

*From the Office of*  
**John F. Edens, Ph.D.**  
**Licensed Psychologist (Texas #31105)**

## **Confidential Psychological Evaluation**

(The contents of this report may not be divulged or released without the expressed permission of the examinee)

**Examinee:** XXX YYY

**Examiner:** John F. Edens, Ph.D.

**Evaluation Date:** 12/06/2010

### **Reason for Referral and Brief Summary of Relevant Background Information**

XXX YYY, a 30 year old Caucasian female, was self-referred for an assessment of personality traits and characteristics, particularly focusing on those associated with the concept of psychopathy, or psychopathic personality. Ms. YYY openly acknowledged that she believes that over the course of her lifetime she has exhibited many of the core features of what she eventually learned has been historically labeled psychopathy (which she refers to as being a "sociopath"). She is seeking professional input as to whether her self-assessment is consistent with currently accepted conceptualizations of this constellation of traits in the field of personality assessment. Of note, Ms. YYY's stated motivation for this evaluation is not for the purpose of referral for mental health services or other forms of intervention, nor was it prompted in response to any particular legal issues or difficulties. Rather, Ms. YYY indicated that she is simply interested in obtaining formal and objective assessment information concerning the extent to which her personality profile is or is not consistent with psychopathy.

Ms. YYY currently is employed as a law professor. She is a graduate of a prestigious law school and has previously worked in applied legal settings. She was a National Merit Scholar as a high school student and described always having excelled academically, despite having been something of a "behavior problem" throughout her years of formal education.

Ms. YYY is single, has no children, and is not involved in a significant romantic relationship at this time. She reports currently having a positive relationship with her family, although also acknowledged some history of conflict with her parents. From a socioeconomic standpoint, her upbringing would appear to be best characterized as upper middle class.

### **Sources of Information**

Clinical Interview (3 hours)

Completed 12/06/2010

Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (PPI-R; Lilienfeld & Widows, 2005)

Completed 12/01/2010

Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992)

Completed 12/06/2010

Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI; Morey, 1991/2007)

Completed 12/06/2010

Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version (PCL:SV; Hart, Cox, & Hare, 1995)  
Administered 12/06/2010; Scored 12/07/2010  
Review of extensive written materials produced by Ms. YYY

### **Behavioral Observations**

Ms. YYY was on time for her evaluation appointment. She was neatly groomed, appropriately dressed, and appeared her stated age of 30. Although no formal cognitive assessment was conducted, Ms. YYY is clearly an intelligent individual, as evidenced by her verbal abilities during the interview—as well as by her written works and her considerable academic achievement and occupational success over the course of her life. There were no signs of any significant clinical symptomatology (e.g., evidence of impaired thought processes, delusions, psychomotor agitation) or other form of cognitive or emotional impairment. Ms. YYY was articulate, well-spoken, and presented as very self-confident and exceedingly comfortable in describing her life history. Her mood seemed for the most part mildly elated and she appeared to some extent boastful about her past accomplishments, as well as her ability to charm and manipulate various individuals in her social network (e.g., teachers, romantic interests, colleagues) over the course of her life.

Of particular note, over the course of the three hour interview Ms. YYY spoke openly and at length about many aspects of her past life experiences that typically would elicit some degree of embarrassment, shame, and/or emotional distress among most individuals who were being interviewed by a relative stranger. Yet she showed no signs of any discomfort or anxiety and in fact laughed during descriptions of certain events that normally would elicit some degree of sadness or angst. Similarly, in describing various social and recreational activities that most would describe as socially undesirable, Ms. YYY appeared unperturbed and essentially unconcerned with how others might judge her conduct. The only notable exception to this was her acknowledgement that she reacts with considerable hostility to authority figures who overtly attempt to “shame” her if they disapprove of her conduct.

### **Summary of Assessment Results**

Ms. YYY was administered a series of well-validated and reliable self-report personality inventories as part of her evaluation. Her approach to completing these tests suggested that she attended appropriately to the item content and the results are likely to provide useful insights into her psychological functioning. Her response style in terms of self-disclosure across these measures was somewhat unusual, in that in some instances she seemed exceedingly forthcoming and willing to acknowledge personal flaws and limitations, whereas on other tests her approach appeared more guarded and prone to positive impression management. Despite these concerns, the consistency of the identified personality pattern across all measures (detailed below) suggests that the results are a valid reflection of her current functioning.

Ms. YYY first completed the PPI-R, a self-report questionnaire developed to tap various personality characteristics historically thought to be indicative of psychopathic personality. This scale provides both a total score indicative of a global index of psychopathic traits as well as eight subscales assessing narrower and more specific traits. A wealth of research suggests that the subscales of the PPI-R tap two broad dimensions of psychopathic traits, with one being more aligned with a fearlessly dominant interpersonal style and the other more indicative of tendencies towards disinhibited, self-centered, and impulsive externalizing behaviors. Across

both the PPI-R total score and two broadband dimensions, Ms. YYY scored beyond the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile of the community normative data for someone her age and gender. Perhaps more notably, Ms. YYY's results were beyond the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile for *any* subsample within the PPI-R's normative database, regardless of age or gender. Needless to say, these findings are highly consistent with a psychopathic personality structure.

Ms. YYY also completed the NEO-PI-R, a self-report questionnaire developed to assess five broadband personality characteristics (e.g., extraversion, conscientiousness) in the "normal" (as opposed to pathological) range of functioning, as well as numerous narrower facets within each of these five broad personality domains. Notable in Ms. YYY's presentation were markedly low scores on characteristics such as agreeableness (that is, high antagonism), dutifulness, and emotional distress and markedly elevated scores on indicators of assertiveness, positive emotionality, and impulsivity. Perhaps most informative, her profile across the subscales of the NEO-PI-R was remarkably similar to what relevant authorities in personality assessment have argued is the prototypical psychopathic personality among females.

The PAI, which is a broad-band self-report measure of personality and psychopathology, also was completed by Ms. YYY during her evaluation. Unlike the NEO-PI-R, which primarily assesses normal range personality domains, the PAI taps a broad range of symptoms of mental disorder, psychopathology, interpersonal style, and other areas of clinical concern (e.g., suicidal thoughts, stressful life events, motivation for change). Most notable in Ms. YYY's clinical presentation on the PAI were pronounced elevations on scales tapping antisocial and psychopathic traits (particularly egocentricism and sensation-seeking characteristics), interpersonal dominance, verbal aggression, and excessive self-esteem, as well as very low scores on measures tapping negative affective experiences (e.g., phobias, traumatic stressors, depressive symptoms), interpersonal nurturance and stressful life events. Here again, her overall profile reflected a constellation of personality characteristics and interpersonal style highly consistent with current conceptualizations of psychopathy.

The PCL:SV, as the name implies, is a checklist of criteria historically associated with Hare's (1991) conceptualization of psychopathy. Based closely on the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (1991), which is a more extensive professional rating scale that is typically not appropriate for evaluating non-criminals residing in the community, the PCL:SV was developed to assess for psychopathic features while relying less on the extensive file and criminal history data required to complete the PCL-R. The PCL:SV is comprised of 12 individual criteria scored using a 0 – 2 range, which are summed to form a total score (range = 0 to 24) and two discernable constellations ("parts") of psychopathic traits (range for both = 0 to 12). Part 1 reflects primarily affective (e.g., lacks remorse and empathy for others) and interpersonal (e.g., deceitfulness, grandiosity) features of psychopathy, whereas Part 2 taps more socially deviant behaviors and activities (e.g., irresponsibility, impulsivity, adult antisocial behavior).

Despite being less directly wedded to assessing psychopathic traits via their expression in overtly criminal behavior, the PCL:SV is still strongly wedded to Hare's criminogenically oriented model of psychopathy, which places relatively less weight on key interpersonal (e.g., dominance, boldness) and emotional (e.g., fearlessness, absence of anxiety) features that are central to many seminal theories of psychopathy that are less directly concerned with criminal conduct. Given that Ms. YYY has no documented criminal record (according to her self-report) the relevance and applicability of a PCL:SV score in her case might be somewhat questionable and may in fact understate her "true" level of psychopathic traits.

That being said, during the interview Ms. YYY openly acknowledged a significant history of impulsive, aggressive, and generally irresponsible conduct that, while perhaps not having resulted in criminal charges, easily could have led to various encounters with the criminal justice system under different life circumstances. Moreover, these actions appear to have been almost entirely for thrill-seeking purposes rather than for any type of economic gain or other instrumental purpose. Whether Ms. YYY's lack of police contact has been due to her successfully manipulating her way out of "jams," various protective factors evident in her life (e.g., high intelligence and educational success, generally supportive family structure, and other socioeconomic advantages), random luck, or some combination of all of the above is unclear at this time.

Ms. YYY's total score on the PCL:SV was 19. Although there are no sharp diagnostic cut-offs on the PCL:SV, according to the instrument's professional manual (Hart et al., 1995) total scores of 18 and higher are argued to "offer a strong indication of psychopathy" (p. 22). Her Part 1 score was 12 and her Part 2 score was 7. Notably, 12 is the maximum score one can obtain on Part 1 of this rating scale and indicates the presence of pronounced affective and interpersonal characteristics typically evidenced by highly psychopathic individuals.

### **Summary**

XXX YYY is a 30 year old Caucasian female seeking an assessment of her personality, particularly in regards to the presence or absence of psychopathic traits. Across multiple self-report inventories tapping both normal-range and pathological personality characteristics, her presentation in many regards could be considered that of a prototypical psychopathic personality. Additionally, the results of the PCL:SV assessment largely converge with this description, particularly in regards to the affective and interpersonal features displayed by Ms. YYY, such as a pronounced lack of empathy, a ruthless and calculating attitude towards social and interpersonal relationships, and a relative immunity to experiencing negative emotions.

By all accounts Ms. YYY has thus far experienced relatively few objective (or subjective) negative consequences associated with being highly psychopathic—and in many regards appears to have excelled across various life domains (e.g., academic, occupational). This suggests that one might describe her as a "socialized" or "successful" psychopath, or at least a relatively non-maladaptive variant of this personality pattern. Although cognizant that she is "different" from most people she knows in terms of her personality structure, Ms. YYY does not view herself as "disordered" in the sense of suffering from a form of mental illness per se. Quite the contrary, she seems content with her lifestyle and its current trajectory and rather blasé about many issues and concerns that might cause others some degree of uncertainty or distress. Of course, such attitudes are emblematic of individuals who are highly psychopathic.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning the contents of this report or if I can be of further assistance in this matter.

Cordially,

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John F. Edens, Ph.D.

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Date