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2018 ATSA Conference | Thursday October 18 | 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

T-39

Entrenched Antisociality

Treatment of Psychopathy and the Integrated Risk Assessment and Treatment System (IRATS) Model

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The issue of management of high-risk high-needs sexual offenders residing in institutional and community settings has not received as much empirical scrutiny as would seem warranted given public sensitivity to such groups of clients. This is especially noteworthy given the fact that there is a great deal of media attention paid to such groups and community notification regarding these clients is mandated in many jurisdictions. The fact that community notification does not appear to reduce rates of recidivism based upon the available research further highlights the need to develop comprehensive assessment and treatment strategies that have been empirically demonstrated to reduce rates of recidivism among high-risk groups of sexual offenders.

The purpose of the current presentation will be to address a number of issues related to both institutional and community management of high-risk high-need sexual offenders. A model of treatment, which we have called the Integrated Risk Assessment and Treatment System (IRATS), will be described. We will argue that the IRATS presents a theoretically driven and empirically supported approach to the management of challenging groups of clients treated in both institutional and community settings. Research by our team related to the IRATS has demonstrated that the model is associated with significant reductions in sexual and violent recidivism in a number of long-term follow up studies. The presentation will focus on how the IRATS can be applied to high-risk populations including groups of offenders who meet criteria for psychopathy. Both the core features (including criminal history, attachment/complex trauma related conditions and deviant arousal) as well as internal/external pressures associated with the model will be described in detail. Examples of how to apply the model in practice will be presented and a summary of several longitudinal studies examining aspects of the model will be described. Several counter-intuitive aspects of the model will also be discussed. For example, the possibility that individual treatment may be more cost effective than group based approaches with clients presenting with particular clinical profiles based on the IRATS will be described.

BETTER TOGETHER

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Learning Goals:

- Describe the Integrated Risk Assessment and Treatment Strategy (IRATS) Model and demonstrate how it can be practically applied in both institutional and community settings. Examples will be presented as to how the model can help clinicians contextualize complex clinical presentations.
- Describe procedures that can be used for multi-modal assessment of offender populations that are in keeping with the IRATS model and which are readily available.
- Describe how the model can be applied to particular groups of high-risk offenders including psychopathic clients.

Dr. Jeffrey Abracen is Chief Psychologist with Central District Parole, Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). He was employed as the clinical director of the community based Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program operated by CSC, and until late 2012 was co-director of the Relapse Prevention Maintenance Program offered to sexual offenders in the Central District of CSC. He has provided training related to the community treatment and supervision of sexual offenders to a variety of audiences and has produced more than fifty publications, as well as having presented numerous papers throughout North America.

Dr. Jan Looman is currently employed by Providence Care Mental Health in Kingston, Ontario on the forensic unit. Dr. Looman has previously been employed by CSC as the Clinical Manager at the Regional Treatment Center Ontario, a psychiatric hospital serving the Federal Prison system in Ontario, Canada. From 1997-2011 he was Program Director of the Regional Treatment Centre Sex Offender Treatment Program. For the past number of years he has conducted Sexually Violent Predator assessments in Washington State. He has carried out training regarding the assessment and treatment of sex offenders at various conferences and workshops and has more than fifty peer-reviewed publications in this area.

BETTER TOGETHER

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Gloomy Corners and Dark Triad: The Development of a Virtual Reality Task to Study the Assessment of Victim Vulnerability

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In the field of violent crime and sexual offences, criminal premeditation and victim selection play an important role in the criminal process and explanatory theories regarding the offending process (Proulx, et al., 1999a; Proulx, et al., 1999b). In fact, several theoretical models (Ward et al., 1995), typologies (Proulx et al., 1999a, 1999b), risk evaluation methods (Serin, Barbaree, Seto, Malcolm, & Peacock, 1997), and intervention strategies (Pithers et al., 1983) utilize premeditation and the decision process as an important foundation for their theoretical developments. Although much work focuses on criminal premeditation and predation, we know little about the general mechanisms of criminal predation, or more specifically, on the detection of criminal opportunities and the mechanisms used by sexual and violent offenders to identify targets (Black, Woodworth & Porter, in press). Most of the sparse knowledge we have about the psychological processes in general and criminal processes and actions in particular comes from self-reported recollections of past crimes or hypothetical scenarios of potential criminal situations (Baumeister, Vohs, & and Funder, 2007; Exum, Turner & Hartman, 2011).

The main objective of this study was to develop a better understanding of the factors influencing perceived vulnerability, especially the possible effects of the dark triad of personality on victim selection. A better understanding of the mechanisms by which offenders identify potential targets could allow for the development of more effective prevention strategies as well as methods to discourage potential offenders.

Method:

Using virtual reality, a sample of 30 offenders were exposed to synthetic characters in a linear park and were asked to assess their level of vulnerability. The synthetic characters' movements were based on a collection of movements, body language, and facial expressions that were collected amongst two groups of people: victims of a criminal act and dominant and assertive non-victims. Body language (normal vs. vulnerable) were integrated into the virtual characters following motion capture (mo-cap) of the two groups of individuals performing activities of daily life while equipped with motion sensors (talking on the phone, walking down the street, discussing with someone, etc.). Dark triad personalities were measured by the Self-Report Psychopathy Scale-SF, (Paulhus, Neumann, & Hare, in press), and the D3-Short (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). The relationship between Dark triad traits and

BETTER TOGETHER

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vulnerability assessment was investigated. Theoretical and practical implications will be discussed, as well as the potential uses of synthetic characters in fundamental research in the field of sexual offending research.

Learning Goals:

- To understand the effects of facial expressions (vulnerable, sad, vs. angry vs. neutral) on estimated vulnerability of targets;
- To understand the effects of body language and gait (vulnerable vs. dominant) on estimated vulnerability of targets;
- To assess the contextual elements of vulnerability (daytime vs. nighttime);

Jean-Pierre Guay, PhD is a Professor at the School of Criminology at the University of Montreal and a researcher at the Philippe-Pinel Institute of Montreal and the International Center for Comparative Criminology. He received his Ph.D. in Criminology from the University of Montreal and completed two years of postdoctoral studies in the department of Psychology of Brandeis University in Massachusetts. He has been teaching risk assessment and statistics at the School of Criminology since 1999. His current research activities are in the fields of risk assessment, virtual reality, psychopathy, and predatory processes.

Stéphane Cyr Desjardins, MSc is a graduate student in psychology at the Université du Québec à Montréal. He specializes in emotional responses in humans and intra-species predatory processes.

Marie-France Paquette is a graduate student in criminology at the University of Montréal. She specializes virtual reality, psychophysiological assessment and violent crimes.