychopathy Scale
 - Youth Psychopathic Traits Inventory
 - Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy



Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Genetic factors
 - Temperament
 - Low arousal and fear linked to psychopathy by a lack of ability to develop empathy, guilt and consciousness.
 - Link not large and environment probably plays a strong factor as well

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Central nervous system
 - Hemisphere asymmetry and deficiency
 - Right Brain issues
 - More difficulty reading emotions in others
 - Psychopaths score lower than others on tasks requiring left brain use
 - Affects reading emotions in others

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Frontal lobe
 - Executive functions
 - Some aggression functions
 - Some research suggests that psychopaths have dysfunction in the frontal lobe
 - One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest film

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Emotional paradox?
 - Can they explain emotions, what to look for, but just not process them in the real world?
- Amygdala
 - Emotional processing
 - May be related to callous-unemotional trait
 - Anger regulation
 - Warrior Gene?
 - More on this in Chapter 5

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Peripheral nervous system
 - Autonomic
 - Responsiveness to stimuli
 - Skin conductance response
 - Low responsiveness, same if lying or telling the truth
 - polygraph

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- The dual-process model
 - At least two temperament contributions that interact with social environmental influences to produce developmental pathways that ultimately lead to psychopathy
 - Low-fear temperament
 - Do not experience fear in situations where normal persons would

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Impaired cognitive-executive functioning
 - Low impulse control
 - Socially deviant lifestyle
 - Antisocial
 - Deficit in avoidance learning
 - Accounts for high recidivism rates

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Four conclusions
 1. Psychopaths appear to be both autonomically and cortically underaroused.
 2. Psychopaths appear to be deficient in avoidance learning.

Neurobiological Factors and Psychopathy

- Four conclusions
 3. If emotional arousal can be induced, psychopaths can learn from past experiences and avoid normally painful or aversive situations.
 - how do you do this in the real world?
 4. With adequate incentives, psychopaths can learn from past experiences and avoid aversive consequences as well as anyone.

Childhood of the Psychopath

- Begins in childhood and continues throughout adulthood.
 - Hyperactivity, impulsivity, and attention problems and conduct problems
 - Parental neglect
 - Negative school experiences
- Life-course-persistent offenders
 - Rejected by mainstream peers in pre-teen years
 - Little bonding with anyone
 - Sadistic and manipulative at an early age
 - Lack insight and are impulsive

Treatment of Criminal Psychopaths

- Research indicates that adult psychopaths are not responsive to treatment.
 - Consistent with most personality disorder treatment
- Large doses of treatment are needed.
 - Not something that can be done in correctional setting
- Evaluation is difficult due to skillful manipulation.
 - Can con psychologists and parole boards into thinking they are better
 - Therapy for psychopaths may have a negative effect and actually make them worse

Treatment of Criminal Psychopaths

- Children and adolescents
 - Distinct sets of emotional and cognitive deficits that lead to violent and antisocial behavior
 - Cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, and eclectic interventions (there isn't much left)
 - The scope, type, intensity, and duration of the treatment, and the training of the staff applying the intervention
 - Takes a long time and is very expensive per person treated
 - Still has about a 45% failure rate

Treatment of Criminal Psychopaths



Additional Resources

- Videos

- Sociopath vs Psychopath – What's the Difference? (2018) Infographics. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAjAMYaiWnI>
- Dr Hare Discusses the Diagnosis of Psychopathy. (2012) E. Orr. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mZJ0p5ZXKQ>
- Car Manufacturer Scandals – Ford Pinto. (2023) The Automobile. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgN7UbiNt_E
- What are the Treatment Options for Psychopaths? (2011) Gift from Within. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGTqJycMBW0>
- The Man Who Had More Than 10 Identities and Cheated the World. (2018) Bright Side. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOEZbLfQQxM&t=18s>
- Inside the Mind of a Murdering Psychopath. (2014) ABC News. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX1oM_b3iW8&t=1s
- Psychopaths, Can their Brains be fixed? (2014) CBC News. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cz7CjeVmKI>
- Psychopath Test. (2018) Infographics. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybM6nU9EU7Y>
- Psychopathy v APD. (2018) Dr Todd Grande. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQSzH10SjqY&t=14s>