

Working with Criminally Sophisticated
Juveniles: Managing Psychopathy and Risk
within the Juvenile Justice System

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Learning Objectives

- Identify psychopathic features in juvenile clients
- Differentiate between psychopathy, conduct disorder, and trauma symptoms/diagnoses
- Identify when traditional therapeutic interventions are contraindicated

Some Background...

SB823

Psychopathy

Measures

What is SB823?

- In 2020, California enacted SB 823/AB 1868, which aimed to:
 - Phase out the close of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
 - Allocate resources to county jurisdictions for supervision and service delivery to juveniles involved in the justice system.
 - Create a new agency to provide oversight and accountability of the realigned system.
 - Raises the age of local jurisdiction and confinement to 25 for serious cases.
 - Establish a new sentencing track for the realigned population.

What is Psychopathy?

- A “mental disorder” especially marked by egocentric and antisocial activity, a lack of remorse for one's actions, an absence of empathy for others, and often criminal tendencies.

Psychopathy Measures

- Psychopathy Check Lists (PCL-):
 - Revised (Adult)
 - Screening Version (Adult)
 - Youth Version (Ages 12 - 18)
- Psychopathic Personality Inventory (PPI)
 - Adult measure
- Antisocial Process Screening Device (APSD)
 - Ages 6 - 13

Psychopathy Measures

- Most adult measures utilize a two-factor approach:
 - Primary: Callous-Unemotional (Interpersonal-Affective) traits
 - Emotional insensitivity
 - Disregard for others
 - Secondary: Impulsive/Lifestyle (Social Deviance/Conduct Problems)
 - Impulsivity
 - Behavioral deviancy
 - Inflated self-importance

PCL:R – The Gold Standard

- Glibness-Superficial Charm
- Grandiose Sense of Self Worth
- Need for Stimulation
- Pathological Lying
- Conning-Manipulative
- Lack of Remorse or Guilt
- Shallow Affect
- Callous-Lack of Empathy
- Parasitic Lifestyle
- Poor Behavioral Controls
- Promiscuous Sexual Behavior
- Early Behavioral Problems
- Lack of Realistic, Long-Term Goals
- Impulsivity
- Irresponsibility
- Failure to Accept Responsibility
- Many Marital Relationships
- Juvenile Delinquency
- Revocation of Conditional Release
- Criminal Versatility

PCL:YV

- Impression Management
- Grandiose Sense of Self-Worth
- Stimulation Seeking
- Pathological Lying
- Manipulation for Personal Gain
- Lack of Remorse
- Shallow Affect
- Callous/Lack of Empathy
- Parasitic Orientation
- Poor Anger Control
- Impersonal Sexual Behavior
- Early Behavior Problems
- Lacks Goals
- Impulsivity
- Irresponsibility
- Failure to Accept Responsibility
- Unstable Interpersonal Relationships
- Serious Criminal Behavior
- Serious Violations of Conditional Release
- Criminal Versatility

Psychopathy Measures

However, more recent research have moved to a four-facet approach:

- Interpersonal
 - Impression management
 - Grandiose sense of self-worth
 - Pathological lying
 - Manipulation for personal gain
- Affective
 - Lack of remorse
 - Shallow affect
 - Callous/lack of empathy
 - Failure to accept responsibility
- Lifestyle
 - Stimulation seeking
 - Parasitic orientation
 - Lacks goals
 - Impulsivity
 - Irresponsibility
- Antisocial
 - Poor anger control
 - Early behavior problems
 - Serious criminal behavior
 - Serious violations of conditional release
 - Criminal versatility

Clinical Considerations...

Differential Diagnoses

Trauma and other Factors

Therapy vs Risk Mitigation

Clinical vs Colloquial Terms...

Clinical

- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Conduct Disorder
- Antisocial Personality Disorder

Colloquial

- Psychopathy
- Sociopathy

Always Remember...

Psychopath and Sociopath are
not diagnostic terms!!

Differential Diagnoses

○ Conduct Disorder

○ Antisocial Personality Disorder

○ Oppositional Defiant Disorder

○ Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Other Factors to Consider

Direct Trauma

- Abuse
 - Physical
 - Mental/Emotional
 - Sexual
- Violence (non-familial)
- Loss

Observed Trauma

- Familial/Domestic Violence
- Community Violence
 - Gang
 - School
 - Interpersonal

Clinical Examples...

“Dexter”

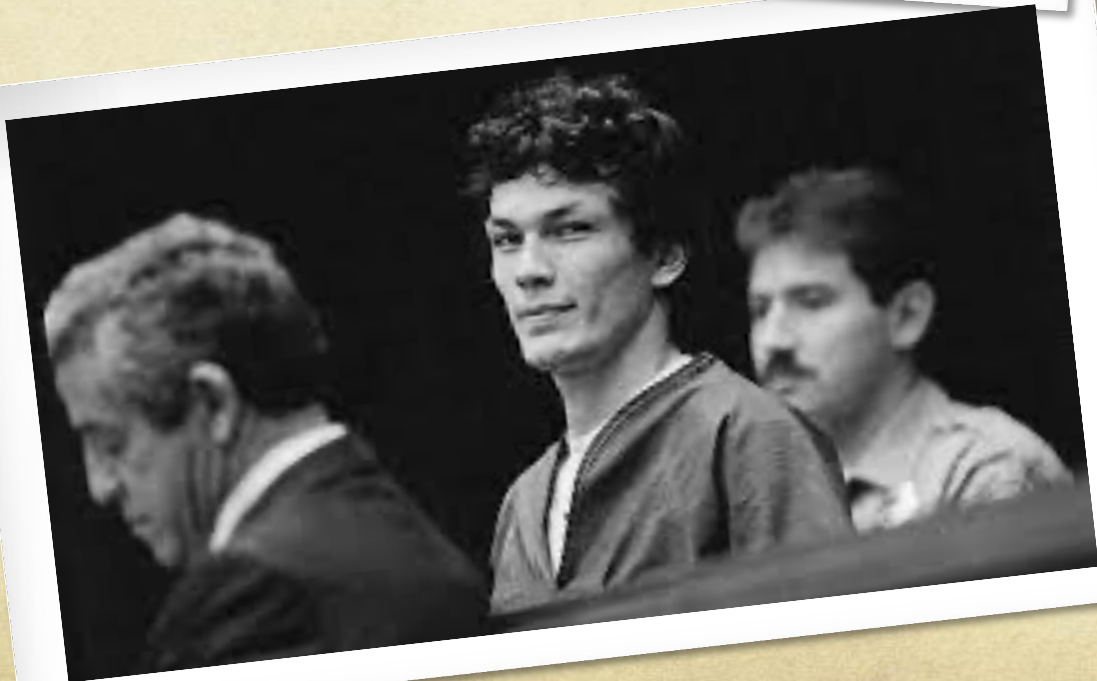
- Clinical Info
- Discussion re: how probation status, court participation, and psychosocial factors contributed to progress through “treatment”
- How lack of clinical insight impacted the balance between treatment and risk mitigation





“Nightstalker”

- Clinical info
- Discussion: How underlying clinical diagnoses, insight, and collaboration with probation impacted progress in risk mitigation
- How treatment interventions increased criminogenic sophistication and utilization of risk mitigation





“Bundy”

- Clinical information
- Discussion: How consultation and collaboration with probation/custody staff, assessment, and clinical presentation determined treatment vs risk mitigation.
- How treatment interventions could increase criminogenic sophistication



Questions?