



Neurocriminologist Identifies a Key Piece of the Puzzle of ?Successful? Psychopaths

June 21, 2016

June 21, 2016 - PRESSADVANTAGE -

The majority of studies on psychopathy are conducted on people who are incarcerated in prisons and jails. However, there is now ample evidence that people with psychopathic traits are not found only in prisons. They are living among us and can be found in all walks of life: among our neighbors, family members, co-workers, and the professionals we see.

However, there is very little published information on people with psychopathic traits who are not arrested, who are often called ?successful? psychopaths. The puzzling question is how these people manage to operate in society without being caught. Are they similar to or different from the incarcerated people who are more typically included in studies of psychopathic offenders? Dr. Robert Schug, a neurocriminologist and forensic psychologist at the California State University and a member of the Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Foundation, found some answers in his and Dr. Adrian Raine?s groundbreaking study on the topic of successful psychopathy.

In a discussion organized by the Aftermath Foundation, Dr. Schug shares the key questions that motivated this research study: ?Do all psychopaths think alike? What about the ones who get caught versus the ones

who don't??

Dr. Schug and his colleagues examined these questions through a neuropsychological lens. They studied the functioning of men and women (ages 19 to 61) recruited from temporary employment agencies in Los Angeles on a battery of tests. All the participants were evaluated on a clinical measure of psychopathy, the Psychopathy Checklist. The high scorers were then divided into two groups: those who had never been convicted of any crimes (the successful psychopathy group) and those who had at least one conviction (the unsuccessful psychopathy group).

Results showed that the "successful" psychopaths performed better than the unsuccessful ones on executive functioning, that is the ability to plan and carry out goal directed actions, monitor performance, and correct one's behavior as needed. Quite unexpectedly, in a few areas of executive functioning, successful psychopaths even performed better than non-psychopathic (healthy) adults.

According to Dr. Kosson, President of the Aftermath Foundation, "Almost everything we know about people with psychopathic traits is based on offenders who have gotten caught and are spending time in prisons, jails or forensic hospitals. We know that we also need to understand how psychopathy operates in the community, and there have been an increasing number of studies that investigate college students and people in the community who report having psychopathic traits. However, because these self-reports are only weakly related to clinical indices, we can only learn a little bit about clinical psychopathy by studying the self-reports of college students. Dr. Schug's study is one of only a very few studies that examine clinical features of psychopaths in a community sample, and its findings are very important for understanding psychopathic people in the community."

For more information about the findings, please see this video of Dr. Schug discussing his study.

###

For more information about Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Foundation, contact the company here: Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Foundation Dr. David Kosson 847-578-3305 Moving-on-support@rosalindfranklin.edu Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Foundation P.O. Box 618 North Chicago, IL USA 60064

Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Foundation

The goal of Aftermath is to reduce the negative impact of psychopaths on individuals and society. Aftermath supports research and education regarding the traits and characteristics of psychopathy and its impact on victims.

Website: <http://aftermath-surviving-psychopathy.org/>

Email: Moving-on-support@rosalindfranklin.edu

Phone: 847-578-3305



Powered by PressAdvantage.com