

## Self-Esteem, Narcissism and Psychopathy and Sexual Offending Against Children

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### SELF-ESTEEM

- Favorable vs. unfavorable self-evaluation
  - Explicit vs. Implicit
- Low self-esteem has been theoretically linked to sex offending
  - Lower self-esteem among SOCs (Whitaker et al., 2008)
  - Self-esteem has not been consistently linked with sexual recidivism (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005)
- High self-esteem linked with aggression (David & Kistner, 2000)
  - Moderated by narcissism? (Bushman et al., 2009)



### SELF-ESTEEM

- Discrepant self-esteem
  - Inconsistency between explicit and implicit self-esteem
  - “Discrepant high” self-esteem
    - High explicit, low implicit
    - Linked with increased anger/aggression (Bosson, 2001)
    - Key feature of narcissism? (Zeigler-Hill, 2006)



### NARCISSISM

- Cluster of traits (Miller & Campbell, 2010)
  - Egocentric, entitled, diminished sense of empathy
  - Attention-seeking, interpersonally exploitative, manipulative
  - Vulnerable narcissism (discrepant self-esteem)
  - Grandiose narcissism (high self-esteem; Miller et al., 2008)
- Theoretical link with sex offending (Bushman et al., 2003)
- Some empirical support (Kosson et al., 1997)
- Relevance of to sex offending against children?



### PSYCHOPATHY

- Cluster of affective, interpersonal, and behavioural traits
  - Lacks emotional depth, chronically under-aroused, diminished sense of empathy
  - Manipulative, interpersonally exploitative, irresponsible
  - Moderate correlations with narcissism
- Theoretical link with sexual aggression (Harris et al., 2007)
- Increased risk of general, violent- and sexual recidivism (Harris et al., 2007; Olver & Wong, 2006; Parent, Guay, & Knight, 2011)



### PURPOSE

- Explore the degree to which self-esteem, narcissism, and psychopathy are related
  - Explicit, implicit, and discrepant self-esteem and narcissism
- Examine whether self-esteem, narcissism, or psychopathy differentiate between SOCs and NSOs
  - Explicit, implicit, and discrepant self-esteem
- Examine whether self-esteem, narcissism, or psychopathy are related to risk of violent (including sexual) recidivism in SOCs
  - Explicit, implicit, and discrepant self-esteem and narcissism



## PARTICIPANTS

- $N = 87$  (ungrouped analyses)
- $n = 72$  (grouped analyses)
- SOC:  $n = 28$
- NSO:  $n = 44$
- SOCs and NSOs differed significantly on age, ethnicity, and education
- No appreciable impact on results of analyses



## MEASURES

### Narcissism

- Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Hall, 1979)

### Psychopathy

- Self-report Psychopathy Scale (SRP-III; Paulhus et al., in press)

### Risk

- SORAG (Quinsey et al., 1998)



## MEASURES

### Explicit self-esteem

- Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1979)
- Self-esteem Semantic Differentials (SDSE)
  - "I am"
    - Negative to Positive
    - Unlikable to Likeable
    - Unpleasant to Pleasant
    - Bad to Good
    - Unlovable to Lovable
- Short Self-esteem Scale (SSES; Thornton)



## MEASURES

### Implicit self-esteem

- Self-esteem Implicit Association Test (SE-IAT)

- SELF: ME, MY, MINE, SELF, I
- OTHER: THEY, THEM, OTHER, HIM, HE
- Positive: peace, good, smile, happy, paradise
- Negative: rotten, poor, sickness, poison, bad

- Higher IAT scores indicate more positive evaluation of self relative to others



## RESULTS

### CORRELATIONS: SELF-ESTEEM, NARCISSISM, AND PSYCHOPATHY

Measure	NPI	RSES	SDSE	SSES	SE-IAT
NPI		.27*	.17	.17	-.02
SRP	.55**	.03	-.11	-.04	.03
SRP-IPM	.50**	-.04	-.18	-.01	-.02
SRP-CA	.42**	.01	-.23*	-.05	-.02
SRP-ELS	.49**	-.01	-.002	-.13	.02
SRP-CT	.33**	.13	.05	.05	.11

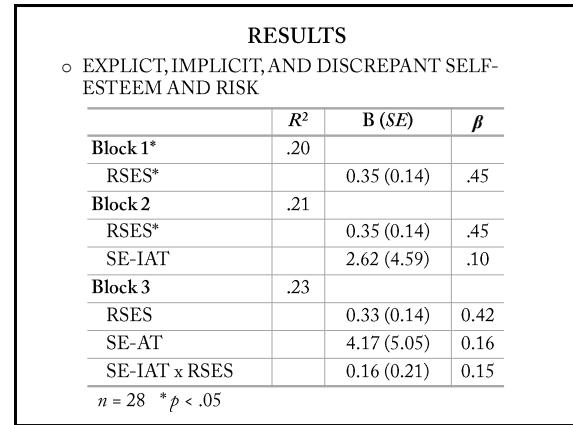
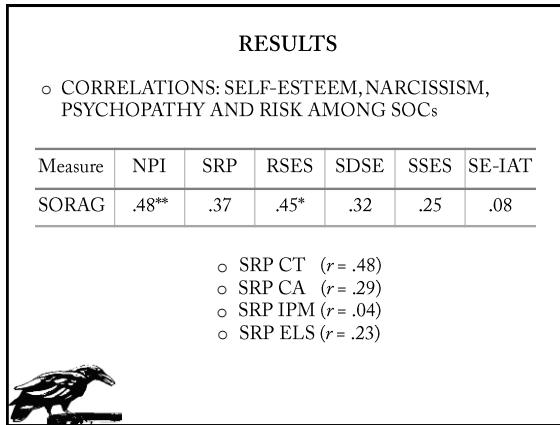
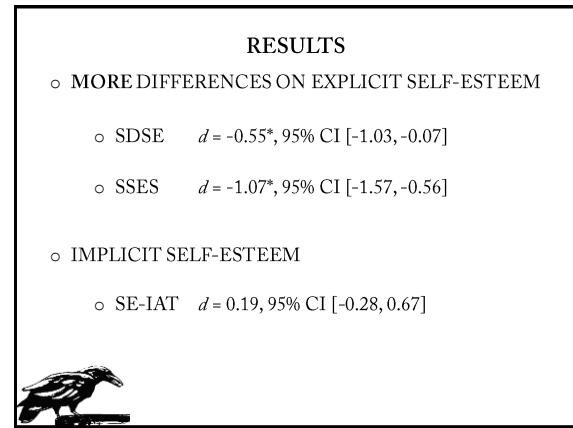
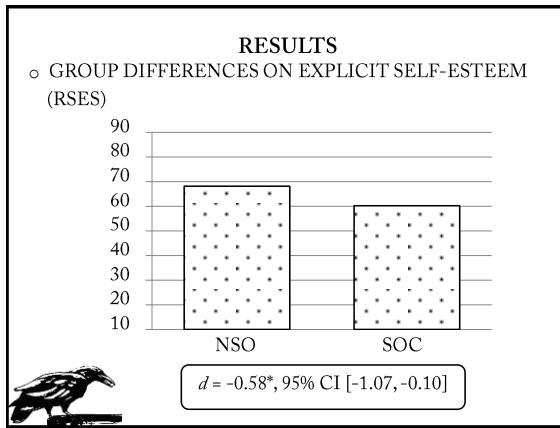
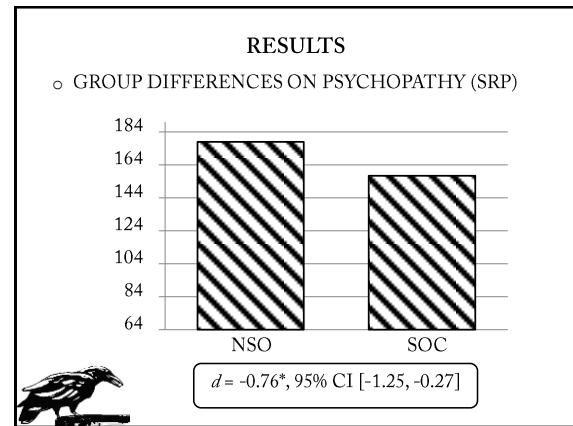
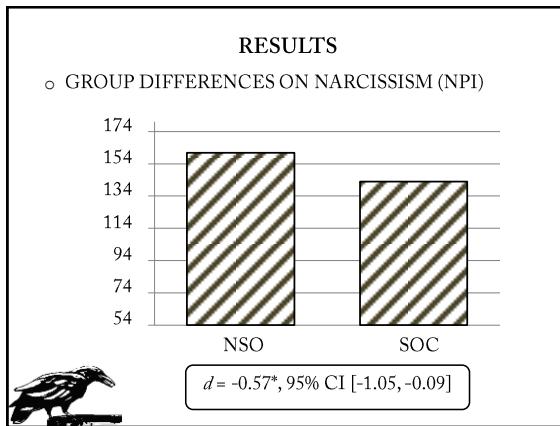


## RESULTS

### EXPLICIT, IMPLICIT, AND DISCREPANT SELF-ESTEEM, AND NARCISSISM

- Hierarchical multiple regression analyses
  - "Independent": Implicit (SE-IAT), explicit (RSES), and discrepant self-esteem (SE-IAT\*RSES)
  - "Dependent": Narcissism (NPI)
  - Ungrouped analyses ( $n = 87$ )
  - Grouped analyses (SOC  $n = 28$ ; NSO  $n = 44$ )
  - Only explicit self-esteem (RSES) was significantly associated with narcissism





## RESULTS

- EXPLICIT SELF-ESTEEM, NARCISSISM, AND RISK

	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	B (SE)	<i>β</i>
Block 1*	.23		
NPI*		0.19 (0.07)	.48
Block 2	.31		
NPI*		0.14 (0.07)	.36
RSES		0.24 (0.14)	.31

*n* = 28 \* *p* < .05



## SUMMARY

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES

- High trait narcissism significantly associated with high explicit self-esteem
- Narcissism not associated with implicit or discrepant self-esteem

### GROUP DIFFERENCES

- SOCs had significantly lower explicit self-esteem, trait narcissism and psychopathy than NSOs

### RISK

- High explicit self-esteem significantly associated with higher risk of recidivism only when narcissism was not accounted for



## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Results did not support increasing self-esteem as a method of reducing risk of recidivism among SOC
- Low self-esteem as a responsivity factor?
- SOCs explicit self-esteem scores vs. norms
- Small sample size
- Multiple regression analyses
- Cross-sectional design
- Sex offenders against adults?



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## THANK YOU

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More about our research

Aggressive Cognitions and Behaviour Research Lab  
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