

Developmental Pathways Toward Childhood Psychopathy: The Potential for Effective Interventions

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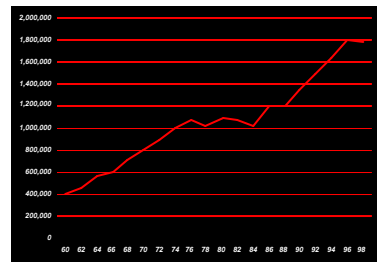
Juvenile Offenders

- 1) Juvenile crime - the problem
- 2) Big 5 factors
- 3) Psychopathy
- 4) Treatment

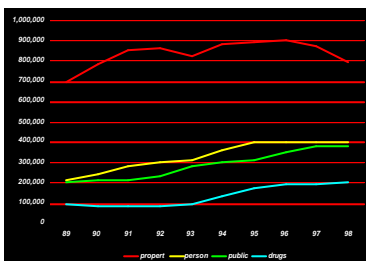
The Problem - Juvenile Crime

- Juvenile crime rose very steeply in the 1980s and continued through the mid 1990s. Girls made up a larger portion of juvenile crime than in the past.
- "Need to get tough on crime "

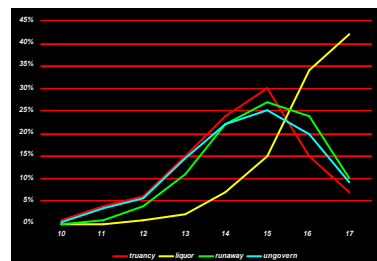
Juvenile Courts Handled More than 4X as many cases than in 1960 (OJJDP)



Caseloads between 1989-1998 for 4 major offense categories (OJJDP)



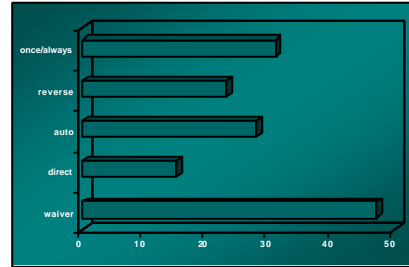
The volume of petitioned truancy, runaway, and ungovernability cases peak at age 15 (OJJDP)



Concern about how to handle the drastic increase in offending

- Greater levels of detention and less tolerance for repeat juvenile offending.

Mechanisms for Transfer



Personality

Personality in Children and Adolescents

- Does it exist?
- How does it connect with pathology?

Personality in Childhood and Adolescence

- Objectives
 - Review research on early emerging differences from infancy through adolescence
 - Links between temperament and personality
 - Structure of personality in children
 - Integration of competing models
 - Stability
 - Processes involved in continuity
 - "Goodness of fit" personality and environment
 - Connection to both "positive" and "negative" outcomes
 - Psychopathy
 - Interventions

Description of Personality in Children and Adolescents

- Thomas & Chess (1963)
 - Temperamental styles
 - Observable in infancy and early childhood
- Temperament and Personality
 - Different
 - Linked
 - Is personality

Definitions of Temperament

Thomas & Chess (1964)	Inherited individual differences that interact with motives and the environment (p.171)
Rothbart & Derryberry (1981)	Individual differences in reactivity and regulation assumed to have a constitutional basis (p.40)
Kagan & Snidman (1991)	Initial, inherited profiles that develop into different envelopes of psychological outcomes (p. 856)
Buss (1995)	Inherited personality traits appear first 2 years and endure (p. 49)
Goldsmith (1996)	Individual differences in reactivity and regulation assumed to have a constitutional basis (p. 221)



p. 469

Resurgence of personality research

- There has been a resurgence of trait psychology, and especially the preponderance of the 5 factor model has:
 - Challenged the fact that personality could not be assessed in children
 - And challenged the notion that it is not biological

John et al. (1994)

- “Little 5” predict externalizing problems in children.
- **McCrae** and colleagues have argued against the artificial distinction between temperament and personality because there is strong empirical evidence that links the 2. Also the defining characteristics of temperament also apply to personality -
- **Early observability, genetic basis, and pervasive impact on a range of behaviors**

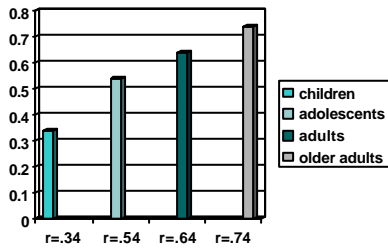
Personality and temperament

- **Caspi** – personality and temperament seem more alike than different
- Frick (2004) – much of this is separated by discipline

Stability of Personality Across Time

- There is **continuity** and **change**
- Roberts & Del Vecchio (2000) k = 152 longitudinal studies
- Challenged the claim that personality was “set like plaster” (test-retest)
- r = .34 childhood
- r = .54 young adulthood
- r = .64 by age 30
- r = .74 ages 50-70

Step-like stability to personality



Personality and Life Outcomes

- The importance of studying personality is that certain traits will be able to **forecast** certain outcomes for children and adolescents
- Quite often in psychology we focused on the **negative aspects** of personality

Big 5 and Positive and Negative Outcomes

Trait	Positive Outcome	Negative Outcome
Extraversion	Social competence; promotes good health Better romance/ I-t relationships	Antisocial behavior; callousness
Neuroticism	Conscience development; guilt when expected	Poor relationships; relation conflict; relation abuse; less competent parenting; risk for unemployment
Conscientiousness	School adjustment; educational and occupational achievement; job performance	obsessive
Agreeableness	Social competence; positive parenting; responsible parenting	Exposure to risks
Openness	Exploring; friendliness; academic achievement	Exposure to risks

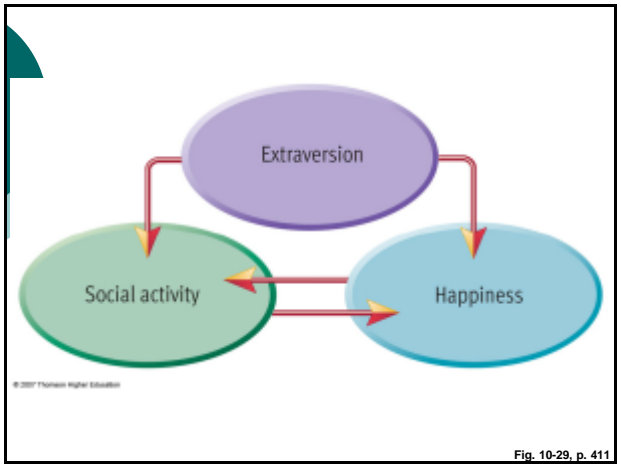


Fig. 10-29, p. 411



Models of Personality and their connection to pathology

- One of the questions that has fueled scholarly and popular interest in temperament is whether children with particular temperaments are at greater risk for negative outcomes –
- including psychopathology

Thomas and Chess

- Suggested that early individual differences could set off a chain of transactions between the child and the environment that could ultimately end with clinical disorders.

Connection between big 5 and disorders

- Shiner & Caspi note that while individual differences in personality shape individuals' adaptation over time, childhood personality also plays a key role in the development of psychopathology

Personality and pathology

- Most of the current research on personality and pathology simply documents correlations between temperament or personality traits and aspects of psychopathology, without articulating how the 2 domains may be connected.
- Shiner & Caspi present conceptual models.

Personality and pathology

<u>Model Name</u>	<u>Path (or relation) to pathology</u>
Spectrum	Pathology is an extreme form of personality (viewed along a continuum)
Vulnerability	Personality sets in motion and is the cause of pathology
Resilience	Personality may protect against or buffer against pathology
Pathoplastic	May influence the form of the disorder even if it is not the cause
Scar	Pathology affects personality change

Support for the models

- There is some support for each of the models but **vulnerability** and **spectrum** models have the most support at this time.
- Behavioral inhibition (anxiety, depression)
- Behavioral disinhibition (externalizing problems)

Personality and pathology

- Vulnerability and spectrum models might work together in concert.

Connection Between the Big 5 and DSM-IV

- Some researchers have suggested that the personality subfactors are ***too broad*** to capture all the interesting variation in children's personality, and distinctions at the level of more specific, ***lower order traits*** are necessary.
- Thus, some researchers (Lynam, 2007; Salekin et al., 2005) have examined psychopathy via the Big 5
- Will return to this later.

Connecting the Big 5 to Specific Childhood Disorders

Externalizing (Extraversion, low Conscientiousness, low Agreeableness)	Internalizing (high Conscientiousness, high Neuroticism)
ODD	Separation Anxiety
CD	Depression
ADHD	Generalized Anxiety OCD
Substance Use	Eating Disorders

Processes Underlying Continuity and Change

- Children's early temperament and personality show both substantial ***continuity*** and ***change***
- This finding regarding stability and change requires explanation

Stability and Change

- What processes underlie stability and change?
- In part the answer lies with contextual factors

Thomas and Chess

- Thomas and Chess raised the question in their early work
- "a trait could yield a variety of outcomes, depending on the ***'goodness of fit'*** between the child's temperament and the environment in which the youth [flourished, languished, or simply did okay]"

Factors that facilitate stability

- Elaboration
- 1) learning processes and environmental elicitation
- 2) environmental construal, social comparisons
- 3) environmental selection and manipulation
- Biological and experiential-learning sources of influence may serve to elaborate an initial disposition over time so that it increasingly organizes thought, emotion, and action.

Personality and Stability

- While the theoretical models are in place, research is needed about each of these processes in relation to different temperamental or personality styles.
- What do we now know?

Other factors

- Other processes promoting continuity and change range from genetic or biological processes, to more broad contextual processes involving classrooms and neighborhoods

Genetic Influence (Relationships)

- ○ 2 strangers
- ○ siblings
- ○ dizygotic twins
- ○ parent & child
- monozygotic twins

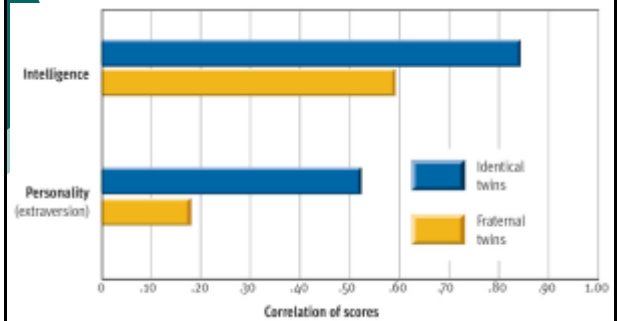


Figure 3.30 Twin studies of intelligence and personality

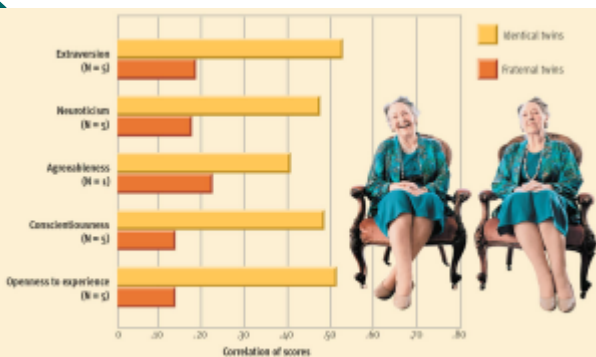


Figure 12.14 Twin studies of personality

Genetics

- MZ show that there is stability based on genetics; however there is also **change**
- Whereas personality **stability** appears to be **due to genetic** factors, **change** appears to be due to **environmental influences**.

Permutations of Personality

- Another factor that could be related to stability and change may have to do with **permutations of traits** and other characteristics that accompany personality
- The child's **"mix" or "makeup"** of personality characteristics
- **Allport (1937)** "dynamic organization determine their unique adjustment to their environment"

Allport (moderates regarding stability and change)

- IQ – **brighter children** find it easier to handle challenging aspects of their personality (longitudinal study has shown that highly neurotic children were able to reduce shyness over a 6 year span)
- Relative **success at school** can shape ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving (2-way street)

Other factors impacting personality

- **Parenting, neighborhood context, schools** etc.
- This is at the heart of the **"goodness of fit"**
- It has been found that parenting practices moderate links between temperament and higher externalizing problems.

These parenting practices include

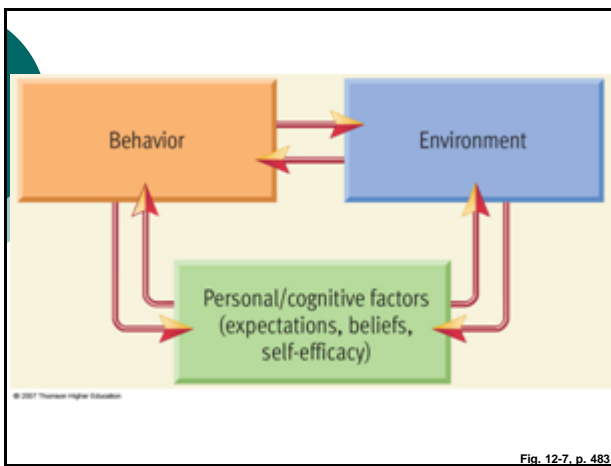
- **Unskilled** disciplining practices
- **Negativity** toward the child
- Lack of **monitoring** and control
- Lack of **warmth**
- Parenting affects **attachment** which affects emotion regulation and behavior
- Not surprisingly, skillful, warm parenting may protect highly negative and hard-to-manage youth from developing externalizing problems.

Neighborhoods

- Broader context such as the **neighborhoods** in which children grow.
- **Teacher and Neighborhood warmth** moderate the links between poor self-control and criminal involvement
- Impulsive youth **in better schools with positive neighborhoods show less criminal involvement** than similar youth in poor neighborhoods who tend to drop out of school. (moderate)

Taken together,

- These findings provide clues that **broader contexts** are, in fact, important moderators and help chart the course of personality development.



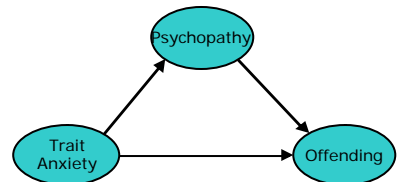
Psychopathy

- Some important issues
 - Developmental appropriateness
 - Comorbidity
 - Stability
 - Prediction

Psychopathy and Anxiety Study

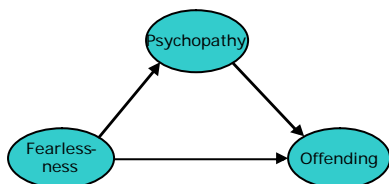
Tested 3 Prominent Developmental Models

- Model 1 (Trait)



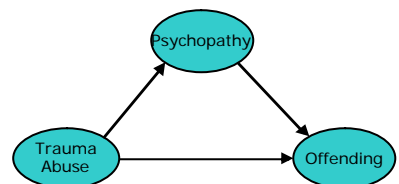
Tested 3 Prominent Developmental Models

- Model 2 (Fearlessness)



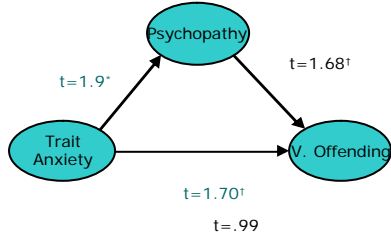
Tested 3 Prominent Developmental Models

- Model 3 (Trauma)



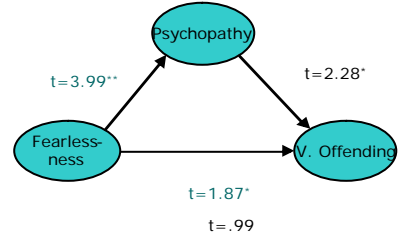
Tests of Mediation - Violent

○ Model 1 (Trait)



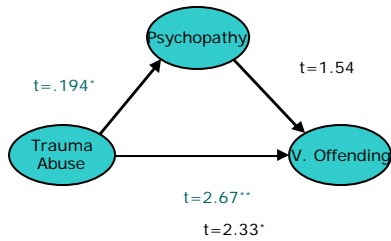
Tests of Mediation – Violent

○ Model 2 (Fearlessness)

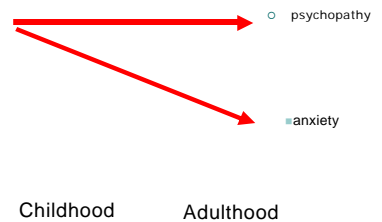


Tests of Mediation -- Violent

○ Model 3 (Trauma)



Changes in Comorbidity

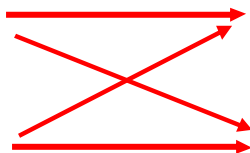


Psychopathy and Change

Psychopathy in children

- Few studies have examined protective factors for youth with psychopathy.

Stability – Possible pathways



Childhood

Adulthood

CJB – special issue (in press)

- Parenting
- Peers (school friend)
- Social Competence
 - Salekin & Lochman (in press)
 - Lynam, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber (in press)
 - Munoz et al. (in press)
 - Pardini & Loeber (in press)
 - Larrson, Viding, & Plomin (in press)
 - Barry, Barry, Lochman et al (in press)

Attitudinal Variables

- Does it matter what the youth thinks about their future?

Purpose

- Test whether
- ***motivation to change*** at time 1 affects offending rates at time 2

Sample

- 145 adolescents (Mage = 15.22 years)
- Racially less mixed.
- Representative crimes included theft, robbery and assault

Concepts

- ***Psychopathy***
 - CPS (Lynam, 2005) 55-item self report
- ***Motivation to Change***
 - RST-I (Salekin, 2004). Semi-structured interview and rating scale designed to measure risk, maturity, and amenability to treatment.
 - ***Procedure*** – 2 time points (3 year follow-up)

Results

- Good dispersion
- Psychopathy was correlated with offending ($r = .182$ general, $r = .193$ violent)
- Psychopathy and motivation to change were uncorrelated ($r = -.033$)

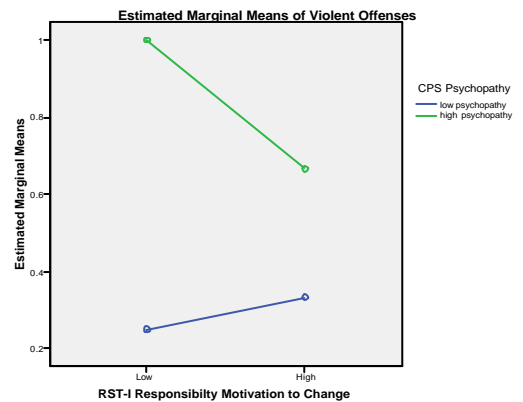
Regressions – Protective Factor

- Age
- Gender
- Psychopathy
- Motivation to Change
- Psychopathy x Motivation to Change

motivation to change

- As a protective factor?

Yes!



Conclusion

- Motivation to change (high) was found to be a protective variable for psychopathy (high) when assessing violent offending.

Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths**
 - Two time points and offending that was assessed prospectively (3 years out)
 - Assesses attitude
- **Limitations**
 - Small mixed sample
 - We do not know for certain that they desisted

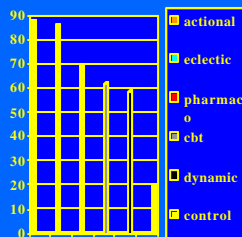
Treatment Amenability

- This idea has been, and should remain, one of the arguments for treating, rather than punishing juvenile offenders.

Psychopathy-Treatment

- Salekin (2002). Psychopathy and therapeutic pessimism: Clinical lore or clinical reality? Clinical Psychology Review

Meta-analysis results for psychopathy intervention studies



- Actional N = 1 (20)
- Eclectic N = 2 (62)
- Pharm N = 2 (10)
- CBT N = 5 (246)
- Dynamic N = 17 (88)
- Control N = 8 (287)

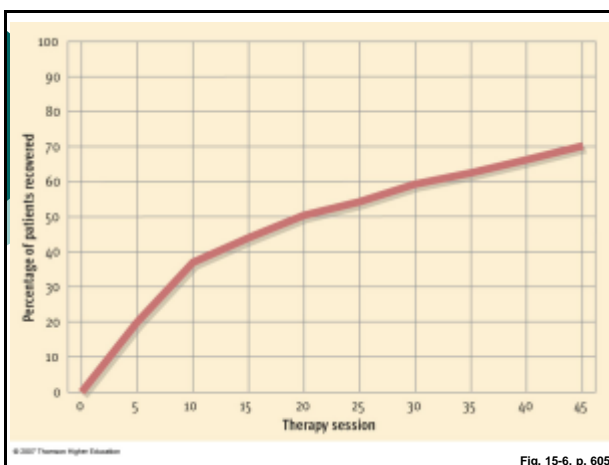


Fig. 15-6, p. 605

Thank you.

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