Psychological Factors

Psychological and environmental factors can trigger schizophrenia if the individual is genetically predisposed (Nicols & Gottesman, 1983).

The genetically identical Genain sisters suffer from schizophrenia. Two of them suffered more than the other two; thus there are contributing environmental factors.

Social Class and Schizophrenia

- Schizophrenia is most common at lower socioeconomic status (SES) levels
- "Breeder" Hypothesis
  - stressors associated with low SES increase the likelihood that schizophrenia will develop
- Social Selection ("Downward Drift") Theory
  - individuals with schizophrenia drift into low SES areas because they cannot function in other environments
  - Research supports social selection

Etiology of Schizophrenia: Psychological Stress

- Reaction to stress
  - Individuals with schizophrenia and their first-degree relatives more reactive to stress
    - During stressful situations, show greater decreases in positive mood and increases in negative mood
**Etiology of Schizophrenia: Family Factors**

- **“Schizophrenogenic” mother??**
  - Cold, domineering, conflict inducing
  - No support for this theory
- **Communication deviance (CD)**
  - Hostility and poor communication
    - Family CD predicted onset in one longitudinal study
    - BUT … CD not specific to families of schizophrenic patients

**Etiology of Schizophrenia: Families and Relapse**

- Family environment impacts rehospitalization
- **Expressed Emotion (EE; Brown et al., 1966)**
  - Hostility, critical comments, emotional overinvolvement
- **Bi-directional association**
  - Unusual patient thoughts → increased critical comments
  - Increased critical comments → unusual patient thoughts

**Warning Signs**

Early warning signs of schizophrenia include:

1. A mother’s long lasting schizophrenia.
3. Short attention span and poor muscle coordination.
4. Disruptive and withdrawn behavior.
5. Emotional unpredictability.
6. Poor peer relations and solo play.

**Personality Disorders**

Personality disorders are characterized by inflexible and enduring behavior patterns that impair social functioning. They are usually without anxiety, depression, or delusions.
Classifying Personality Disorders

- 10 personality disorders classified into 3 clusters:
  - Cluster A Odd/Eccentric: (paranoid, schizoid, schizotypal)
  - Cluster B Dramatic/Erratic: (histrionic, antisocial, narcissistic, borderline)
  - Cluster C Anxious/Fearful: (obsessive-compulsive, dependent, avoidant)

Antisocial Personality Disorder

- DSM-IV Criteria for ASPD
  - Must be at least 18 years old
  - Three or more of the following:
    - Conduct disorder before age 15
    - Disregard for the rights of others since age 15
    - Impulsive, irresponsible behavior
    - Deceitfulness
    - Irritability and aggressiveness
    - Reckless disregard for the safety of others
    - Lack of remorse
    - Low tolerance for frustration and boredom

- Similar to a “psychopath” (e.g., Ted Bundy)

Prevalence of ASPD

- Prevalence: 3.6% in general population
  - 5.5% in men
  - 1.9% in women
- Approximately 10 - 25% of incarcerated offenders meet criteria for psychopathy, closer to 40% for ASPD

What is psychopathy?

- Predates DSM-IV-TR category
- Core features:
  - Psychopaths lack remorse
  - Poverty of emotions (positive & negative)
  - Superficially charming
  - Pathological liars & cheaters
  - Impulsive; sensation seekers
  - Manipulative, will change story to fit facts
  - Less responsive to fear/anxiety
  - Immoral
  - Usually diagnosed in men
ASPD and Psychopathy

• Most psychopaths would qualify as having ASPD, but not all individuals with ASPD are psychopaths
  – For example, all serial killers would probably qualify as psychopaths, but not all psychopaths are serial killers

• A key difference: Lack of remorse -- is needed to be considered a psychopath, but not for the diagnosis of ASPD.

Understanding Antisocial Personality Disorder

Like mood disorders and schizophrenia, antisocial personality disorder has biological and psychological origins. Youngsters with antisocial personality characteristics, (even before committing any crimes), respond with lower levels of stress hormones than others do at their age.

Antisocial Personality Disorder

• Emotion and psychopathy
  – Lack of fear or anxiety
  – Low baseline levels of skin conductance (sweating)
  – Low skin conductance reactivity at age 3 predicted APD at age 28 (Glenn et al., 2007)

• Makes it difficult for them to avoid behavior that leads to punishment
• Also show less SCR to other’s distress
  – Lack empathy

PET scans of 41 murderers revealed reduced activity in the frontal lobes. In a follow-up study, repeat offenders had 11% less frontal lobe activity compared to normal individuals (Raine et al., 1999; 2000).
The likelihood that one will commit a crime doubles when childhood poverty is compounded with obstetrical complications (Raine et al., 1999; 2000).

Rates of Psychological Disorders

The prevalence of psychological disorders across different countries (WHO, 2004).

Risk and Protective Factors

Risk and protective factors for mental disorders (WHO, 2004).

### Cultural Influences Also Matter. Understanding Antisocial Personality Disorder

The likelihood that one will commit a crime doubles when childhood poverty is compounded with obstetrical complications (Raine et al., 1999; 2000).

### Rates of Psychological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalized anxiety</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phobia</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive disorder</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood disorder</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial personality</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any mental disorder</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data from Nunnally & others, 2002).

### Rates of Psychological Disorders

The prevalence of psychological disorders across different countries (WHO, 2004).

### Risk and Protective Factors

Risk and protective factors for mental disorders (WHO, 2004).

### Cultural Influences Also Matter. Understanding Antisocial Personality Disorder

The likelihood that one will commit a crime doubles when childhood poverty is compounded with obstetrical complications (Raine et al., 1999; 2000).
## Risk and Protective Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low socio-economic status</td>
<td>Positive parent-child relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical illness</td>
<td>Problem-solving skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurocognitive impairment</td>
<td>Resilient coping with stress and adversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental mental illness</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental substance abuse</td>
<td>Social and work skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal loss and bereavement</td>
<td>Social support from family and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor work skills and habits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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