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Strange Moralities
Vicarious Emotion and Moral Emotions in Machiavellian and Psychopathic Personality Styles

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Not all manipulative characters of dubious morality are detected by the criminal justice system. Individuals with psychopathic and Machiavellian tendencies are well represented in the general population. Using McIlwain's cascading constraints model of personality styles we suggest that the different affective deficits of psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian individuals are precursors to deficient and strategic empathy and that empathy deficits in turn predispose these individuals to develop *strange moralities* with little concern for harming another, for which we offer detailed evidence, including a new scale. We asked these dark personalities to make decisions in moral dilemma scenarios (our variants of the Trolley Problem) and to give their rationales. We show the role played by callous unemotionality and blunted, strategic empathy in the display of strange moralities where others are viewed as objects in self-serving accounts cloaked in moral language.

Au: Abstracts should not cite references, so years for McIlwain deleted here. If this needs further revision, please advise.

INTRODUCTION

Psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people are relatively amoral, charming manipulators. They have affective deficiencies in the scope and intensity of

directly experienced emotion. Psychopathically inclined people have specific deficits in discerning emotions in others, whereas Machiavellians are seen as having a more across-the-board affective muting. Does this also extend to the emotion that they feel on behalf of others—termed *vicarious emotion*? How does empathic capacity relate to morality?

First, we offer a conceptual analysis and a psychometric picture of the overlap and distinctness of the two personality styles in previous research and offer new findings of our own. We then define personality style in terms of *cascading constraints* (McIlwain, 2007, 2008, 2010b). Our focus is on callous-unemotional traits as we see these as most relevant to morality, and we establish that these unemotional traits are shared by psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian individuals.

Our original studies illustrate the cascading constraints approach: Study 1 reveals that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people share callou unemotionality; in Study 2a we then link this to a lack of empathy; Study 2b reveals that these individuals also share a strategic use of empathy; and Study 3 links empathy deficiencies to the manifestation of *strange moralities*. We argue that strange moralities—moralities that are self-centered in focus and *harm-blind* in terms of outcome for the other—in psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people arise as a result of affective deficits that impair the full development of empathy and impede the development of a sense of others as subjects who should not be harmed. We use our original variant of a moral dilemma scenario not only exploring the decisions made by psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people but also considering in detail the rationales offered. Looking at the words as they are spoken enables us to reveal subtle differences in the moralities of psychopathic and Machiavellian personality styles.

DEFINING THE PERSONALITY STYLES: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

Psychopathy

Early accounts of psychopathy outlined the moral deficiencies of psychopathic characters and the diverse views as to their origin, with references to "innate moral depravity" (Rush, 1812/1947, cited in Smith, 1984) and "acquired moral insanity" (Prichard, 1835, cited in Benn, 1999). By the turn of the nineteenth century, psychopathically inclined people were portrayed as immoral savages without insight into their condition and beyond remediation, requiring asylum for their own safety and that of others (Krafft-Ebing, 1905/2007). Contemporary accounts also suggest that psychopathic people lack moral responsibility, viewing them as unable to form other-regarding moral beliefs or to act for prudential reasons—unable to act in the present moment in ways to secure what they believe to be in their long-term best interest (Adshead, 1999; Fields, 1996). However, whether they lack moral responsibility, not all psychopathically inclined people are recidivist criminals or serial killers. Psychopathic inclinations are at similar levels in the incarcerated and nonincarcerated North American populations; around 1% of the general population show levels of these attributes similar to those seen in incarcerated psychopathic

Au: Smith, Benn, Prichard, and Rush citations not in ref list.

populations (Hare, 1996, 1999; Kirkman, 2002). Psychopathically inclined people are not inevitably detected by the criminal justice system. Hare (1998) suggests that those who escape formal detection can still be charming, if violent, manipulators. He describes them in the following way:

> [These] individuals [,] … lacking in conscience and feeling for others, find it easy to use charm, manipulation, intimidation and violence to control others and to satisfy their own selfish needs. They … form a significant proportion of persistent criminals, drug dealers, spouse and child abusers, swindlers and con men, mercenaries, corrupt politicians, unethical lawyers, terrorists, cult leaders, black marketers, gang members, and radical political activists. (pp. 128–129)

Many psychopathically inclined people have no criminal records and are well represented in the business and corporate world (Kirkman, 2002), where a lack of morality may be of benefit when unaccompanied by vivid displays of antisocial, criminal or self-defeating behavior. Many so-called successful psychopaths may thus evade detection and seem to function normally in society.

Until recently, research into psychopathy has focused primarily on incarcerated male offenders (although see Belmore & Quinsey, 1994; Ishikawa, Raine, Lencz, Bihrle, & Lacasse, 2001). We are interested in examining psychopathic tendencies in the general population and accordingly adopt a dimensional approach, seeing psychopathy as a matter of degree. We focus on personality traits rather than antisocial behaviors, following Cleckley's (1941/1964) work, which pioneered a personality-based conception of psychopathy. His empirical case studies and the personality profiles developed over years of clinical work drew attention to the following personality traits as well as rash and antisocial behavior: superficial charm in the presence of good *intelligence* and an absence of delusions and other signs of irrational thinking; absence of *nervousness* or psychoneurotic manifestations; unreliability; untruthfulness and insincerity; lack of remorse and shame; poor judgment and failure to learn by experience; pathologic egocentricity and incapacity for love; general poverty in major affective responses; specific loss of insight; and unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations.

While the early *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 1st ed. (*DSM-I*: APA, 1952) was consistent with Cleckley's conception and had emphasized personality features, the current *DSM-IV* (APA, 1994) focuses on defining antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) according to strictly observable behaviors to promote reliability (Lilienfeld, 1994; Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996). However, we suggest that psychopathic tendencies characterize only a subset of people with ASPD and that, in turn, only a subset of those with psychopathic tendencies show callous unemotionality (as shown in Figure 6.1). Callous unemotionality refers to "characteristics of interpersonal callousness such as a lack of guilt or remorse, an absence of empathy and compassion for others, and shallow and constricted emotions that interfere with the formation of meaningful attachments" (Kerig & Stellwagen, 2009, p. 1). Since there will also be those with callous-unemotional traits who do not exhibit marked antisocial behaviors, we think it is important to distinguish between the

Au: "Callous unemotionality" doesn't need a hyphen; it needs one only when it's serving as an adjective (e.g., "callous-unemotional traits").

Au: Kerig and Stellwagen is 2010 in ref list.

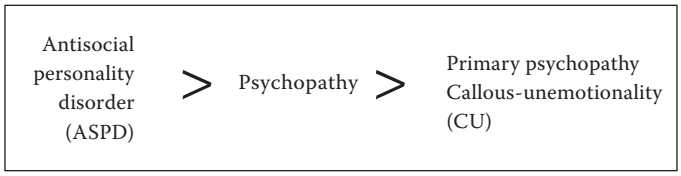

Figure 6.1 Clarifying the relations among ASPD, psychopathy, and callous unemotionality.

personality traits associated with psychopathy as a personality style and the antisocial behaviors that associate with an array of personality disorders.

With regard to assessing psychopathic tendencies in the general community, Lilienfeld (1994) notes that the earlier measures based on observable behavior are likely to overlook successful psychopaths, while Hill (2003) suggests that more behavioral definitions are overinclusive and may include those with ASPD. A focus on observable behaviors also ignores culturally different motivations for antisocial behavior (Lilienfield, 1994, p. 23), potentially confounding personality predispositions with the effects of long-term institutionalization (Kirkman, 2002).

Hare has also contributed to the psychometric assessment of psychopathy. In 1980, he developed the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL) and later the revised version of the scale (PCL-R; Hare, 1991). The PCL-R was found to show two distinct factors. The first factor assessed callous unemotionality and predatory aggression (not necessarily physical), including items to tap pathological lying and emotional poverty. The second factor comprised items addressing antisocial, impulsive behaviors and is closer to the *DSM-IV* (APA, 1994) diagnostic criteria for ASPD. These two factors echo the distinction made by Karpman (1948), who first distinguished *primary* and *secondary* psychopathy. Recent research with the PCL-R shows some researchers arguing for a four-factor solution (Neumann, Hare, & Newman, 2007) and others suggesting the data support either a two-factor or a four-factor solution (Bishopp & Hare, 2008). The PCL-R, while a comprehensive tool involving an interview and a review of collaborative data, was not designed for use with nonincarcerated samples.

To assess larger general-community samples, researchers have developed a number of self-report measures of psychopathic tendencies, such as the Self-Report Psychopathy Scale (LSRP; Levenson, Kiehl, & Fitzpatrick, 1995). The LSRP was designed to measure primary and secondary psychopathy, mirroring the PCL-R factors 1 and 2, respectively. This divide between primary and secondary psychopathy appears to be stable across different measurement scales and across time (Mealey, 1995). For example, in a longitudinal study using a broadband measure of normal personality traits (Multi-dimensional Personality Questionnaire; Tellegen, 1982), Blonigen, Hicks, Krueger, Patrick, and Iacono (2006) found two broad factors, *fearless dominance* and *impulsive antisociality*, and suggested that these "may reflect separable trait dimensions of personality with distinct etiologic processes" (p. 92). Indeed, twin studies show evidence that two allied risk factors for psychopath—callousness and neuroticis—are both highly heritable and have a high degree of genetic independence (see Viding, 2004, for discussion). Viding suggests

Au: Tellegen 1982 not in ref list.

that those high in callousness show distinct neurocognitive profiles (e.g., showing emotion processing abnormalities) and distinct patterns of offending: Psychopathic people who are callous start acting against others earlier and are more versatile, showing an emphasis on predatory rather than reactive violence. Frick (1995) and Frick, Cornell, Bodin, Dane, Barry, and Loney (2003) also note that only a subset of children with conduct disorder exhibit the interpersonal characteristics of psychopathy, which are important indicators of future problem behavior.

Machiavellianism

Another personality style marked by a certain affective coolness is Machiavellianism. The concept of the Machiavellian arose from Christie and Geis's (1970) psychological interpretations of the writings of Florentine diplomat Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527). His political and social commentaries *The Prince* (Machiavelli, 1513/2003) and *The Discourses* (Machiavelli, 1513/1970) advocate expediency, duplicity, and opportunism while maintaining power and influence in society. The delicate balance required of an individual between the socially cooperative, "what you see is what you get" openness and a more power-oriented willingness to manipulate appearances and strategically to shift tactics can be directly observed in Machiavelli's *The Prince,* where he states of a leader, "It will be well for him to seem and, actually, to be merciful, faithful, humane, frank and religious. But he should preserve a disposition which will make a reversal of conduct possible in case the need arises" (p. 57). Christie and Geis (1970) were the first psychologists to study Machiavellianism as a personality variant. They identified four characteristics of a Machiavellian manipulator: (1) a relative lack of empathy in interpersonal relationships (it is easier to manipulate one viewed as an object than one with whom there is emotional attachment); (2) a lack of concern with conventional morality (a utilitarian view of interactions with others is optimal for manipulation); (3) a lack of gross psychopathology (objective reality testing is not muddied); and (4) low ideological commitments with an emphasis on getting things done.

Using excerpts from *The Prince* and *The Discourses,* Christie and Geis developed a number of self-report scales (Mach II, Mach IV, Mach V) to measure participants' agreement with Machiavelli's statements, such as, "Anyone who completely trusts anyone else is asking for trouble." The research reported in this chapter uses the earlier Mach II, which includes the original 71 items and permits detailed analysis of the subscales; in contrast, the later Mach IV includes only 20 of these items. Three subscales in the Mach II assess the following: (1) views, whether others are portrayed as vain, self-deluded, and out for themselves (e.g., "It is safer to assume most people have a vicious streak"); (2) tactics like flattery and deceit that expediently take advantage of those human weaknesses (e.g., "It is wise to flatter important people"); and (3) morality, which justifies actions with beliefs such as, "Others would do the same if given the chance" (e.g., "There is no point in keeping a promise if it is to your advantage to break it"). High and low scorers on these tests are often referred to in the literature as high and low Machs, respectively.

In line with the prevailing view of psychopathy, Machiavellianism has been found to be unrelated to intellectual ability, gross psychopathology, and

(interestingly) economic status (Cherulnik, Way, Ames, & Hutto, 1981; Christie & Geis, 1970). "While not normally considered disordered, dangerous or even overtly antisocial, high Machs are characterized by manipulation, deceit and coercion and exhibit (a) a distinctly cynical view of others, and (b) an apparent lack of affect in interpersonal relations" (Kinner, 2004, p. 41). Findings to date have demonstrated that the Machiavellian is characterized by a preparedness to use manipulative and exploitative strategies and a cluster of attitudes toward the interpersonal world (McIlwain, 2003). For example, Machiavellians are prepared to use others against the interests of those others, armed with strategies like deceit and flattery to target human vanities (Kligman & Culver, 1992), a cynical worldview that suggests such preemptive action is warranted before others get in first and a relativistic morality. Hunter, Gerbing, and Boster (1982) established statistically that the development of cynicism arises before the exploitative, competitive behaviors. Overall, Machiavellian people, like psychopathically inclined people, are charming manipulators who do not think very highly of their fellow humans.

The Psychometric Overlap Between Psychopathically Inclined and Machiavellian People

Some suggest that it is among the subclinical, successful variants of psychopathic people that one finds Machiavellians. Thus, psychopathy is argued by some to be the broader construct, subsuming Machiavellianism. That these two constructs have been researched separately is attributed to professional boundaries by McHoskey, Worzel, and Szyarto (1998); while clinical psychiatrists, criminal psychologists, and more recently experimental cognitive scientists have explored the concept of a psychopathic person, it is largely personality and social psychologists who have investigated the concept of the Machiavellian.

The two personality styles certainly have many descriptive attributes in common (McIlwain, 2008). Early studies conducted by Smith and Griffith (1978) and Ray and Ray (1982) found weak-to-moderate correlations between the two constructs. McHoskey et al. (1998) found that Machiavellian scores were positively correlated with levels of both primary and secondary psychopathy and concluded that Machiavellianism was similar to global psychopathy. They asserted that high Machs represent the successful, white-collar psychopaths in society. However, other researchers have argued that the Machiavellian and psychopathic personalities are overlapping yet distinct constructs (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Smith, 1999). One reason for these conflicting views is that people use different measures to assess the two constructs, but there may also be subcultural variation. There is overlap as shown by statistical correlation, but differences may emerge using different methodologies. We expect that there will be psychometric overlap between the two personality styles since at the very least we see them as each having a high degree of callous unemotionality.

STUDY 1: STATISTICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PSYCHOPATHIC TENDENCIES AND MACHIAVELLIANISM

The following findings are the authors' own initial explorations of the relations between psychopathy and Machiavellianism.

Aims and Methods

To explore the overlap and distinctness of psychopathic and Machiavellian profiles, we assessed a sample of 107 (75 female) voluntary participants, 91.6% of whom were first-year psychology students and 8.4% of whom were recruited from elsewhere. We used the Mach II (Christie & Geis, 1970) and the LSRP (Levenson et al., 1995).

Results and Discussion

There is definite overlap between the two constructs. We found a strong positive correlation of .68 between the mean scores on the Mach II and the overall mean psychopathy score, as assessed using the LSRP (Table 6.1). In line with our expectations, Machiavellianism overlaps strongly (r = .66) with the primary psychopathy, which includes callous-unemotional traits. Primary psychopathy scores were moderately linked to all three Mach II subscales—morality, cynical views, and tactics—used to exploit and play on the vanity of victims. Links between Machiavellianism and primary psychopathy are considerable, while the links between Machiavellianism and secondary psychopathy are weaker but still significant.

Au: "subscales—morality…of victims" OK?

Follow-up analyses were conducted to identify the best predictors of Mach II scores. Results confirmed our expectation that the primary psychopathy score is a better predictor, since secondary psychopathy scores did not add much value to predicting Mach II scores once the primary psychopathy scores had been taken into account.

Thus, while the Mach II and LSRP scales may be measuring similar constructs, it seems that factor 1 of the LSRP, which assesses callous unemotionality as a part of primary psychopathy, is more powerfully linked to Machiavellianism. To better understand these subtle differences and how they might relate to morality, we then sought to explore in more detail the theoretical profiling of the affective capacities of these two personality styles. Our general theoretical framework was to adopt a cascading constraints model.

A Cascading Constraints Model of How Personality Styles Arise

Affective deficits are a central defining feature of psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people. What does this imply for their morality? Psychopathically inclined people might know the language but do not "feel the music" of emotion. Machiavellian people can remain emotionally detached while manipulating and lying to others, seemingly bypassing empathy (McIlwain, 2003). Early studies (e.g., Christie & Geis, 1970; Geis & Levy, 1970) characterized Machiavellian people as having a *cool*

TABLE 6.1 Correlations Among the Mach II and LSRP Psychopathy Subscales

Variable	Global Mach	Global Psychopath	Primary Psychopath	Secondary Psychopath	Mach View	Mach Morality	Mach Tactics
Global Mach Scale							
LSRP Global Psychopathy Scale	.68**						
LSRP Primary Psychopathy subscale	.66**						
LSRP Secondary Psychopath subscale	.43**		.34**				
Mach View subscale		.53**	.50**	.36**			
Mach Morality subscale		.61**	.59**	.38**	.45**		
Mach Tactics subscale		.61**	.59**	.37**	.64**	.52**	

Note: $N = 107$.
** $p < .01$.

syndrome; they are able to make realistic, cognitively based judgments of others without betraying any of their own affective experiences. McIlwain (2003) outlines how the cool syndrome is an advantage to a manipulator. A lack of affective expressivity is likely to make behavioral manipulation contingently successful, since the manipulator does not give themselves away with blushes or anxiety; a lack of affective resonance to the distress of another minimizes any possible internal sanction due to shame, guilt, and anxiety that might otherwise arise in the course of exploiting others.

On this account both (1) affective sensitivity (resonancing) and (2) expressivity have implications for morality. Affective insensitivity predisposes a person to deficient feeling on behalf of another (termed *vicarious feeling* or *affective resonancing*) and an inability to discern that another is being harmed from their distress cues. Thus, Machiavellians are likely to lack the hot, affective inputs to empathy that arise from within their own bodily economy as a result of perceiving others' distress. The inability to feel for another's distress may rob the viewer of informational and motivational input that might lead to correctly identifying emotion and promote morally responsible actions. This is of significance for later development from basic empathy to more nuanced morality. This lack of awareness of (or possibly an entire lack of) affective responses on witnessing another's suffering means they lack the inner signals that, on self-reflection, might be the basis of the formation of self-reflective moral emotions like guilt and shame. So this early

affective deficit may in turn contribute to the development of strange moralities where the lack of vicarious emotion means decisions are justified with a focus on the outcome for oneself rather than any consideration of minimizing harm toward another. There may be the use of moral language, but closer analysis may reveal that there is a deep assumption of "the other as object" rather than the other as a knowing, feeling subject to whom respect and care are to be accorded, since they are harm-blind.

The second feature, a lack of affective expressivity, means that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people are likely to be highly successful manipulators, since emotional agitation is not going to alert victims to the fact that they are being exploited. It means that for the manipulator there is not the bodily clout of affect to overcome when strategically donning whatever emotional masks the situation requires.

Affective insensitivity is not portrayed as a single causal path to callous amorality since there may be other contributing factors, like a predatory fusion of sexuality and violent conquest in some psychopathically inclined people (McIlwain, 2007). We suggest that the flow on from affective deficit to empathic and moral deficiency is one possible broad tracing of influence. Overall, we view these psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian personality styles as arising contingently via a dynamic interplay of processes producing cascading constraints whereby early deficits have knock-on consequences for later development (McIlwain, 2007, 2008, 2010a). Constraint on parameters in early development restricts which other parameters are free to vary later in personality by a kind of *developmental shunting* (Alder & Scher, 1994). Formative early difficulties can close off certain developmental pathways while making others more likely. While traits vary along a continuum, being extremely low in a certain trait early in one's life may restrict variation on other traits later and make certain multidimensional constellations more likely than others. Psychopathy and Machiavellianism are multidimensional constructs, each dimension of which may have different developmental inputs and trajectories. Only people with the full constellation of dimensions have the full personality style, which may resemble a qualitatively different personality disorder (McIlwain, 2010a). This view suggests qualitatively different personality styles can arise from a cluster of extreme scores in a constellation of personality traits that are themselves dimensional parameters. Someone who is extreme on some but not all parameters may be socially gifted; for example, someone skilled at controlling facial expressivity may become a diplomat, psychotherapist, or a hostage negotiator—they have fully intact affective sensitivity under strategic expressive control, retaining at least one basis of inner moral sanction.

Traits exist to varying degrees in everyone, but innate predisposition or early experiences may influence whether one moves more toward the low or high end of any given parameter. A pertinent example for Machiavellianism is dispositional trust at first encounter with others (Gurtman, 1992). If early experience predisposes one to hostile distrust as the default option in first encounters, this radically shapes resultant social exchanges and the pattern of interpersonal difficulties faced. Cascading constraints may arise from either acquired traits, such as a lack of trust, or innate deficits, such as the fearlessness purportedly associated with psychopathy (see Kochanska, 1993; Lykham, 1957; Saltaris, 2002). Fearless children may lose

Au: Lykham 1957 not in ref list.

the direct emotional experience that forms the basis of discerning such experiences in others. Indeed Blair and colleagues (Blair, Colledge, Murray, & Mitchell, 2001; Blair et al., 2002, 2004) present evidence that supports such a link. They found that some psychopathically inclined children are deficient in discerning experiences of fear and distress in the facial expressions and voices of others.

Unlike the specific deficits in regards to fear and distress that have been established for fledgling psychopathically inclined people, theory and research suggest that Machiavellian people have an across the board affective blunting. We suggest that Machiavellians bypass inconvenient emotions (McIlwain, 2003, 2010b); fleeting emotional signals are defensively dealt with so swiftly that these signals are insufficient to provide inner sanction to prevent exploitative behavior.

Psychopathically inclined people do not spontaneously discern the relevance of moral emotions like guilt. For example, Blair, Sellars, Strickland, Clark, Williams, and Smith (1995) found that although psychopathic and nonpsychopathic people performed similarly in attributing happiness, sadness, and embarrassment to characters in stories, the psychopathically inclined people attributed less guilt to story characters. Machiavellians seem to avoid inconvenient moral emotions by automatically attributing causality and blame to external sources (Mudrack, 1990). They are not entirely Teflon-coated when it comes to handling shame and blame, however. There is some evidence that Machiavellian people experience anxiety (Fehr, Samson, & Paulhus, 1992), encounter situations in which they feel unwilling to manipulate others (Barber, 1994) and experience narcissistic wounds and vulnerabilities (McIlwain, 2003; Sheppherd & Socherman, 1997). However, McIlwain (2003, 2010b) noted that an external attribution bias may diminish any adversely felt, shameful effects of exploiting others. There is evidence to support this view; for example, an external locus of control (i.e., a tendency to attribute the cause of events to powerful others, fate, or circumstances) is a robust indicator of Machiavellianism (Mudrack, 1990). Braginsky (1970) described Machiavellian young girls who spontaneously attributed to the experimenter responsibility for these young girls' imposition of an onerous task (of eating quinine-soaked biscuits) on another child whose exploitation was carried out by, and benefited, the young Machiavellian girls. In this way Machiavellian people avoid personal responsibility for their exploitative actions, and this may enable them to bypass shame (McIlwain, 2010b) and empathy (McIlwain, 2003). They also have a cynical worldview to further deal with any moral twinges, presuming everyone would manipulate if given the chance. Machiavelli stated that "a man would be a fool to throw away his sword when other men are only hiding theirs" (Machiavelli, 1513/1966, pp. 62–63; cited in Leary, Knight, & Barnes, 1986, p. 80). Our point is simple: If a cynical worldview and an external attribution bias prevent lingering experience of emotions indicating that another is suffering harm, then it is likely that the experience of empathy will be restricted or absent and other-oriented moral beliefs about preventing harm and suffering are unlikely to develop. We suggest that important (but possibly different) precursors to the development of empathy are lacking in both psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people. So we expect that both personality styles will be deficient in their reporting of empathy.

Au: Fehr et al. 1992 not in ref list.

Au: Machiavelli 1513/1966 not in ref list.

Empathy in Psychopathically Inclined and Machiavellian People

Empathy hinges on vicarious experience in that the observed experiences of others come to affect our own bodily economy, feelings, and thoughts. It entails the ability to step outside of one's own frame of reference, a kind of decentering, and being able to suppress temporarily one's perspective on events to take on another's. Optimally, this perspective-taking facilitates the anticipating of conflict, acknowledging the legitimate claims of others, and working toward compromise and accommodation. Historically empathy has been divided into quick, hot, involuntary reactions and a more intellectualized ability to recognize the state of another independent of the vicarious experience of that person's state. Davis (1980), in his Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) measure of empathy, distinguishes between *hot* spontaneous, emotional responses to another's emotional state such as empathic concern (EC) and personal distress (PD) and *cold* cognitive appreciation of another's emotional state such as perspective-taking (PT) and fantasy (F). Cold empathy is more attitudinal and entails cognitive appraisal of the perspective of the other. It can include the fantasy projection of oneself into the position of the other as a more imaginative variant. Pellarini (2001, cited in McIlwain, 2003) found that Mach scores were significantly, negatively associated with empathic concern and positively correlated with levels of fantasy. However, research has failed to find a significant relationship between Mach scores and IRI personal distress scores (McIlwain, 2003).

A number of researchers (Baron-Cohen, 2004; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004; Blair & Firth, 2000) have observed that the hot and cold aspects of empathy appear doubly dissociable. Individuals with autistic spectrum disorder purportedly lack the cold aspects of empathy while retaining some relatively normal reactions to emotional stimuli (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004; Kinner, 2004). The opposite is the case for psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people, who show intact cognitive ability to recognize the thought processes of another in *theory of mind* tests while lacking an ability to vicariously experience what another is experiencing. While (cognitive) theory of mind is intact, it is still in question whether psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people report even cold, intellectually based empathy. Further, existing empathy scales were designed for use with prosocial populations. So we conducted two studies of empathy in these dark personalities. In Study 2a we sought to further explore the forms of empathy that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people self-report. Using our original scale of strategic empathic concern, we then explored in Study 2b whether they acknowledge that they have the ability to discern what another is feeling but have control over whether this knowing influences them.

Au: Blair and Firth 2000 not in ref list.

STUDY 2A: PSYCHOPATHY, MACHIAVELLIANISM, AND THE INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX (IRI)

Aims and Method

To examine the relations among empathy, psychopathic tendencies, and Machiavellianism, we first asked the same 107 participants mentioned in Study 1 to also complete the IRI (Davis, 1980), which assesses separately the hot aspects of empathy via the empathetic concern (EC) and personal distress (PD) subscales, and the cold cognitive aspects, via the fantasy (F: placing oneself in the life situation of fictitious others) and perspective-taking (PD: the cognitive ability to understand another's affective state) subscales.

Results and Discussion

The full array of findings is reported in Table 6.2 (with the cold empathy subscales shaded). There was no relationship between LSRP psychopathy or Mach scores and a tendency to experience personal distress at another's suffering or to be willing to project oneself into the situation of another by fantasy means. As expected, levels of psychopathy (primary and secondary) and Mach scores were significantly negatively associated with the IRI hot empathy subscale, empathic concern. Strikingly, there were also negative relations with IRI perspective-taking ability, a cold empathy subscale (see also Langdon & Delmas, 2010, Chapter 5, this volume).

STUDY 2B: STRATEGIC EMPATHY (MCILWAIN & WRIGHT)

Aims and Method

The finding that both Machiavellian and psychopathic tendencies related negatively to perspective-taking, a form of cold empathy puzzled us. Given that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people are such good manipulators, which seems to entail their being able to discern the need the state of other to exploit that

TABLE 6.2 Empathy, as Assessed Using the IRI in Psychopathically Inclined and Machiavellian People

Variable	Global Mach Scale	Global Psychopathy	Primary Psychopathy	Secondary Psychopathy
IRI global empathy	–.35**	–.39**	–.47**	–.11
IRI perspective-taking	–.38**	–.46**	–.44**	–.29**
IRI empathetic concern	–.51**	–.59**	–.65**	–.24*
IRI personal distress	.02	–.04	–.11	.10
IRI fantasy	.02	.11	.05	.16

Note: $N = 107$.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

other, how do they do it if they are lacking in hot and cold empathy? One possibility is that our existing scales do not address the kinds of empathy they have. Like all empathy scales, the IRI was devised for prosocial populations and makes heavy use of feeling-saturated language. While entirely appropriate in the populations for which the scale was devised, psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people may not reveal to a full extent the skills that they possess, because they may be unprepared to represent themselves on dimensions assessed by feeling-language items. Further, the IRI conflates a capacity to feel for another or take the perspective of the other, with the inevitable use of these abilities, since normatively if we have these skills we tend to use them. But in the personalities we have been discussing, capacity and use may be dissociable.

As part of a larger project with a sample of 62 first-year psychology students, we sought to address the dissociability of having an empathic capacity or skill and being able to turn that skill on or off depending on what would produce the best outcome for the protagonist. We used a new empathy scale we hope may complement Davis's (1980) IRI. We[1] devised new empathy items for the Strategic Emotional Control (SEC) scale that address the ability and tendency of participants to respond in an empathic way strategically, only when it suits their interests (e.g., "I can pick up on what others are feeling, but then it is my decision whether I let this influence me"). The scale is composed of seven items and shows reasonable internal reliability and no significant gender differences. We used it with the IRI and Mach IV.

Results and Discussion

In our sample of 62, the SEC scale significantly correlated moderately and positively with both primary psychopathy and Mach IV scores (see Table 6.3). Thus, psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people are inclined to withhold their feelings of empathy toward others if necessary. McIlwain (2003) suggested that Machiavellians may initially experience the emotional responses of others, but they "may only experience them just long enough to get the information relevant to manipulation and then 'turn them off' or 'block them from awareness' in some way in order to better to exploit the person" (p. 51). The positive associations of SEC scores with both primary psychopathy and Mach IV scores suggest that both personalities characterized by affective coolness/deficits are inclined to self-report themselves as having this ability.

Au: Check quote marks here; OK?

Both primary psychopathy and Mach IV scores correlated moderately negatively with empathic concern (EC; Table 6.3), confirming the idea that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people are less inclined to self-report feeling hot empathy for others. Neither primary nor secondary psychopath scores were associated with being affected by others' distress. This is consistent with the findings of different neurocognitive profiles and action dispositions in psychopathically inclined people when they respond to the distress cues of others. In one relevant study, Blair, Jones, Clark, and Smith (1995) presented a series of threatening, neutral and distressing visual stimuli to 18 psychopathic inmates and 18 nonpsychopathic controls and compared their electrodermal responding. While the groups

TABLE 6.3 Correlations Among LSRP Psychopathy Scores, Mach IV Scores, IRI Measures of Empathy, and Scores for Strategic Emotional Control (SEC)

	IRI Fantasy Subscale	IRI EC Subscale	IRI PT Subscale	IRI PD Subscale	IRI Total	SEC
LSRP primary psychopathy	–.320*	–.510**	ns	ns	–.372**	.441**
LSRP secondary psychopathy	ns	ns	–.496**	ns	ns	ns
Mach IV	ns	–.391**	ns	ns	–.329*	.544**

Notes: EC, empathic concern. PT, perspective-taking. PD, personal distress. SEC, strategic emotional control. ns, nonsignificant.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

did not differ in their responses to the first two conditions (threatening and neutral), the psychopathic inmates showed little electrodermal response to the distress cues. Levenston, Patrick, Bradley, and Lang (2000), using skin conductance reactivity, heart rate, and facial expressions as indices, found that those high on primary psychopathy scores are slower to show the expected startle response when viewing stimuli most people consider aversive, such as images of starving children and mutilation. They conclude that "psychopathy involves a deviation in affective response at the most fundamental level—that of evoked action dispositions" (Levenston et al., 2000, p.382). As suggested already, this affective coolness may protect the manipulator from vicariously experiencing the effects they have had on the other person in exploiting them and may make that exploitation less likely to be detected by the other in the first place.

In the next section, we consider what has variously been termed the *innate moral depravity*, *acquired moral insanity* of psychopaths, and ethical pathology that has been ascribed to psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people alike. What forms of morality are acquired by individuals with these personality styles, so often portrayed as being without shame, guilt, and remorse?

Strange Moralities

Psychopathically inclined people understand morality enough to use it in exploiting others and to feign remorse at the right time. Having entertained claims that psychopathically inclined people ascribe to, in extreme forms, "the actual morality of society rather than the idealized morals that we would like to think pertain" (Fields, 1996, p. 267), Field concludes psychopaths differ more widely from the general population than this. He suggests they lack moral responsibility, that they are "incapable of acting for other-regarding moral reasons" (Field, 1996, p. 267), adding that psychopaths do not act through rational calculation but "on a whim" and cannot act for prudential reasons in taking seriously their own best future interests.

How well do psychopathically inclined people understand morality when questioned? Evidence suggests that they fail to discriminate moral from conventional transgressions (Blair et al., 1995). However, the specific finding was that psychopathic men rated conventional transgressions as being as serious as moral transgressions, and this may have been a function of an incarcerated sample with parole on their minds (see also Langdon & Delmas, Chapter 5, this volume). They may have rated all transgressions highly for reasons of social desirability. Other researchers argue that this failure to distinguish moral from conventional transgressions is indicative of psychopaths' deficient empathy and failure to grasp the concept of harm to another. The focus is more on their own selfish gain and the whims of the moment. For example, Frick and Ellis (1999) noted that psychopaths' callous, unemotional superficial charm, coupled with impulsivity, a dysfunctional inhibition system, and a lack of guilt and shame, is a dangerous combination as these people also possess socially selfish tactics and a ready-made capacity for immoral behavior. The psychopaths' general poverty of affective reactions, especially those that would be triggered by the suffering of others (remorse, sympathy), condemnation by others (shame, embarrassment), or attachment to others (love, grief; Haidt, 2001, p. 822), renders feasible acts like murdering parents to collect the life insurance money or stealing from friends.

Au: Which Blair et al. 1995 citation? Blair, Jones, et al. or Blair, Sellars et al.? If the latter, please list all 6 authors here on first mention.

Machiavellians are associated with cunning guile but less with such overt and whimsically motivated violence. One of the underlying assumptions is that Machiavellians do not share conventional morality (Leary, Knight, & Barnes, 1986). For example, people with higher levels of Machiavellianism are *not* more likely to cheat than those with lower levels, but they are less likely to confess; they are only more likely to steal when being supervised if the supervisor clearly does not trust them, while people with low levels of Machiavellianism steal regardless of their supervisor's attitudes to them (Exline, Thibaut, Hickey, & Gumpert, 1970). Leary et al. (1986) found that Machiavellians think relativistic standards of behavior should apply in all situations and so are described (strangely enough) as *absolute relativists*: "Machiavellian individuals subscribe to a system of situationally-based ethics in which moral decisions are based upon a personal set of relativistic ethical guidelines rather than upon moral absolutes" (Leary et al., 1986, p. 76). Leary and colleagues examined two ethical dimensions: *relativism*, which rejects the notion that absolute moral principles exist that apply to all contexts; and *idealism*, the degree to which people believe that morally right behavior always leads to good consequences. They found a (weak) significant positive correlation between relativism and Mach scores, and that idealism was moderately and significantly negatively correlated with the Mach scores: Machiavellian people thus tended to hold the view that morally right behaviors will not always lead to the desired outcome.

Machiavellians do not see others as moved by ideals and so tend to be preemptively pragmatic (Pitkin, 1984). There needs to be something personally at stake for them for them to exploit or lie—such as stealing from under the nose of a distrustful supervisor.

Hot Inputs to Moral Reasoning and Feelings About Feelings

The suggestion that emotions and personal motivations are relevant to morality, the "sentimentalist" account of morality, is not a new stance. Hume proposed that "reason can let us infer that a particular action will lead to the death of many innocent people, but unless we care about those people, unless we have some sentiments that value human life, reason alone cannot advise against taking the action" (Haidt, 2001, p. 816).

The social intuition model of Haidt (2001) puts forward a delightfully Machiavellian theory of morality. Haidt claims that moral judgments are caused by quick moral intuitions and followed by post hoc moral reasoning. This model proposes that moral reasoning is therefore not a search for unbiased truth but "is likely to be hired out like a lawyer by various motives, employed only to seek confirmation of preordained conclusions" (Haidt, 2001, p. 824). Our own approach differs from Haidt's; we suggest there is not such a clean divide between fast intuitions and moral reasoning—the two become developmentally intertwined. We suggest that there are quick, almost involuntary inputs into moral judgments, namely, the hot components of empathy, and that, like developmentally primary emotions, these are quick, fast, and automatic. However, the specific form they take depends on a whole suite of available competencies and abilities, like the capacity for self-reflection, which changes as the person develops (with which they are "co-assembled"[2]) that characterize a person at a given developmental moment. So, swift inputs can result in complex, nested, and self-reflective emotions. We suggest that in developing morality a vital preliminary stage is to develop reflective feelings about vicariously evoked feelings. Normally we experience feelings arising in response to another person being harmed as aversive. These "feelings about feelings" motivate us to stop the harm to the other. Feelings about feelings, or meta-emotions, include feeling shame for longing to depend on others or feeling anguish at perceiving another's distress (McIlwain, 2007).

However, hot, vicarious emotions elicited upon witnessing the experience of another are still vital inputs to morality, optimally providing instant bodily feedback that another is being harmed. We suggest normative morality will not be in evidence in those who lack it. Study 2a established that primary psychopathically inclined people and Machiavellians are particularly lacking in hot empathy in the form of empathic concern. We suggest these individuals will have strange moralities.

Cooler cognitive processes are also relevant to empathy or its bypassing. Literature on moral judgment and reasoning implicates the attitudes people hold about others as one of the central determining factors of personal morality. One form of attitude formation can be described as a set of automatic processes based on first impressions (Albright, Kenny, & Malloy, 1988). A pertinent example for Study 3 (in the next section) is the finding in Western society that overweight individuals are perceived as less active, less attractive, less intelligent, less popular, less hardworking, and less successful than individuals of an average weight (Hebl & Heatherton, 1997). Because our society views obesity as a controllable condition, larger individuals are also viewed as weak-willed, self-indulgent, and even immoral (Hebl & Mannix, 2003). If this kind of swift stereotyping response is commonplace

in the general population and likely to be modulated in its verbal avowal by social desirability concerns and tempered by compassion, then, we reasoned, psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people might represent an extreme of this kind of swift stereotyping stance, minus the compassion and minus the social desirability concerns.

Barber (1994) also proposes that morality is moderated by the extent of relatedness between the helper and recipient. Individuals frequently restrict prosocial behavior to members of their own family or social group (Hamilton, 1964, cited in Barber, 1994; Wilson, Near & Miller, 1996). However, Barber (1994) noted that Machiavellianism is one example of the biological concept of social selfishness, characterized by social detachment, competitiveness, and manipulation. This even extends to their kin, as Barber found that kinship had little influence on Machiavellians' ratings of their future behavior. They actually showed more favor toward close friends than toward family members.

Using this literature as background, we put to the test the moral decisions made by those high in psychopathy or Machiavellian scores to explore their moral judgments and the rationales they offer in hindsight. This approach allows us to consider whether these individuals might make similar judgments for different reasons. If so, such findings would suggest that different processes might underpin their exploitative capacities.

STUDY 3: PART ONE: ETHICAL DECISIONS AND THE TROLLEY PROBLEM

One way that philosophers and students of ethics and law have examined moral reasoning and its relation to moral action is the hypothetical Trolley Problem (Figure 6.2). This is a reasoning experiment in ethics that was introduced by Thomson (1976).

Au: Please check figure callouts throughout rest of chapter for accuracy.

In what we call Dilemma 1 (Figure 6.3), the traditional problem is as follows:

> A train trolley is running out of control down a track. In its path are four people who have been tied to the track (Track A). You can flip the switch to divert the train onto a different track; however, there is one person tied to that track (Track B), a person who would survive if you did not act. The dilemma is this: Should you flick the switch or not?

Thomson (1976) also introduced a "large person variation" of the Trolley Problem (which we call Dilemma 2; see Figure 6.4) in which you are a bystander on a bridge, watching the whole event take place. Next to you stands a fat man. The decision you must make is whether you would push the large person onto the tracks to stop the train before it kills the people tied to the tracks?

In Dilemma 1 people generally think that it is their moral responsibility to flick the switch, whereby the decision to sacrifice one life for four is permissible. However, in Dilemma 2, individuals are less likely to judge it morally permissible to push the larger person, purportedly because direct harm to another is an integral part of the plan (Thomson, 1985).

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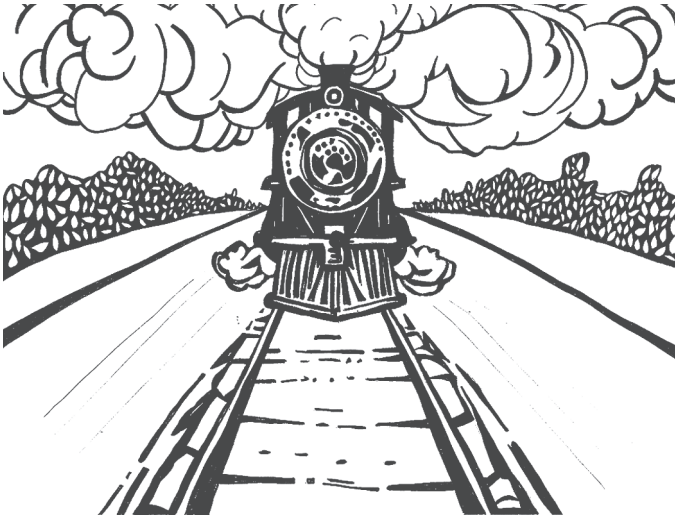

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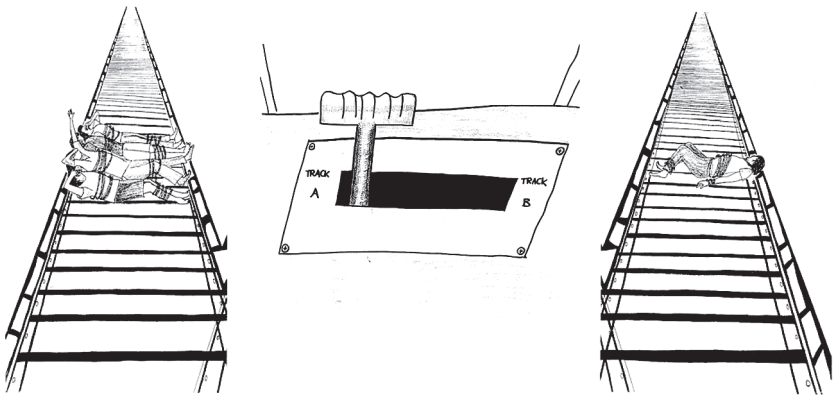

Track A Track B

Figure 6.3 006x003.eps

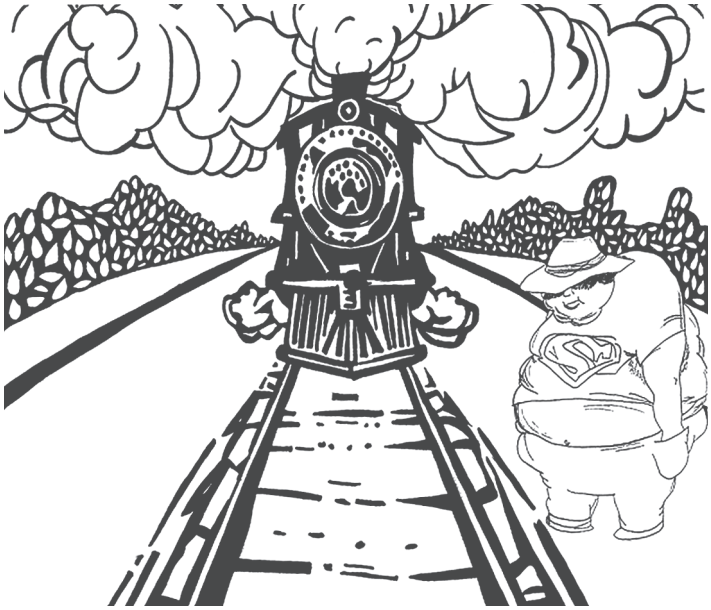

Figure 6.4 006x004.eps

Aims and Method

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In response to a workshop presentation by Greene in 2006, we planned research to extend his paradigm to consider how different personality styles would respond to a modified Trolley Problem (to which we also added some additional dimensions). As well as looking at the traditional yes or no decisions people make about flicking the switch or pushing the large person, we also included questions that tap into the moral–conventional distinction, questions that look at relatedness, such as, "What if the single person tied to the track was your family member or friend?" and questions that looked at responses to possible distress cues, such as, "What if the large person was unconscious or conscious at the time of being pushed?" To profile Machiavellian and psychopathy in richer and more nuanced detail, we included open-ended questions to tap into post hoc moral reasoning. Open-ended questions permit us to discern whether moral language and other-oriented beliefs figure in the reasons given for judgments made as well as explore whether the decisions were made for primarily self-centered reasons. Our sample was the same 107 people mentioned in Study 1.

Results and Discussion

Dilemma 1: Flicking the Switch to Save Four Overall, the majority of our participants indicated they would flick the switch (n = 89/107) to Track B, sacrificing

one to save four people, with only a minority leaving the train on Track A (n = 18/107). However, there were no significant differences for people higher and lower in psychopathy and Mach scores in their decision to flick or not flick the switch. Although, among the very highest scorers (n = 8) we did find a strong and significant association between higher psychopathy scores and the decision not to flick the switch.

Dilemma 1a: Sacrificing Four to Save a Family Member or a Friend Given Barber's (1994) finding that kinship influenced less the altruistic decision making of Machiavellians, we also asked individuals what they would do if the single person on Track B were a family member over four strangers. Normatively, most participants avoid killing a family member than a friend on Track B. While 58 participants would change their initial decision to flick the switch and divert the train away from the more populated Track A for a family member or a friend, nine said they would change their initial decision only for a family member and not a friend. A total of 11 respondents wrote maybe for their response to the friend tied to the track option. One participant's open-ended response was of interest: Would s/he save a friend? "Possibly… I'd have to think about this one, unlike the immediate decision I made concerning the family member. In this case I would need to weigh up the friend's good and bad points…." However, there were no effects of psychopathy or Mach scores on decisions to save friends or family.

Dilemma 2: The Fat Man Variant We also varied whether people were prepared to push a fat man on to a track as well as whether it would make a difference to decisions if he were conscious (Dilemma 2a) or unconscious (Dilemma 2b). We also varied the numbers of people on the tracks. Would people push him onto the tracks to save four people (Dilemma 2c)? Would they push him to save one person (Dilemma 2d)? We thought Dilemma 2d to be the strangest, since it entails killing one person to save one person. Discussion is restricted to Dilemma 2d since personality differences were in evidence.

Dilemma 2d: Pushing the Conscious Fat Man Onto a Track to Save One Person In terms of killing one to save one, we found a significant (weak) correlation between the primary psychopathy score and the decision to push a large conscious person in front of Track B (r = .21, p < .05). An independent t-test showed that the group that would not push the large conscious person had a significantly lower psychopathy score (M = 1.96, SD = .47) than the group saying they would push him (M = 2.41, SD = .64). So those with higher levels of primary psychopathy were more likely to push the larger person, even when it was only to save one person tied to Track B.

STUDY 3: PART TWO: PERSONAL RATIONALES FOR DECISIONS ON THE TROLLEY PROBLEM

Aims and Method

We included open-ended questions with the Trolley Problem to understand how psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people justify ethical decisions.

Based on the research by Braginsky (1970) and the robust meta-analytic findings of Mudrack (1990), we expected that there would be more blame shifting in the qualitative responses of those high on Machiavellian measures compared with those low on these measures. Specifically, we expected that high scorers' responses would show more evidence of an externalizing of control, rationalization, callousness, and a failure to become involved or take responsibility in the moral scenario. We expected that the large-person variant would produce the most unusual post hoc moral reasoning in those high on Machiavellian and psychopathy scores.

The participants were the same 107 participants. We asked participants to explain what went through their mind as they made their judgments. In response to the large-person variant, a person high on primary psychopathy said, "The person has the right to decide whether he/she wants to do it or not. If he/she is unconscious then his/her thoughts can't be heard." Moral terms are used, but the decision does not consider the unconscious fat man as a subject who should not have harm imposed on him. Another participant, high in primary psychopathy, viewed the fat man as somehow expendable: "To sacrifice someone who is 'okay to die' to save 4 lives or one life sounds reasonable." A person with a high Mach score said, "I assume (perhaps incorrectly) that the larger person does not appreciate their life as much as the person on the track does. They have let themselves go physically and do not appear to appreciate life to the fullest," so this participant would sacrifice the fat man to save one life or four.

We took all rationales and rated them on the basis of 14 theoretically and evidence-based categories that were scored on a three-point scale, where 1 = no evidence of this category, 2 = sometimes shows evidence of this category, and 3 = often or always shows evidence of this category. These categories were as follows:

1. Perspective-taking (ability to see from another's perspective)
2. Fantasy (participants' ability to step into the scenario)
3. Empathy (use of hot emotional words like *pain* and *sad*)
4. Moral compliance (use of phrases such as "It's murder")
5. Direct distress (self-focused distress)
6. Vicarious distress (other-focused distress)
7. Fear (answers which include words like *scared, afraid, panic*)
8. Shame (the object of concern is the entire self, where the whole person is conceptualized as bad. Answers expressing a desire to escape the interpersonal situation, for example, "I couldn't bear to face the families of the victims")
9. Guilt (object of concern is a particular bad action or a failure to act and answer which are characterized by feelings of remorse and regret)
10. Rationalization (assigning value to particular people on the track that made their death seem justified, for example, "They have probably done something bad if they are tied to the track," or "The large person will probably die of diabetes anyway")
11. External locus of control (answers that refer to fate or displace the blame)

12. Cold or callous (answers that go beyond just distancing themselves from the characters to answers that show sparks of cruelty and no hint of empathy)
13. Refusal to immerse (answers that say things like, "This is a rubbish scenario")
14. Refusal to involve (answers that included phrases like, "I would walk away")

Results and Discussion

Interater reliability for the 11 categories was acceptable. Correlations with single categories showed that those high on psychopathy gave rationales with a significant absence of perspective-taking and significant evidence of refusal to involve. The justifications of people with high Mach scores were characterized by significant evidence of callousness.

Since it was unlikely that a single category would be a good predictor of psychopathy and Mach scores, we also examined what clusters of categories intercorrelated. A factor analysis extracted five independent factors of items (see Table 6.4).

Five numeric scores were then created for each of these factors. We then looked at how these factors were linked to the rationales offered by psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people. People with higher Mach scores were most concerned with protecting their own egos—their rationales were largely self-centered: Factor 2, callous self-defense, showed a weak, positive association with Mach scores, indicating people with higher Machiavellian tendencies showed more evidence of fantasy, rationalization, and callousness in their qualitative rationales. An excerpt from a participant who gained among the highest Mach scores clearly demonstrates a propensity toward cool moral reasoning: "A lie is only a lie if other people find out. If I can save the lives of these people and the large person didn't know he was being murdered then it would be ok. The saved [sic] would probably be a greater asset to society anyway." Levels of psychopathy scores were not associated with factor 2 scores.

We were wise to pay attention to the subscales of the Mach as the morality subscale showed a significant positive correlation with factor 4, detachment, which is a combination of responses that evidence an external locus of control and a refusal to involve ($r = .22$, $p < .05$). Those with higher Mach morality scores would shift the blame—sometimes on to the people on the tracks themselves—and would say that they would walk away, which is even more detached than deciding not to flick the switch. For example, one such participant noted in response to the question as to whether they would flick the switch: "No. I have no intention of getting involved … best to walk away and let it run its course. Nobody innocent gets put in front of a train." These results partially confirmed our expectation that Machiavellians are characterized by detachment and blame shifting. Notably though, factor 4 did not show a significant relationship with either of the other Mach subscales or with psychopathy scores.

Factor 1 seems to be an empathy factor,[3] which also taps a willingness to immerse in the moral scenario and entertain it as real. This factor was negatively

TABLE 6.4 Factor Analysis Solution

	Factor 1 Empathy	Factor 2 Callous Self-Defense	Factor 3 Moral Emotions	Factor 4 Detachment	Factor 5 Too Fearful to Comply
[Q] Perspective	**.79**	.30	.05	–.08	–.03
[Q] Fantasy	.31	**.57**	.28	–.05	.34
[Q] Empathy	**.78**	–.10	.16	–.02	–.04
[Q] Moral compliance	.23	–.44	.18	.15	**–.56**
[Q] Direct Distress	–.03	.01	.47	–.17	**.51**
[Q] Vicarious Distress	**.53**	–.09	.39	.17	.14
[Q] Fear	.15	–.14	–.01	.19	**.75**
[Q] Shame	–.01	–.16	**.74**	–.18	–.16
[Q] Guilt	.35	–.03	**.73**	.02	.10
[Q] Rationalization	.14	**.77**	.09	.09	–.15
[Q] External Locus	–.01	.36	–.07	**.71**	.21
[Q] Callousness	–.23	**.81**	–0.4	.16	.00
[Q] Refusal to Immerse	**–.69**	–.19	.03	.33	–.10
[Q] Refusal to Involve	–.17	–.02	–.11	**.81**	–.11

Notes: [Q], Qualitative. Bold signifies component in which each category was included.

associated with levels of global psychopathy ($r = –.19$, $p < .05$) and more particularly with levels of primary psychopathy ($r = –.25$, $p < .05$).The justifications of more psychopathically inclined people showed: less empathy, less perspective-taking, less vicarious personal distress, and a higher likelihood of a refusal to immerse—a preemptive strike against having to make decisions where there was nothing to gain for them. One participant who scored high on psychopathy wrote, "Why should I put myself in personal jeopardy for a group of strangers in an unknown dilemma—not enough information for me to risk acting a hero and looking a fool."

To consider the profiles of those highest on the psychopathy and Mach measures, the data were filtered to include only participants whose mean scores fell above the 75th percentile. Eight participants fell into this category; note that the small numbers dictate caution here. More extreme Mach and secondary psychopathy scores within this extreme subgroup were linked with a refusal to be involved in the scenario by taking any action. But it was higher psychopathy scores in this extreme subgroup that associated most with post hoc rationales characterized by the constellation of a lack of hot and cold empathy and refusal to immerse in the scenario at all, or if they do, showing an unwillingness to flick the switch.

General Discussion of Study 3: Strange Moralities

There are indeed strange moralities: Rationales are cloaked in moral language, but even where moral terms are used there is a fundamental lack of concern for harm toward another—they have the words but not the music of morality. Both personality styles give rationales that conceive of others as objects, and their rationales

are largely self-centered, such as electing to push the unconscious rather than the conscious person to avoid hearing screams. The qualitative profiling suggests that Machiavellians are prepared to immerse themselves in the fantasy scenario but are not prepared to be actively involved, electing to walk away, unlike psychopathically inclined people who were preemptively unlikely to immerse in the first place. This illustrates an interesting feature of the Trolley Problem. Immersing in the fantasy scenario at all means that any decision has personal costs. Once immersed someone will die if one acts, and walking away means one is still implicated in deaths. This has interesting connections with recent work by DeScioli, Bruening, and Kurzban (2009) that explores the moral implications of omissions (e.g., where not acting is viewed less severely than acting, even if the causal outcome is still the same).

We found that high Mach scorers gave more callous and cynical reasons for their decisions—attributing blame to the victims on the track. Psychopathy scores were instead negatively related to using empathic terms, while no such negative relationship pertained for Mach scores. There are thus complex differences in the moral rationales associated with the two personality styles.

We cannot do justice in this chapter to the richness of all the qualitative responses. Some detail is lost collapsing open-ended responses into categories for analysis. More detailed focus on the content of the qualitative responses of psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people is required. Although we attempted to control for variability in scoring and had four separate coders, there was still room for interpretation bias. However, the interrater agreement was high for the majority of categories, and the qualitative results mirrored the quantitative results, which lends some support to the overall reliability of our qualitative approach. Finally, we note that hypothetical moral reasoning, as we have examined, may not translate into real-world action. Hence, ecological validity concerns remain.

CONCLUSIONS

Regarding construct overlap, we found that psychopathy and Machiavellianism are closely related psychometrically; however, primary psychopathy is more closely related to Machiavellian traits than secondary psychopathy. Our psychometric analyses therefore support previous research that has shown links between the constructs (McHoskey et al., 1998; Ray & Ray, 1982; Smith & Griffith, 1978). We found that those who share callous unemotionality are also found to lack empathy; Study 2a confirmed that those who score higher on measures of psychopathy and Machiavellianism show less empathy and, in particular, less vicarious hot empathy, as argued elsewhere (Lauria, 2002; Pellarini, 2001, cited in McIlwain, 2003). However, across two studies, using the IRI (Davis, 1980) our findings did not support the view that psychopathically inclined and Machiavellian people possess intact, even enhanced cold empathy or the ability cognitively to recognize the emotional responses and thought processes of others without vicariously experiencing them.

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Different processes may well underlie empathic deficiencies; this requires further research. For those high on psychopathy, poor self-reported perspective-taking, as assessed using the IRI, may reflect deficiencies in vicarious emotional experience of fear and distress. For those who score high on Machiavellianism, their poor perspective-taking may result from flattened affect in general, arising from a cynical worldview and blame-shifting external attribution bias that function to detach them emotionally from the situation and presume the worst in others.

The mystery of how Machiavellian and psychopathically inclined people can be such good manipulators if they lack all capacity to discern the need states of others may be clarified by our Study 2b showing that these individuals share a strategic capacity to use empathy when it suits their purposes. They are prepared to report empathic ability when questions retain a distinction between a capacity to discern another's feelings and control over how that understanding is implemented in action. Our new empathy scale has promise.

Different moral profiles emerge in the themes prominent in rationales offered for decisions made in our variations of the Trolley Problem. These personality constructs are overlapping, but distinct, in accord with Paulhus and Williams (2002) and Smith (1999). Machiavellians' moral reasoning has a self-defensive quality, characterized by callousness and rationalization—as if emotions impact them and are swiftly dealt with. For psychopathically inclined people it is as if vicarious emotions do not impact in the first place and immersion in the scenario just does not happen. The moral justifications of psychopathically inclined people are primarily characterized by a lack of empathetic resonance, an absence of vicarious distress, and an inability to see from another's perspective. This same pattern of underlying differences has been suggested in the literature where it is argued that, while psychopathically inclined people lack the actual ability to fully experience empathy (Cleckley, 1941/1964; Hare, 1998; Johns & Quay, 1962) or to recognize distress (Blair, Jones, et al., 1995), Machiavellians may bypass vicarious emotion (McIlwain, 2003) or use it strategically. This ability to detach or gain reflective distance from the experience of empathy may be facilitated by the Machiavellian's deeply ingrained cynical worldview and the propensity to rationalize and place the blame elsewhere.

In conclusion, our study highlights the promise of qualitative techniques to explore differences in reflection on moral reasoning. As our cascading constraints model suggested, we found that those with affective deficits and high on callous unemotionality were also those lacking in empathy and those with the most deviant moral reasoning. We also found a link between unusual reasoning and a callous capacity to detach from responsibility by refusing to become involved in the scenarios (as shown by the high Mach scorers) and from preemptive refusal to immerse in fantasy scenarios in the first place (as shown by the high psychopathy scorers). While only a small number of individuals overall in our studies would be classified as high in psychopathic and Machiavellian tendencies relative to the levels seen in incarcerated populations, the very fact that we found such results within a population largely composed of undergraduate students lends further support to the view that such traits exist to a varying degree in the noninstitutionalized population.

Perhaps future research will reveal that many of those higher on psychopathic and Machiavellian tendencies in our society are not the "monsters" traditionally portrayed as vicious, antisocial criminals but are wolves in sheep's clothing—students who walk among us, future business women and men, journalists, politicians.

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ENDNOTES

1. Barbara Nevicka helped to devise some of the items of this scale.
2. Co-assembly was a term coined by Tomkins in his affect theory to refer to a process which creates a unitary experience when an affect amplifies the signal from another psychological system (Moore & McDonald, 2000, p. 155).
3. Global IRI Empathy shows a significant, positive moderate correlation with Component One ($r = .34$, $p < 0.01$) and a significant, negative moderate correlation with Component Four ($r = -.25$, $p < 0.01$). This result indicated that those who scored higher on the IRI global empathy wrote qualitative responses that showed more evidence of perspective taking, empathetic concern, and less evidence of an external locus of control and failure to be involved in the scenario. This also gave support to the validity of our qualitative measures.