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# Does Psychopathy Predict Desirability in Speed Dating Situations? A Social Relations Analysis

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The University of Southern Mississippi

DOES PSYCHOPATHY PREDICT DESIRABILITY IN SPEED DATING  
SITUATIONS? A SOCIAL RELATIONS ANALYSIS

by

Kathleen Tucker Payne

Abstract of a Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate School  
of The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2011

## ABSTRACT

### DOES PSYCHOPATHY PREDICT DESIRABILITY IN SPEED DATING SITUATIONS? A SOCIAL RELATIONS ANALYSIS

by Kathleen Tucker Payne

August 2011

Psychopathy is a multifaceted construct that can lead to a number of consequences including many that could interfere with interpersonal relations and romantic attractions. The speed-dating paradigm allows researchers to study various aspects of interpersonal relations. The present study examined how the two-factor structure of psychopathy, as measured by the Psychopathic Personality Inventory (PPI; Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996), may influence evaluations of initial romantic attraction during speed-dating events. Factor I, or “fearless dominance,” is characterized by the affective and interpersonal aspects of psychopathy, whereas factor II on the PPI represents “impulsive antisociality” and is characterized by the more antisocial features of psychopathy. Kenny’s (1994) social relations model was used to study the relation between initial romantic attraction and perceived psychopathic traits in a sample of 129 college students. As hypothesized, there was significant consensus and assimilation, indicating that ratings were partly due to the rater and partly due to the individual being rated. It was also hypothesized that participants’ PPI scores would be related to how they were rated as well as to how they rated their dates. Men higher on factor II of the PPI generally had a negative impression of the women they met, whereas women’s PPI scores were unrelated to their perceiver effects. Additionally, individuals who were seen as attractive tended to see their dates as lower on variables typically valued in social

interactions. There was a tendency for women who scored high on PPI-I to be seen as selfish, whereas men who scored high on PPI-I tended to be seen as attractive. Women saw men high on PPI-II as less confident and having low self-esteem, low narcissistic traits, and high sincerity. As expected, attractiveness played a significant role in ratings of desirability. The present study provides limited evidence that psychopathy has interpersonal consequences, and also evidence that the speed dating paradigm is effective for examining the process of initial romantic attraction.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“I wanted it to go back to like when we first met in the beginning---he was so charming, so humorous and complimentary---unlike any guy I ever met and got swept off my feet. He found me at a time during the midst of an estrangement--my ego needed a boost. Nevertheless in the midst of this charm, there was also this gut feeling that something was not right” (<http://groups.msn.com/PSYCHOPATH>)

Although the subject has been debated for many years, researchers agree that psychopathy is a construct that comprises behavioral, affective, and interpersonal traits. Individuals classified as psychopaths most often “control others to satisfy their own selfish needs” (Hare, 1996, p. 26) in a rational, conscious way. These individuals exert this control using a myriad of traits. Such traits include superficial charm, lack of anxiety, seemingly “good intelligence,” egocentricity, impulsivity, irresponsibility, shallow emotions, lack of empathy, guilt, or remorse, pathological lying, manipulation, and persistent violation of social norms (Cleckley, 1988; Hare, 1996). Moreover, individuals high in psychopathy are indifferent to the probability of punishment for their actions. This multifaceted construct undoubtedly leads to a number of consequences including many that could interfere with interpersonal relations and romantic attractions, such as incarceration, hurting others, and ruining lives. Furthermore, psychopathic individuals have a tendency to engage in promiscuous sexual behaviors (Knight & Guay, 2006). Despite evidence supporting the role of psychopathy in social relations, few studies have examined psychopathy from an interpersonal perspective (Mahaffey & Marcus, 2006).

The purpose of the current study was to examine how psychopathic traits are related to how individuals behave in the early stages of interpersonal relations and romantic attraction. The study also examined how psychopathic traits are related to how individuals are perceived in these first stages, including information about the

transparency of psychopathic traits. Furthermore, the current study may extend the literature on the two-factor model of psychopathy in noncriminal populations.

Speed-dating is an ecologically valid paradigm that provides researchers an opportunity to assess individuals' brief evaluations of potential romantic partners. This paradigm also allows for the examination of how psychopathy may influence these evaluations. Furthermore, this paradigm permits researchers to study different aspects of interpersonal relations (i.e., perceptions of each individual and the interaction between the two individuals).

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Two-Factor Model of Psychopathy

Psychopathy has most often been characterized as a two-factor construct. Factor analyses of two well-validated measures, the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R; Hare, 1991) and the Psychopathic Personality Inventory (PPI; Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996), have both yielded two factors. Cooke, Michie, and Hart (2006) explained the two-factor model well when they asserted, “[the two factors] can be regarded as distinct facets of a superordinate construct in the way that verbal and performance intelligence underpins general intelligence” (p. 94). For example, research on the PCL-R, a semi-structured interview that is based on both Cleckley’s psychopathy criteria and DSM’s criteria for antisocial personality disorder (Hart & Hare, 1989), has demonstrated that factor 1 evaluates personality characteristics related to the affective-interpersonal aspect of psychopathic behavior, whereas factor 2 evaluates impulsivity and deviant behaviors (Harris, Rice, & Quinsey, 1994). The PCL-R was originally validated using male prison inmates and forensic psychiatric populations to determine the degree to which the individuals in these populations exhibited traits thought to be characteristic of psychopaths (Hare et al., 1990). Factor 1 comprises items like glibness, grandiosity, conning, manipulative, callousness, and lacking remorse (Harris et al., 1994). Furthermore, lovelessness and poor attachments seem to be associated with Factor 1 (Fowles & Dindo, 2006). On the other hand, factor 2 encompasses items like impulsivity, irresponsibility, parasitic lifestyle, proneness to boredom, incompetence in antisocial behavior, and poor behavior controls.

Although originally validated using college students, research on the PPI has demonstrated similar findings (i.e., a two-factor construct was revealed). Specifically, Benning Patrick, Hicks, Blonigen, and Krueger (2003) found that factor 1 on the PPI represents a “fearless dominance” factor, characterized by the affective and interpersonal aspects of psychopathy (e.g., fearlessness, manipulateness, social dominance, narcissism), whereas factor 2 on the PPI represents “impulsive antisociality” and is characterized by the more antisocial features of psychopathy (e.g., impulsivity, irresponsibility, aggression). The PPI scales Social Potency, Stress Immunity, and Fearlessness load onto PPI-I. PPI-II is composed of the Impulsive Nonconformity, Machiavellian Egocentricity, Carefree Nonplanfulness, and Blame Externalization scales. These two factors are thought to originate from two distinct etiologies, thus an individual may score high on one factor but not on the other (Hall & Benning, 2006). Researchers have reported that these factors appear orthogonal with correlations between the two factors ranging from  $r = -.07$  (Benning et al., 2003) to  $r = .04$  (Patrick, Edens, Poythress, Lilienfeld, & Benning, 2006). The divergence among the two PPI factors can be further illuminated by examining correlates that appear to be positively related to one factor and negatively related to the other. Fearless dominance appears to embody traits that may potentially be more attractive and/or appealing to others. For example, PPI-I is composed of scales measuring social potency, or the ability to influence others, fearlessness, and a tendency to experience minimal anxiety (Benning, Patrick, Blonigen, Hicks, & Iacono, 2005). Furthermore, Benning et al. (2003) have demonstrated that PPI-I is positively correlated with well-being and achievement, and Patrick and colleagues (2006) found that PPI-I is positively related to work ethic and heroism. At first glance, these correlates can

make for a desirable mate. Benning et al., (2003) also revealed that education level, high school class rank, positive emotionality, and emotional resilience are positively related to PPI-I. Overall, it seems that Cleckley's (1988) often mentioned "convincing mask of sanity" is best represented by PPI-I. Individuals scoring high on PPI-I appear (a) well-adjusted, (b) dominant, (c) to experience low anxiety and (d) to seek thrills or risks.

Conversely, impulsive antisociality (i.e., PPI-II) is associated with more negative aspects of psychopathy; correlating with reckless, aggressive, rebellious behavior (Benning et al., 2003; Patrick et al., 2006). According to others (e.g., Fowles & Dindo, 2006), PPI-II also appears to be related to alienation, poor planning, a tendency to blame others, egocentricity, and negative emotionality; all traits that can serve to hinder relationships or simply "turn off" potential mates. Individuals who score high on PPI-II seem to be aggressive, self-centered, rebellious, and impulsive. This impulsivity may be associated with sexual promiscuity or risky sexual behavior, leading some individuals high in psychopathy to be indiscriminate about their romantic partners. In fact, item 100 on the PPI (Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996), "I can't imagine being sexually involved with more than one person at the same time," is reverse-scored and loads onto PPI-II. Moreover, researchers have found that antisocial behavior is highly correlated with sexual behavior (Harris, Rice, Hilton, Lalumière, & Quinsey, 2007). In contrast with PPI-I, PPI-II appears to be negatively related to education achievement, income, verbal intelligence, and constraint. Furthermore, PPI-II has been positively correlated with child and adult antisocial behavior and negative emotionality. Lastly, the two factors are divergent with respect to suicidal ideation, with PPI-I correlating negatively and PPI-II correlating positively with this trait.

### Social Visibility of Psychopathic Traits

Lilienfeld and Andrews (1996) validated the PPI with college samples to demonstrate the measure's usefulness with noncriminal populations. They correlated college students' PPI scores with ratings by friends and trained interviewers. The students were rated on a number of characteristics like trustworthiness, likeability, accuracy of reported emotions, ease of establishing rapport, and how interesting they were. Additionally, the interviewers and peers completed a measure of Cleckley's criteria for each student as adapted from Harkness (1992). The students' total scores on the PPI correlated highly with the interviewer assessed Cleckley criteria ( $r = 0.60$ ), and the peer-rated Cleckley criteria ( $r = 0.45$ ), whereas the total PPI scores negatively correlated with both trustworthiness ( $r = -.39$ ) and accuracy of reported emotions ( $r = -.30$ ). Therefore Lilienfeld and Andrews (1996) demonstrated that students' friends and non-friend trained interviewers were capable of detecting behaviors and traits associated with psychopathy. Their demonstration that psychopathic traits are visible in interpersonal relations supports the present study's purpose of examining the role psychopathy plays in interpersonal relations and/or romantic attractions.

In their study of interpersonal perception in a criminal population of "well-acquainted sex offenders," Mahaffey and Marcus (2006, p. 53) correlated self-reported psychopathy with peer ratings of psychopathy. A total of 63 offenders who were court-ordered to attend group therapy completed the PPI, and then each offender rated each group member on psychopathy-related behaviors/traits. They found that "the higher the individuals scored on the PPI, the more likely they were to be perceived by others as psychopathic" (p.65). Additionally, the individuals' group peers believed that those who

scored higher on the PPI were more likely to re-offend. Of particular interest, is the finding that the peers had these beliefs without knowing the individuals' scores on the PPI. Furthermore, Mahaffey and Marcus (2006) demonstrated assumed similarity among several dyadic variables. This finding suggests that when an individual saw himself as particularly high on one trait, there was a tendency for him to see others as high on the same trait. For example, there was a tendency for individuals in this study to see others as coldhearted if they saw themselves as coldhearted. Similarly, individuals who saw themselves as egocentric, socially potent, and/or impulsive tended to also see others as being high on these traits. In general, these findings support the present study's claim that self-reported psychopathy traits are related to interpersonal perceptions of similar traits.

Individuals who present themselves in an overly positive light are known as "aberrant self-promoters" (LeBreton, Binning, & Adorno, 2006). Aberrant self-promoters are similar to individuals who score high on fearless dominance (PPI-I) in that they tend to be very egocentric and endorse themselves as grandiose. These individuals are seen as differing from psychopaths "in degree, not kind" (Gustafson & Ritzer, 1995, p. 148). Unlike the success-oriented behavior encouraged and accepted in our country, their self-promotion is considered aberrant because the primary goal is to "further their own self-interests" (Gustafson & Ritzer, 1995, p. 148). Paulhus (1998) reported that after one encounter, "aberrant self-promoters" were perceived as well-adjusted, competent, and agreeable. Interestingly, after seven encounters, these same individuals were perceived negatively despite continuing to promote themselves. These findings suggest that grandiosity or egocentricity may be beneficial, at least in the beginning of a relationship and provide support for the present study's aim to demonstrate the interpersonal

consequences of psychopathy. Furthermore, it seems that individuals interacting with individuals high in PPI-I are highly aware of their egocentric tendencies (i.e., these traits are socially visible).

### Criminal vs. Noncriminal Psychopathy

Most studies that have examined psychopathy have used psychopathic criminal samples with whom it is especially common to see negative psychopathic traits. However, noncriminal samples often allow for the examination of “successful” psychopathy and factors that may protect against persistent participation in deviant behavior. In fact, Cleckley (1988) hypothesized that individuals high in psychopathy are present in almost every type of career and at any social economic status. Lykken (2006) has also suggested that psychopathic traits like superficial charm or fearlessness may actually help individuals in certain occupations (e.g., politics). Researchers have even demonstrated that certain traits as measured by the PPI (Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996) are correlated with positive factors like intelligence and SES (Benning et al., 2003). Additionally, findings based on criminal populations are not necessarily generalizable to noncriminal populations (Hall & Benning, 2006). The frequent use of criminal populations in the literature is due in part to the focus on antisocial and deviant acts as a standard definition of psychopathy. Thus, because criminals are incarcerated for violating norms and acting defiantly, this population is often the natural choice for studying the construct of psychopathy. Moreover, the base rate for psychopathy is higher in criminal settings. Nevertheless, there are noncriminal individuals who may possess the same traits and engage in some similar behaviors, but who are successful at either avoiding legal consequences and even act within the law (Hall & Benning, 2006).

Marcus, John, and Edens (2004) demonstrated that psychopathy, as measured by the PPI, is likely “best understood as existing on a continuum” (p. 626). Similarly, Guay, Ruscio, Knight, and Hare (2007) reported a dimensional structure of psychopathy as measured by the PCL-R. Both of these studies suggest that individuals high in psychopathy are not qualitatively distinct from others. Given that psychopathy is dimensional, it is important to study psychopathic behaviors among other non-criminal populations such as community mental health patients and undergraduates to further understand the nature of the construct. In fact, researchers have begun to recognize the value of validating measures designed to assess psychopathy in noncriminal populations (e.g., Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996; Lynam, Whiteside, & Jones, 1999).

#### Speed-Dating Paradigm

Because individuals high in psychopathy appear to initially present themselves in a positive light, speed dating is ideal for studying the social visibility of psychopathic traits, as it provides an opportunity to examine the relation between personality/social traits and initial attraction/perceptions. Researchers have begun to use the speed-dating paradigm to study initial romantic attraction, and this paradigm also allows researchers to examine predictors of relationships (Finkel, Eastwick, & Matthews, 2007). That is, speed-dating provides researchers a relatively quick way to examine why individuals choose certain partners over others. Additionally, in speed-dating sessions, the researcher can investigate the behaviors and preferences of both members of the interaction or dyad at one time. Without the appropriate methodology, it can be difficult to examine “important attraction phenomena” (Finkel & Eastwick, 2008, p.194) that occur in the beginning of a relationship. This “phenomena” involves two individuals making social

judgments about one another. Many studies of romantic attraction have examined only the perspective of one of the individuals (e.g., Dutton & Aron, 1974). The use of speed-dating in research, however, allows for examining naturally occurring dyadic processes like generalized and dyadic reciprocity. For example, the speed-dating paradigm allowed Eastwick, Finkel, Mochon, and Ariely (2007) to study generalized reciprocity effects. Specifically, they found that men and women who were less selective or indiscriminant in speed dating settings were perceived as desperate and “turn-off” their potential dates. Such processes can be explored using Kenny’s (1994) social relations model.

#### The Social Relations Model (SRM)

Kenny’s (1994) SRM includes four components: the perceiver, the target who is being evaluated, the relationship, and error. Because the questions of interest relate to consensus and assimilation, the focus in this study is the target and perceiver, respectively. Kenny’s question of consensus asks whether people agree with each other about, for example, who is desirable. Consider that Jane thinks that John is desirable. It may be that most women find John desirable. If this is the case then there would be large target variance, indicating consensus. It is possible, for instance, that individuals do not agree with each other in their perception of level of desirability of the same individual. In this case, there would be small target variance. Without consensus, identifying the importance of traits like desirability in interpersonal relations becomes much less meaningful.

Alternatively, Jane may rate most men as desirable, in which case much of the variance in her judgment would be due to the perceiver, indicating assimilation. Kenny’s (1994) assimilation question asks whether a perceiver sees multiple targets the same way.

Assimilation measures how much perceivers differ from one another in their perceptions of targets. In the case of desirability, if some perceivers view multiple targets as highly desirable, whereas others rate these targets as low in desirability, then there would be high assimilation regarding desirability.

If Jane generally does not rate most men as desirable and most women do not find John desirable, then her rating could be ascribed to their unique relationship. Without the other women perceivers' ratings of John, or without Jane's ratings of other men, it cannot be determined the extent to which Jane's evaluation of John could be ascribed to the perceiver, the target, or the relationship.

The SRM is used to partition the variance in interpersonal ratings into perceiver, target, and relationship variances by analyzing multiple perceivers' ratings of multiple targets. For the present study, a block design was used where two subgroups were formed (men and women). The members of one subgroup rated each member of the other subgroup, and vice versa. Using the SRM to analyze data from a speed-dating study also allowed for the study of the correlates of these variance components. Most important are the target by personality correlations. For example, consider Jane as the target who is being rated by multiple men (perceivers). Jane's target effect (derived from the men's ratings of Jane) will then be correlated with Jane's self reported psychopathy to determine whether Jane's scores on the PPI-I and PPI-II factors predict desirability ratings by the men. The SRM also allowed the examination of perceiver by personality correlations. For example, consider that John is the perceiver rating multiple women. John's perceiver effect (derived from his ratings of the women) will be correlated with

his self-reported psychopathy to determine whether his scores on PPI-I and PPI-II predict how he will rate these women.

## CHAPTER III

### PRESENT STUDY

#### Hypotheses

This study is unique in its attempt to examine the role of psychopathic traits on interpersonal attraction in a situation with real-life consequences (e.g., possible rejection by potential mates). Moreover, this study examined the role psychopathy plays in relations between men and women.

It was hypothesized that there would be significant perceiver variance, indicating assimilation, when men rated women and when women rated men. In a speed-dating study, Eastwick and Finkel (2007) reported moderate assimilation for chemistry, or having a connection, when both men (0.19) and women (0.13) rated others. Researchers have also reported a range of assimilation for ratings of likeability among perceivers from 0.16 (Chapdelaine, Kenny, & LaFontana, 1994) to 0.37 (DePaulo Kenny, Hoover, Webb, & Oliver, 1987). Eastwick and Finkel (2007) also demonstrated that there was consensus for who was romantically desirable when both men (0.27) and women (0.25) were rated. Other researchers have reported a range of consensus levels for ratings of likeability among perceivers for targets from 0.05 (DePaulo et al., 1987) to 0.45 (Malloy & Janowski, 1992). Therefore, it was also hypothesized that there would be significant target variance, indicating consensus, when men rated the desirability of women and when women rated the desirability of men.

Given that high scores on PPI-II are associated with sexual impulsivity or promiscuity, it was also hypothesized that willingness to date others would be predicted by the perceivers' PPI-II scores (i.e., there would be a positive correlation between the

PPI-II and perceiver effects). Because fearless dominance is associated with superficial charm, low anxiety, social potency, and being well-adjusted, it was further hypothesized that this factor (PPI-I), would predict desirability in a speed-dating scenario. That is, targets scoring higher on PPI-I would be rated as more desirable by perceivers attending the same speed-dating session. Conversely, it was hypothesized that impulsive antisociality, would be negatively related to desirability. In other words, targets scoring higher on PPI-II will be rated as less desirable. These hypotheses cannot be supported unless the first two corresponding hypotheses concerning assimilation and consensus are supported. Without significant assimilation, there is no evidence that the perceiver effects by personality correlations will be significant. Likewise, without significant consensus there is no basis for the argument that target effects will be related to the individuals' PPI scores. Non-significant consensus would indicate that perceivers disagree about who is dateable, whereas non-significant assimilation would indicate that the individual perceivers vary in their rating of potential mates, rather than rating them all similarly.

Because researchers (e.g., Mahaffey & Marcus, 2006) have demonstrated that self-reported psychopathy scores are related to how individuals perceive others, it was expected that perceivers' self-reported PPI-I scores would be positively related to the ratings of their dates on charm, narcissism, and competence (traits that are generally related to PPI-I). Likewise, perceivers' PPI-II scores were expected to be positively correlated to ratings of selfishness, insincerity, and impulsivity.

A substantial amount of research (e.g., Buss & Barnes, 1986) suggests that men are more likely than women to make judgments based on physical attractiveness. In brief encounters particularly, men may be more likely to evaluate potential mates based on

their physical appearance rather than on their personality traits (Fisman, Iyengar, Kamenica, & Simonson, 2006). Because this finding is well established, and will undoubtedly play a significant role in the present study's data, attractiveness was expected to be a predictor of ratings of desirability. In other words, it was hypothesized that there would be a positive correlation between attractiveness and target effects.

Furthermore, it was hypothesized that gender of the perceiver would be related to ratings of desirability. Researchers (e.g., Fisman et al., 2006) demonstrated that women are more selective (compared to men) in their choice of potential mates in groups, and that their selectivity increases as the size of the group increases. There is also an abundance of evolutionary research that supports that females tend to be more selective or discriminate when choosing a mate (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Clark & Hatfield, 1989). A woman's selectivity is often based on the earning prospects of the man in consideration, whereas a man's selectivity is often based on the physical attractiveness of the woman. Furthermore, Eastwick and Finkel (2007) found that men are more likely than women to engage in "yessing," or saying "yes" to dating potential mates they meet at speed dating events. According to Eastwick and Finkel (2008), this greater likelihood of men to say yes may be explained by their eagerness to find a potential romantic partner. Given these research findings, it is expected that men (compared to women) will be more impulsive or less discriminating in evaluating whether they would like to meet the women again for a date.

In summary, the current study evaluated the following hypotheses:

1. There will be significant assimilation for perceivers in regard to ratings of desirability.

- a. The perceiver variance when the men rate the women will be significant.
  - b. The perceiver variance when the women rate the men will be significant.
2. There will be significant consensus for targets in regard to ratings of desirability.
  - a. The target variance when the men rate the women will be significant.
  - b. The target variance when the women rate the men will be significant.
3. Perceiver effects for desirability will be related to self-reported psychopathy of the perceiver.
  - a. Perceiver effects will be positively correlated to PPI-I scores.
  - b. Perceiver effects will be positively correlated to PPI-II scores.
4. Target effects for desirability will be related to self-reported psychopathy of the target.
  - a. Target effects will be positively correlated to PPI-I scores.
  - b. Target effects will be negatively correlated to PPI-II scores.
5. There will be assumed similarity when perceiver effects are correlated with the perceivers' PPI scores.
  - a. Perceivers' PPI-I scores will be related to the ratings of their dates on PPI-I traits (e.g., charm, narcissism, competence).
  - b. Perceivers' PPI-II scores will be positively related to the ratings of their dates on PPI-II traits (e.g., selfishness, insincerity, impulsivity).

6. There will be self-other agreement when target effects are correlated with the targets' PPI scores.
  - b. Targets' PPI-I scores will be related to the ratings they receive on PPI-I traits (e.g., charm, narcissism, competence). Targets' PPI-II scores will be related to the ratings they receive on PPI-II traits (e.g., selfishness, insincerity, impulsivity).
7. Target effects for desirability will be related to attractiveness ratings of the target.
8. Target effects for desirability will be related to level of discrimination of the target: Targets who are less discriminating when they rate others will be perceived as less desirable.
9. Men will provide higher desirability ratings for the women than when the women rate the men.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHOD

#### Participants

The participants were 129 undergraduate students (69 women, 60 men) at the University of Southern Mississippi. They had a minimum age of 18 and mean age of 20.53 ( $sd = 4.79$ ; range 18 to 54). The majority of participants reported being Caucasian (67.4%), followed by African American (28.7%), Hispanic (1.6%), and Asian (1.6%). More than 75% of participants reported that their current marital status was single, whereas 12.4% identified themselves as casually dating, 8.5% as seriously dating, and 1.6% as married. Students were recruited to participate in this study through a series of advertisements for “Southern Miss Speed Dating.” Flyers and advertisements in the student newspaper served to promote the study. Three weeks before the first speed dating event, the first wave of advertisements was circulated. These advertisements encouraged students to consider these events as enjoyable and engaging alternatives to their usual dating scene, while concurrently informing them that the events were part of a research study. Approximately ten days before the first event, a second wave of advertisements was circulated. Students were required to complete a series of questionnaires online prior to the event to be eligible to participate. Students were awarded course credit for completing the questionnaires and attending the speed dating event.

#### Materials and Procedure

After registering online and providing informed consent, participants were assigned a random number to maintain anonymity. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time. Participants

were required to complete a series of questionnaires via SurveyMonkey on the Internet before attending a speed-dating event. The questionnaire segment lasted approximately one hour. The current study was part of a larger project that included a number of additional questionnaires. Only the measures relevant to the current study are described below (i.e., demographics form, PPI, and interaction form). Participants completed a demographics questionnaire that included items concerning their age, ethnicity, and marital status.

The PPI is a self-report scale consisting of 187 items. The scale measures the major personality characteristics of psychopathy without overtly referring to antisocial or criminal behaviors. Respondents rate each item on a 4-point Likert type scale with responses of false, mostly false, mostly true, and true. In addition to obtaining a total score for the PPI, there are scores for each of eight scales. Machiavellian Egocentricity is designed to measure narcissism and callousness in interpersonal relations. Social Potency measures perceived ability of the self to influence and manipulate others. Coldheartedness is designed to assess lack of guilt or remorse and a tendency to be callous. Carefree Nonplanfulness assesses one's careless attitude toward planning. Fearlessness measures anxiety or lack thereof related to harm of risky activities. Blame Externalization assesses the inclination to blame others and rationalize own behaviors. Impulsive Nonconformity is designed to measure lack of concern with social norms. Stress Immunity measures reactions or lack thereof in response to anxiety-provoking situations (Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996). With alphas ranging from 0.90 to 0.93, the PPI-total score has good internal consistency. The test-retest reliability for the PPI-total score is also very high ( $r = 0.95$ ) (Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996). As previously discussed, the

eight subscales have been factor analyzed into two factors (Benning et al., 2003). PPI-I, or Fearless Dominance, includes the Social Potency, Stress Immunity, and Fearlessness scales. PPI-II, or Impulsive Antisociality, includes Carefree Nonplanfulness, Impulsive Nonconformity, Machiavellian Egocentricity, and Blame Externalization. Coldheartedness does not load on either factor. The coefficient alphas for PPI-I and PPI-II in the current sample were 0.90 and 0.92, respectively.

When participants arrived at the speed dating event, they were given a packet with multiple copies of a 14-item Dyadic Rating Questionnaire (DRQ) that was created for the current study. The DRQ was completed after each four-minute date. All but one of the items were presented on a 7-point scale with two anchors. The first item required the participants to indicate whether they would be interested in exchanging emails with their “date.” The next two items (anchored by “not at all” and “very much”) assessed how much the rater would like to date the individual being rated and how well he or she knew the individual prior to attending the speed dating event. Three items (anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree”) asked perceivers to rate their partners on traits of self-esteem, competence, and how well he/she likes him/herself (i.e., narcissism). The remaining items, adapted from Mahaffey and Marcus’s (2006) social relations research, asked perceivers to rate their partners on psychopathy-related personality traits. Machiavellian Egocentricity was represented by “selfish—not selfish,” Social Potency by “charming—not charming,” Coldheartedness by “insincere—sincere,” and Carefree Nonplanfulness by “does not think before acting—thinks before he/she acts.” Mahaffey and Marcus (2006) found that these four items represent the factors that make the largest contribution to the total PPI (i.e., having the largest eigenvalues). Participants also rated

their dates on the traits “confident-insecure,” “attractive-unattractive,” “fun-dull,” and “outgoing-shy.” Each respondent completed a DRQ for each opposite sex participating member of his or her event. Not all of the items were included in the current analyses. Questions that assessed how well the participant knew his or her date prior to the event were excluded from the analyses because this information is not likely related to PPI scores. Likewise, perceived traits “fun-dull” and “outgoing-shy” were excluded because these traits are not representative of psychopathy.

Nine speed dating sessions were conducted during which participants engaged in four-minute speed dates with each opposite-sex individual that participated in the respective session. Groups ranged in size from 9 (4 women, 5 men) to 26 (15 women, 11 men) participants ( $M = 14.4$ ). Speed-dating events were held on campus and lasted approximately 90 minutes. Each event was supervised by the researcher and two to three graduate student research assistants. Before beginning the sessions, participants’ photographs were taken and each individual was given a nametag displaying only his or her unique identification number for the session (e.g., 3509A). Immediately following each “date,” men rotated one partner to the right and then the participants completed an interaction scale based on their previous “date.” These measures asked participants, among other things, to indicate whether they would or would not be interested in meeting with each opposite sex partner again on a date. When couples “matched” (i.e., both indicated a desire to meet again), they were given the ability to contact each other through email.

Four research assistants (two males and two females) independently rated each participant’s photograph for physical attractiveness on a scale of 1 (not attractive at all) to

7 (extremely attractive). The mean rating for male participants was 2.75 ( $SD = 1.27$ ), and the mean rating for female participants was 3.22 ( $SD = 1.35$ ). Agreement was acceptable between the raters ( $ICC = 0.85$ ).

### Statistical Analyses

Because the number of men and women in each group varied across sessions, linear modeling in SPSS was used instead of Kenny's BLOCKO program to conduct the analyses (BLOCKO requires the same group size/composition across sessions). First, the dyadic ratings (e.g., how much you want to date this person, how high is this person's self-esteem, how competent does this person seem, how narcissistic does this person seem, is this person selfish, charming, sincere, impulsive, confident, and/or attractive?) were partitioned into perceiver variance, target variance, and relationship variance with error. The relationship variance and error were conflated because data collection occurred only at one point in time (i.e., following the "date"). The variance components allow for determining what percentage of each rating may be due to the perceiver, target, and relationship. For example, when John rates how much he wants to date Jane, it may be that John gives most women consistently high (or low) ratings, in which case there would be considerable perceiver variance. Conversely, Jane may get consistently high (or low) ratings from most men, indicating considerable target variance. Alternatively John may rate most women low on this question and most men give Jane low ratings, but for some unique reason John really wants to date Jane (relationship effect). Two sets of variance partitionings were conducted for each dyadic rating: One set for the men's ratings of the women and one set for the women's ratings of the men.

There were two sets of reciprocity covariances. First, perceiver-target covariances were computed to determine if, overall, targets seen as particularly high on each of the dyadic variables in turn rate their dates as particularly high on that same variable. For example, if John is seen as particularly desirable, does he in turn tend to rate the women he dates as desirable? Next, dyadic reciprocity, which is the relationship effects correlated across dyads or date pairs was computed. Dyadic reciprocity asks the question: if John sees Jane as particularly high on one trait, does Jane see John as particularly high on the same trait?

The variance components were then correlated with the individual-level measures (PPI-I, PPI-II, PPI total scores, and independently rated attractiveness scores). This procedure yielded four sets of correlations (i.e., perceiver effects by individual-level variables when men rate women; perceiver effects by individual-level variables when women rate men; target effects by individual-level variables when men rate women; target effects by individual level variables when women rate men). For example, when using desirability as the dyadic variable, the target by PPI-I correlation describes whether individuals high in PPI-I are perceived to be more desirable. The perceiver by PPI-II correlation addresses whether individuals higher on PPI-II were less discriminating in their choice of potential mates than individuals lower on PPI-II.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

#### Preliminary Analyses

The correlations among all of the individual-level variables (i.e., PPI, PPI-I, PPI-II, & attractiveness ratings) were first computed. PPI-I and PPI-II were not significantly related ( $r = 0.13, p = 0.15$ ). Attractiveness (as rated by the independent raters) was modestly but significantly correlated with PPI-II ( $r = 0.17, p = .05$ ), but unrelated to PPI total ( $r = 0.11, p = 0.22$ ) and PPI-I ( $r = -.04, p = 0.63$ ).

#### Variance Partitioning

The relative variance partitionings and total variance are listed for each of the dyadic variables in Table 1. Consistent with hypothesis 1, there was significant perceiver variance for desirability when both men (0.28) and women (0.28) provided the ratings. There was also significant perceiver variance for the remaining 9 dyadic variables when men rated women and when women rated men. As expected (see hypothesis 2), there was significant target variance for desirability when both men (0.14) and women (0.19) were the raters. There was also significant target variance for seven of these variables when men rated women and when women rated men. Significance levels were not interpretable for impulsivity because the standard error was zero.

Perceiver variance explains to what extent one individual rates or perceives others as similar. Assimilation accounted for from 18% (charming) to 45% (competent) of the variance when women rated men, and from 23% (attractive) to 44% (competent) when men rated women. In other words, these ratings were partly due to the person providing the ratings regardless of whether men and women were the raters. Generally, the

proportion of perceiver variance was similar for both men and women (see Table 1, first column). For example, there does not appear to be any sex difference in perceiver variance when men and women rated their speed date partners on desirability with assimilation accounting for 28% of the variance in both cases. However, the absolute perceiver variances were larger when the men rated women on narcissism, charming, and confidence. Conversely, the absolute perceiver variances were larger when women rated men on esteem, competence, selfishness, sincerity, impulsivity, and attractiveness.

Table 1a

*Variance Partitionings for Women and Men*

Trait	Perceiver	Target	Relationship	Total
<b>DESIRABLE</b>				
women rating men	.28**	.19**	.53**	2.736
men rating women	.28**	.14**	.58**	2.746
<b>ESTEEM</b>				
Women rating men	.27**	.25**	.48**	2.299
Men rating women	.28**	.14**	.58**	1.678
<b>COMPETENT</b>				
Women rating men	.45**	.08**	.47**	1.907
Men rating women	.44**	.07*	.49**	1.766
<b>NARCISSISM</b>				
Women rating men	.32**	.17**	.52**	1.83
Men rating women	.39**	.09**	.52**	1.63
<b>SELFISH</b>				
Women rating men	.32**	.03 ( $p=.18$ )	.65**	1.841
Men rating women	.30**	.04 ( $p=.17$ )	.66**	1.688

Note. \*\* indicates significance at < .01 level, \* indicates significance at < .05 level

Table 1b

*Variance Partitionings for Women and Men*

Trait	Perceiver	Target	Relationship	Total
<b>CHARMING</b>				
Women rating men	.18**	.21**	.61**	2.864
Men rating women	.24**	.17**	.59**	2.294
<b>SINCERE</b>				
Women rating men	.27**	.02( $p=.314$ )	.71**	1.534
Men rating women	.28**	.10*	.62**	1.361
<b>IMPULSIVE</b>				
Women rating men	.33**	.12**	.55	2.311
Men rating women	.26	.04	.70	1.689
<b>CONFIDENT</b>				
Women rating men	.20**	.31**	.50**	2.137
Men rating women	.30**	.12**	.58**	1.801
<b>ATTRACTIVE</b>				
Women rating men	.28**	.29**	.44**	3.147
Men rating women	.23**	.35**	.42**	2.691
<b>AVERAGE</b>				
Women rating men	.29	.17	.55	
Men rating women	.30	.12	.57	

*Note.* \*\* indicates significance at < .01 level, \* indicates significance at < .05 level

Target variance explains how much the perceivers agree “in their impressions of a common target” (Kenny, 1994, p. 50), or to what extent is there consensus about how the targets are perceived. Consensus accounted for from 8% (competent) to 31% (confident) of the total variance when women rated men, and from 7% (competent) to 35% (attractive) when men rated women. Target variances were less consistent among men and women than perceiver variances. For example, there was nearly twice the level of

consensus when women rated men (17%) than when men rated women (9%) on narcissism. In other words, there was roughly twice as much agreement when women rated men as being narcissistic than when men rated the women. Similarly, consensus when women rated men on confidence (31%) was more than twice as large as when men rated women (12%). Overall, target variances were larger when women were the perceivers than when men were providing the ratings, indicating that women tended to agree about how they perceived the targets more than men did.

#### Desirability and Psychopathy

According to hypothesis 3, it was expected that perceiver effects for desirability would be related to self-reported psychopathy of the perceiver. Specifically, it was hypothesized that perceiver effects for desirability would be positively related to PPI-I and PPI-II scores. Unfortunately, perceiver effects for desirability were not related to either PPI-I or PPI-II scores.

Hypothesis 4 posited that target effects for desirability would be related to self-reported psychopathy of the target. Specifically, it was hypothesized that target effects for desirability would be positively related to PPI-I scores. Furthermore, it was expected that target effects for desirability would be negatively related to PPI-II scores. Regrettably, there was not a significant correlation between target effects for desirability and PPI-I or PPI-II scores.

#### Assumed Similarity and Other Perceiver by Personality Correlations

Hypothesis 5 posited that perceivers' PPI-I scores would be related to the ratings of their dates on PPI-I traits. This part of the hypothesis was unsupported because PPI-I scores were unrelated to perceiver effects when either men or women were the raters.

When the perceiver effects for the remaining dyadic variables were correlated with the participants' self-reported PPI-II psychopathy scores, the analysis revealed a number of significant associations (see Tables 2a and 2b). Hypothesis 5 also posited that perceivers' PPI-II scores would be related to the ratings they give their dates on PPI-II traits. Men who scored higher on PPI-II rated women as lower in esteem ( $r = -.46$ ), competence ( $r = -.40$ ), narcissism ( $r = -.41$ ), and selfishness ( $r = -.43$ ); all significant at the  $p < .001$  level. Men higher on PPI-II also rated women as higher in impulsivity ( $r = 0.39, p < .05$ ). Women's PPI-II scores were unrelated to their perceiver effects. Correlations between total PPI scores and the perceiver effects for the dyadic variables were similar to, but generally not as large as, those between PPI-II scores and the perceiver effects. In sum, men higher in impulsive antisociality (PPI-II) generally had a more negative impression of the women they met, seeing them as impulsive, low in self-esteem, competence, and selfishness.

Table 2a

*Dyadic Variables (Perceiver Effects)*


---

	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Esteem</u>	<u>Competent</u>	<u>Narcissism</u>	<u>Selfish</u>
<b>PPI-I</b>					
Men rating women	-.07	.02	.19	.06	.08
Women rating men	.16	.10	.02	.07	.01
<b>PPI-II</b>					
Men rating women	.06	-.46**	-.40**	-.41**	-.43**
Women rating men	-.20	.05	.07	.38	-.01
<b>PPI-total</b>					
Men rating women	-.01	-.40*	-.26	-.33*	-.38*
Women rating men	-.12	.03	-.08	.09	-.01
<b>Attractiveness</b>					
Men rating women	-.40**	-.48**	-.50***	-.59***	-.07
Women rating men	-.16	-.25	-.15	-.19	.11

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Note. \* indicates significance at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* indicates significance at  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* indicates significance at  $p < .001$

Table 2b

*Dyadic Variables (Perceiver Effects)*


---

	<u>Charming</u>	<u>Sincere</u>	<u>Impulsive</u>	<u>Confident</u>	<u>Attractive</u>
<b>PPI-I</b>					
Men rating women	-.08	.09	-.08	.00	-.19
Women rating men	.04	.10	.10	.04	.06
<b>PPI-II</b>					
Men rating women	-.17	-.24	.39*	-.18	.02
Women rating men	-.07	-.07	.20	.04	-.07
<b>PPI-total</b>					
Men rating women	-.26	-.21	.33 $t$	-.17	-.09
Women rating men	-.02	.01	.17	.06	-.02
<b>Attractiveness</b>					
Men rating women	-.43**	-.16	.23	-.44**	-.47**
Women rating men	-.41**	-.01	.01	-.40**	-.40**

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Note. \* indicates significance at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* indicates significance at  $p < .01$ ;  $t$  indicates significance at  $p = .10$

### Self-Other Agreement and Other Target by Personality Correlations

Another set of analyses involved examining the relation between the individual-level variables (i.e., self-reported psychopathy) and the target effects for the dyadic variables (see tables 3a and 3b). It was hypothesized (see hypothesis 6) that targets' PPI-I scores would be related to the ratings they receive on fearless-dominant traits. There was a tendency for women who scored high on PPI-I to be seen as selfish ( $r = 0.38, p < .10$ ) by the men. Men who scored high on PPI-I tended to be seen as attractive ( $r = 0.27, p < .10$ ). It was also hypothesized (hypothesis 6) that targets' PPI-II scores would be related to the ratings they receive on impulsive-antisocial traits. When PPI-II scores were correlated with the target effects, women saw men high on PPI-II as less confident ( $r = -.32, p < .05$ ). The women also tended to see men high on PPI-II as having low esteem ( $r = -.42, p < .10$ ), low narcissistic traits ( $r = -.31, p < .10$ ), and high sincerity ( $r = 0.60, p < .10$ ).

Table 3a

*Dyadic Variables (Target Effects)*


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	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Esteem</u>	<u>Competent</u>	<u>Narcissism</u>	<u>Selfish</u>
<b>PPI-I</b>					
Men rating women	.02	.05	.21	-.22	.38 $t$
Women rating men	.17	.16	.05	.24	-.08
<b>PPI-II</b>					
Men rating women	-.16	-.04	-.09	-.19	-.28
Women rating men	.08	-.42 $t$	-.18	-.31 $t$	-.07
<b>PPI-total</b>					
Men rating women	-.15	-.04	.05	-.18	-.03
Women rating men	.13	-.15	-.26	-.11	-.22
<b>Attractiveness</b>					
Men rating women	.70**	.67**	.36 $t$	.73***	-.21
Women rating men	.66***	.56***	.41*	.61***	-.77**

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Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ;  $t = .10$

Table 3b

*Dyadic Variables (Target Effects)*


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	<u>Charming</u>	<u>Sincere</u>	<u>Impulsive</u>	<u>Confident</u>	<u>Attractive</u>
<b>PPI-I</b>					
Men rating women	-.17	.02	.06	.01	-.13
Women rating men	.22	-.14	.02	.15	.27 $t$
<b>PPI-II</b>					
Men rating women	-.14	-.18	.30	.01	-.02
Women rating men	-.16	.60 $t$	.03	-.32*	.02
<b>PPI-total</b>					
Men rating women	-.20	-.13	.23	.06	-.09
Women rating men	.03	.01	.17	-.16	.18
<b>Attractiveness</b>					
Men rating women	.69***	-.08	.24	.64***	.85***
Women rating men	.71***	.10	.16	.60***	.79***

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Note. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ;  $t = .10$

### Who's Desirable?

Attractive people are desirable. Consistent with decades of existing literature (e.g., Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, & Rottmann, 1966), and hypothesis 7, the more attractive a participant was (when independently rated), the more desirable he/she was seen by their dates. This was true when men rated women ( $r = 0.70, p < .001$ ) and when women rated men ( $r = 0.66, p < .001$ ). In addition to attractiveness being largely related to desirability, it was also related to a number of other perceiver and target effects. Men who were rated as more attractive rated women lower on esteem ( $r = -.48, p < .01$ ), charming ( $r = -.43, p < .01$ ), confident ( $r = -.44, p < .01$ ), and attractive ( $r = -.47, p < .01$ ). Likewise, the more attractive the woman, the lower she rated the men on esteem ( $r = -.25, p < .05$ ), charming ( $r = -.41, p < .01$ ), confident ( $r = -.40, p < .01$ ), and attractive ( $r = -.40, p < .01$ ). Men who were rated as more attractive also rated the women lower on competence ( $r = -.50, p < .001$ ), and narcissism ( $r = -.59, p < .001$ ). Overall, individuals who were seen as attractive tended to see their dates as lower on variables typically valued in social interactions (e.g. confidence, charm, competence).

When the targets' attractiveness ratings were correlated with the target effects, the analyses yielded a number of significant correlations. Women who were independently rated as attractive were seen by the men as having high esteem ( $r = 0.67, p < .001$ ), being highly narcissistic ( $r = 0.73, p < .001$ ), charming ( $r = 0.69, p < .001$ ), confident ( $r = 0.64, p < .001$ ), and attractive ( $r = .85, p < .001$ ). Similarly, men who were independently rated as attractive were seen by women as having high esteem ( $r = 0.56, p < .001$ ), being competent ( $r = 0.41, p < .05$ ), narcissistic ( $r = 0.61, p < .001$ ), charming ( $r = 0.71, p < .001$ ), confident ( $r = 0.60, p < .001$ ), and attractive ( $r = 0.79, p < .001$ ). Men rated as

attractive were also seen as not selfish ( $r = -.77, p < .01$ ). The men also tended to rate attractive women as competent ( $r = 0.36, p < .10$ ).

Discriminating people are desirable. Consistent with hypothesis 8, men who were more discriminating or choosier were rated as more desirable by the women ( $cov = -.63, p < .001$ ). Just as Eastwick, Finkle, Mochon, and Ariely (2007) found, when men were less discriminating about who they rated as desirable, women provided less favorable ratings. However, there was no such association when men rated women who were more or less discriminating in the present study. Thus, it seems that eagerness or desperation is visible and unattractive when men are rated. On the other hand, it may be that unattractive men are more desperate, or it may be a combination of the two (the more attractiveness, the less likely they would rate their dates as desirable). When men rated women, the men's perceiver effects for who was desirable was negatively related to their own attractiveness ratings as independently evaluated by research assistants ( $r = -.40, p < .01$ ). Although the perceiver-target covariance for desirability when women rated men was not significant ( $cov = 0.26, p = .15$ ), it does suggest a difference between how men and women respond to eagerness/desperation in a potential partner: Men who are eager or non-discriminating are not desired by women, but women who are eager or non-discriminating are not similarly rejected by men.

Women are more desirable to men than men are to women. As expected in hypothesis 9 the average desirability rating provided by the men (3.60) was significantly higher than the average rating provided by the women (3.25;  $t = -1.95, p = .05$ ).

## Additional Findings

### *Perceiver-Target Covariances*

Because there was significant consensus and assimilation, perceiver-target covariances (see Table 4) were computed to determine whether individuals who are seen a particular way rate other individuals in the same way. The perceiver-target covariances for attractiveness were similar when men rated women ( $\text{cov} = -.53, p < .001$ ) and when women rated men ( $\text{cov} = -.35, p = .013$ ). Targets seen as highly attractive by men or women provided low ratings on attractiveness to their dates. Similarly, when men rated women ( $\text{cov} = -.327, p = .054$ ) and when women rated men ( $\text{cov} = -.370, p = .048$ ) as high on narcissism, their dates rated them as low on these variables. When men rated women as highly charming ( $\text{cov} = -.617, p < .001$ ), they received low ratings from the women. Additionally, the covariances for esteem ( $\text{cov} = -.323, p = .051$ ) were negative indicating that when the men rated the women as high on esteem the women rated them as low on this variable. Women who gave men high ratings on impulsivity, also received high ratings from the men ( $\text{cov} = 0.975, p < .001$ ). This result should be interpreted with caution, however, because there was not significant consensus or assimilation when men rated women on the trait of impulsivity.

Table 4

*Reciprocity Covariances*

	Dyadic Reciprocity	Perceiver-Target Cov. (Men rating women)	Perceiver-Target Cov. (Women rating men)
Date	.134, $p = .010$	-.630, $p = .000$	.260, $p = .148$
Esteem	-.011, $p = .835$	-.323, $p = .051$	-.119, $p = .522$
Competent	.092, $p = .079$	-.334, $p = .079$	.027, $p = .901$
Narcissism	.030, $p = .573$	-.327, $p = .054$	-.370, $p = .048$
Selfish	.133, $p = .012$	-.128, $p = .697$	-.035, $p = .904$
Charming	.058, $p = .268$	-.617, $p = .000$	.032, $p = .872$
Sincere	.064, $p = .229$	.000, $p = 1.000$	.379, $p = .076$
Impulsive	-.064, $p = .208$	-.174, $p = .385$	.975, $p = .000$
Confident	-.001, $p = .991$	-.291, $p = .075$	.007, $p = .971$

*Dyadic Reciprocity*

Dyadic reciprocity asks the question if one individual rates a specific target in a unique fashion, does that target then uniquely rate the individual in the same fashion? As shown in Table 4, if participant A rates participant B as uniquely desirable/dateable, participant B also rates participant A as uniquely desirable/dateable (cov = 0.134,  $p = .01$ ). Similarly, if participant A rates participant B as particularly selfish, participant B also rates participant A as particularly selfish (cov = 0.133,  $p = .01$ ). Although only

marginally significant, the dyadic reciprocity for attractiveness was interesting. If participant A rates participant B as uniquely attractive, participant B tends to rate participant A as uniquely unattractive ( $cov = -.099, p = .057$ ).

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION

Despite evidence supporting the role of psychopathy in social relations, as well as a widely accepted definition of psychopathy that includes interpersonal consequences, few studies have examined this construct from an interpersonal perspective (Mahaffey & Marcus, 2006). Because psychopathy can be an interpersonally damaging set of personality traits, it was at the center of the present study. The present study used Kenny's (1994) social relations model to examine the relation between initial romantic attraction and psychopathic traits in a sample of college students. A block design was used where two subgroups were formed (men and women) with members of one subgroup rating each member of the other subgroup in a real-life dating scenario. The variance in these dyadic ratings was partitioned into target, perceiver, and relationship/error variance, making it possible to determine levels of assimilation and consensus. The associations between the men's and women's ratings were decomposed into generalized reciprocity correlations (perceiver effects by target effects) and dyadic reciprocity correlations (relations effects by relationship effects). Furthermore, the individuals provided self-report data, allowing the examination of personality by target and personality by perceiver correlations.

#### Do Individuals Judge Others as Similar?

One of the primary questions of the present study involved evaluating the extent to which individuals judge others as similar. Specifically, it was hypothesized that there would be significant perceiver variance, indicating assimilation when men rated the desirability of women and when women rated the desirability of men. As expected, there

were significant levels of assimilation regardless of whether women rated men or when men rated women, indicating that portions of the ratings/judgments were in the eye of the beholder. According to Kenny (1994), assimilation seems to reflect stereotypes that individuals have about others or particular groups. These stereotypes or expectations develop from a combination of the individual's own being and his or her interaction with others. Thus, significant assimilation reflects the amount of variance explained by the perceiver and his or her attempt to assimilate targets into his or her personal set of beliefs. Another explanation for significant levels of assimilation is that individuals may have a particular approach when using a numerical rating system. For example, one individual may tend to use larger numbers on a scale, whereas another individual may tend to assign smaller numbers. This type of response bias may also be reflected in significant levels of assimilation (i.e., perceiver variance). Nevertheless, in both cases, a portion of the dyadic rating is unique to the individual providing the rating or judgment.

#### Do Individuals Agree with Each Other About the Desirability of Others?

A second question involved evaluating levels of consensus, or whether the speed daters agreed with each other about who is desirable. It was hypothesized that there would be significant target variances, indicating consensus, when men rated the desirability of women and when women rated the desirability of men. As expected, there was significant consensus among the participants about who was desirable regardless of whether women rated men or men rated women. These findings are consistent with Eastwick and Finkel's (2007) results that demonstrated consensus for who was romantically desirable when both men (0.27) and women (0.25) were rated. Other researchers have reported a range of consensus levels for ratings of likeability among

perceivers for targets from 0.05 (DePaulo et al., 1987) to 0.45 (Malloy & Janowski, 1992). Moreover, researchers (e.g., Marcus & Lehman, 2002) have demonstrated that consensus exists even at zero acquaintance for traits that increase the likelihood of individuals being rated as desirable (e.g., sociable). Consensus is presumed to exist because of certain stereotypes that most individuals share. In other words, significant consensus reflects the degree to which individuals share stereotypes about what traits make up a desirable mate.

#### Do Psychopathic Traits Influence Judgments of the Desirability of Others?

The significant assimilation findings allowed further exploration. It was hypothesized that perceiver effects would be related to the individuals' PPI scores and attractiveness ratings. Psychopathy in the perceivers did not influence the ratings of desirability. In other words, perceivers did not rate their dates as more or less desirable depending on their own levels of self-reported psychopathy. However, individuals high on PPI-II seem to hold a negative view of others in general (see below).

#### Do Psychopathic Traits Influence How Desirable People are to Others?

The significant target variance, or consensus, findings permitted further examination of the relation between ratings and self-reported psychopathy. It was hypothesized that target effects would be related to the individuals' PPI scores because PPI-I is associated with traits that may be desirable at first meeting. Even though they were not rated as more desirable, individuals high on PPI-I were rated more favorably on other socially potent traits (see below). The question then begs to be asked: Why were the individuals high on PPI-I not seen as more desirable to date? The answer is clearly linked to attractiveness. Any personality variables (e.g., charm, competence) that would

seemingly determine target effects for desirability were overwhelmed by the targets' levels of physical attractiveness. In other words, an individual who was rated as highly attractive was also rated as desirable regardless of his or her score on PPI-I and PPI-II.

#### Do Individuals See Others as They See Themselves?

It was further expected that perceiver effects for traits related to psychopathy would be positively correlated with the perceivers' PPI scores, indicating assumed similarity. In other words, it was hypothesized that people who report themselves as higher in psychopathic traits (as measured by the PPI) would be likely to perceive others as higher in these same traits. PPI-I scores were unrelated to perceiver effects when either men or women were the raters. However, men higher in impulsive antisociality (PPI-II) generally had a more negative impression of the women they met, seeing them as impulsive, low in self-esteem, competence, and selfishness. Given that individuals high on PPI-II are typically impulsive and selfish, these findings suggest that these men seem to see women as similar to themselves. Moreover, it appears that men high in impulsive antisociality view their world and others in it negatively. These findings are consistent with the findings of Mahaffey and Marcus (2006) that sex offenders high on psychopathic traits view others as similar on these same traits. Important implications from the current study's findings include not only an understanding of how the world appears to individuals high in impulsive antisociality, but also that these individuals probably solicit negative responses from others. This implication is partly supported by the current findings that individuals high on PPI-II were seen as low in confidence and self-esteem (see below).

#### Do Others See Individuals as the Individuals See Themselves?

Target effects for traits related to psychopathy were expected to be positively correlated with the targets' PPI scores, indicating self-other agreement. Specifically, it was hypothesized that targets' PPI-I scores would be related to the ratings they receive on PPI-I traits whereas their PPI-II scores would be related to the ratings they receive on PPI-II traits. Men high on PPI-I were rated as attractive by their dates, however women scoring high on fearless dominance (PPI-I) were seen as selfish. PPI-II scores were related to less favorable ratings from the dates. Specifically, although the men high on this factor were not necessarily seen as less desirable, women saw men high on PPI-II as less confident and as having low self-esteem and low narcissistic traits (i.e., liking himself). The impulsive antisociality characteristics are thus related to negative evaluations by the partners and do not bode well for men high on PPI-II in the dating scene. These men were however seen as having high sincerity. So, for some men, the tendency to be impulsive may influence their level of sincerity (e.g., speaking honestly before thinking).

#### The Role of Attractiveness

As hypothesized (see hypothesis 7) and consistent with other research (e.g., Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, & Rottmann, 1966), attractiveness (as rated by independent research assistants) was strongly correlated with desirability ratings when both men ( $r = 0.66, p < .01$ ) and women ( $r = 0.70, p < .01$ ) were the targets. Furthermore, attractive individuals were given favorable ratings on several other traits (e.g., self-esteem, charm, confidence) considered valuable in interpersonal relationships. These findings serve to further support the current understanding that physical attractiveness plays a vital role in initially establishing romantic relationships. Additionally, these results echo loudly the

“what is beautiful is good” stereotype discussed by Dion, Berscheid, and Walster (1972). Individuals seem to rate others on traits of social competence like extraversion, sociability, assertiveness, and happiness in accordance with the attractiveness of those being rated. This stereotype is even considered to function across all cultures. A likely explanation is that the self-fulfilling prophecy is in play with more attractive individuals being treated as superior on certain traits, so in turn they begin to act and perceive themselves similarly.

Analyses also revealed that some personality traits are related to attractiveness. As expected (see hypothesis 8) and consistent with Eastwick and Finkel’s (2007) findings, the present study found that in general, men who were more eager to find a potential mate or were inclined to engage in “yessing,” were seen as more desperate and less desirable by the women. Thus, this type of “desperation effect” was socially visible and was responded to differently depending on whether men or women were providing the ratings. It is not entirely clear as to why male participants who confidentially indicated they would like to date many of their speed dating partners were disliked. However, Eastwick, Finkel, Mochon and Ariely (2007) speculated that these males may have verbally or nonverbally projected their plans to rate many, if not most, of their partners favorably. Another possible explanation is that less attractive individuals are likely the ones who rated the most participants as desirable, and rather than seeming “desperate,” may have been rated lower on desirability themselves due to their level of attractiveness. In fact, there was a negative relationship between attractiveness of the perceiver and desirability ratings they provided to their dates. Specifically, men who were independently rated as attractive found the women they speed dated less desirable.

Moreover, men who were independently rated as less attractive received lower desirability ratings from the women with whom they speed dated.

In contrast, for women who engaged in “yessing,” the results trended toward the opposite direction. In other words, the men were actually more attracted to eager or less discriminate women and the women were not similarly rejected. One possible reason for this difference may involve the notion that men feel they need to take all the chances they can get when it comes to dating. If the women projected their plans to rate many of their partners favorably, it would be to the men’s benefit to also rate these women favorably, thereby increasing their chances of “matching.” Women’s attractiveness was not related to how they rated the men on desirability, although the attractive women did tend to rate the men as lower on self-esteem, charm, confidence, and attractiveness.

Although not a central hypothesis of the present study, an interesting finding was that men agreed more about the attractiveness of the women than when the women rated the men’s attractiveness. This finding is consistent with the results from Marcus and Miller’s (2003) social relations analysis that evaluated whether judgments of physical attractiveness differed between men and women. Specifically, they found that “the highest levels of consensus occurred when men judged the attractiveness of women” (Marcus & Miller, 2003, p. 325). Wood and Brumbaugh (2009) also demonstrated that although there was significant consensus when either men or women were providing attractiveness ratings, men tended to agree more. These findings may be explained by the amount of value women place on physical attractiveness when evaluating a potential mate. Unlike men who highly value physical attractiveness in potential mates, women tend to value other aspects of men (e.g., earning potential, status, personality) that will

help support a family (e.g., Trivers, 1972). Therefore, women may agree less with other women about the physical attractiveness of men because it is not considered as important as other mate characteristics when evaluating potential mates.

Perceiver effects for variables typically valued in social interactions (e.g. confidence, charm, competence) were interestingly related to attractiveness of the perceiver. Specifically, individuals who were rated as attractive by the research assistants tended to see their dates as lower on these variables. Thus, as Eastwick and Finkle (2007) found in their study, it may be that attractive individuals in the present study were more discriminating and use higher standards when judging others. On the other hand, individuals interacting with more attractive dates may feel intimidated. This sense of intimidation may lead to dates assuming a self-effacing manner, resulting in less favorable ratings from their attractive partners.

#### Are Women More Desirable to Men than Men are to Women?

Given evolutionary literature that has demonstrated that women are typically more selective when choosing potential mates (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Clark & Hatfield, 1989), it was expected (see hypothesis 9) that men (compared to women) would be less discriminating in evaluating whether they would like to meet the women again for a date, thus providing higher desirability ratings for the women than when the women rated the men. Additionally, Eastwick and Finkel (in press) recently reported that selectivity is related to approaching in speed dating studies. Specifically, the participants who rotate, or approach their dates, (in the present study, men rotated) tend to be less discriminate in saying “yes” to their speed date partner. These findings are consistent

with my findings that men provided significantly higher desirability ratings for the women than when the women rated the men.

#### Additional Findings

Women who gave men high ratings on impulsivity also received high ratings from the men. This result should be interpreted with caution, however, because there was not significant consensus or assimilation when men rated women on the trait of impulsivity. However, men and women who were rated as highly charming, narcissistic, and high in self-esteem tended to rate their date partners low on these same traits. According to Kenny (1994), this assumed contrast is also known as “complementary projection,” and is fueled by the perceiver effects. That is, how an individual views others (i.e., his or her perceiver effect) influences how he or she will behave in turn and thus be perceived by others (i.e., his or her target effect). The ratings of attractiveness among men and women were also complementary in nature. In general, men and women rated as attractive by their dates tended to rate their partners as unattractive. This opposition between how participants were rated and how they rated their partners may indicate that individuals who are high on these traits are more discriminating than their partners. Additionally, many traits (e.g., narcissism) related to psychopathy and social potency in general were found to be complementary in nature (e.g., a man rated as high on one trait, rates the women low on the same trait).

## CHAPTER VII

### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study is not without limitations. Future research that takes these limitations into consideration should provide results that are more generalizable. One limitation is the use of a college student sample. It is not that college students are not representative of the general public, but rather that they may respond differently due to a lack of commitment or interest in speed dating. Some college students may have viewed a speed-dating research study as a means to an end (i.e., if I participate in a research study, I can earn extra credit in my class), thereby not participating genuinely. In fact, the participation rate was somewhat lower when course credit was not an incentive at the beginning of data collection. That is, there were fewer participants who were open to try speed-dating as a way to meet potential mates. Although participants were encouraged to respond openly and honestly, there is no guarantee that they responded sincerely. Thus, it is suggested that this study be replicated using members of a community who have interest in speed-dating as a means to meet potential mates.

Given the aim of the current study to examine the role of personality in attraction, a second limitation involved the substantial role that physical attractiveness played in the participants' ratings of each other. Attractiveness ratings explained a significant amount of the variance in each of the relationships, as is common when assessing interpersonal relations. Future studies might attempt to reduce or eliminate the role of attractiveness. Reducing the role of attractiveness may be accomplished by requiring the participants to be seated behind opaque partitions to conceal their faces and bodies. In doing so, the role of certain personality characteristics like psychopathy in interpersonal relations may

become clearer. Given women's demonstrated preference for factors such as status and earning potential (among others) when selecting mates (e.g., Trivers, 1972), future researchers may consider asking participants to disclose such information. Asking for this information may be an option if it is not feasible to entirely eliminate attractiveness as an influencing factor.

Despite strong efforts to ensure each session had 10 men and 10 women, the current study lacked equal group sizes across the speed-dating events. This limitation of running different group sizes at each event prevented the use of Kenny's (1993) BLOCKO program to analyze the data. The BLOCKO program assumes a block design in which a group or session is divided into two groups of the same size (in this case, men and women) with members from each group rating each member from the other group. Preferably, future research will ensure equal groups across sessions to allow the BLOCKO program to execute multivariate analyses using the components of the dyadic variables.

The setting in which the speed-dating sessions were held was less than ideal. Although the best efforts were made to transform a classroom into a romantic venue each night, participants may have felt somewhat uncomfortable dating in a university building. Clearly, future research might make greater strides to conduct the speed-dating events in more of a typical dating atmosphere. For example, renting a banquet hall or private section of a nearby restaurant would suffice.

To conclude, the present study provides further evidence that psychopathy has interpersonal consequences. Although neither of the factors (fearless dominance or impulsive antisociality) was related to desirability, impulsive antisociality (PPI-II)

appears to have more influence than fearless dominance (PPI-I) on initial romantic attraction. Men high in impulsive antisociality (PPI-II) apparently view their world and others in it negatively. In part this may be because men high on PPI-II also have a tendency to see women as similar to themselves on particular negative traits such as impulsivity and selfishness. Moreover men high in impulsive antisociality likely solicit negative responses from others. Although PPI-I, fearless dominance, was expected to play a somewhat positive role in interpersonal relations, this was not the case. Fearless dominance was unrelated to desirability. Nor was fearless dominance related to the target effects for any of the other dyadic personality ratings. Furthermore, despite the documented relationship between sexual impulsivity or promiscuity and impulsive antisociality, PPI-II scores were not associated with willingness to date others. In addition to this study demonstrating that psychopathy has interpersonal consequences, this study also demonstrated that PPI-I and PPI-II are distinct factors among a college sample of men and women, and may contribute to the current literature on the two-factor model of psychopathy in noncriminal populations.

## APPENDIX

## HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE APPROVAL



The University of  
Southern Mississippi

Institutional Review Board

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**HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE  
NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION**

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: **27072401**

PROJECT TITLE: **Speed-Dating I**

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: **08/15/07 to 01/15/09**

PROJECT TYPE: **New Project**

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: **Virgil Zeigler-Hill**

COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Education & Psychology**

DEPARTMENT: **Psychology**

FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**

HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: **Expedited Review Approval**

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: **07/24/07 to 07/23/08**

  
Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.  
HSPRC Chair

7-27-07  
Date

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