

S - 9A

ASSESSMENT AND ASPECTS OF PSYCHOPATHY

Tine Wøbbe (organizer)

The focus of the two presenters will be upon psychopathy as a general construct and the association between psychopathy and violence from a mentalization-based perspective.

Tine Wøbbe: Psychopathy remains to be one of the most discussed and debated “constructs” in psychiatry. It is not a (formal) diagnosis, it cannot (easily) be treated, the psychopaths himself is most often not suffering from his “condition” – but his surroundings are as psychopathy is closely linked to violence, and the forensic system often deals with both psychopaths and their victims. Psychopathy is generally assessed in adults, but over the past few decades an increasing awareness among clinicians and researches has yielded attention to psychopathy in adolescents.

Mickey Kongerslev: Converging evidence exists to suggest a robust association between psychopathy and violence. Still, however, little is known about the underlying bio-psycho-social mechanisms mediating this association. In this presentation, a review of studies demonstrating such links will be presented. Then the findings will be discussed from a mentalization-based perspective. Mentalization, defined as the processes by which human beings understand themselves and others as psychological agents and beings, is a multidimensional social-cognitive-affective construct.

It will be argued, that partial dysfunctions in mentalizing might be some the core psychological mechanisms underlying psychopathy, and mediating/explaining its links with violence and other antisocial tendencies.

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