

Analytical Mind, Facet of Cunning

Required Reading:

Before diving into this piece, read the following passage taken from Illimitable Man's essay '[Understanding Psychopathy](#)'. It gives a good overview of 'Cold Reading'.

“The powers of observation – The ability to understand, discern, correlate or simply “connect the dots” based on non-verbal cues.

The powers of observation are not psychopathic per se, but anyone who has formal training in psychology based roles such as psychiatry tend to have heightened powers of observation; a critical mind that can observe and deduce to create fairly accurate deductive analysis. Manipulation does not know stupidity and psychopaths are always manipulative, and it is analysis which plays the part of providing data that the psychopath can use in decision-making. This is why the job of a shrink requires them to be able to comprehend psychopaths in some kind of tangible manner. In order that they can create some kind of evaluative report. Even if the report isn't completely correct, they have to medicalise how fucked up the dark triad individual in question is and somehow rationalise an explanation for their deviant behaviour.

OK, to the gritty now, cold reading is essentially what you're after. Cold reading is the ability to create deductions based upon non-verbal observations and the nuances in verbal communication, so nonverbally we're talking posture, body language: what direction do they face, their hand placement, their eye movement speed, are they fidgeting or controlled, do they scratch or needlessly touch areas of themselves for no obvious reason (eg: putting your hand on your neck, bringing hands together to make hand gestures etc.), non-verbal but auditory cues include sighing, breathing heavily and making noise with the air in the nose, such as snorting. What direction do they gaze in, can they hold eye contact – yes or no? Who looks away first? The last one is a hugely important one, it signifies confidence and dominance.

Verbally we're talking tonality, with word choice do they self-censor? Do they use Ebonics? Do they swear? What idiolectal mannerisms do they adopt? In the UK accent often gives away one's social class and economic standing, with the better educated trying to hide their natural regional accents (you see this a lot in places like Scotland/Newcastle) by consciously changing their pronunciation of vowel sounds to sound more southern, whereas the lower class give no fucks and pronounce many things incorrectly, staying true to the local dialect/accent.

There's overall articulacy (to indicate speed of thought, knowledge base, intelligence, wit, charisma etc.) and then there's vocabulary, do they use simple words or complex ones? When they use complex language is that natural or a redundant effort to impress present company involved?

Clothing, make-up and overall presentation. What do they wear? Why do they wear it? What image are they trying to convey to the world around them? Is it a rocker full of tattoos and piercings? That types want to communicate they're rebellious and don't give a fuck, they don't respect boundaries and demand respect. Is it a man in a suit? He wants to communicate he's socially and economically successful. Black guy in a jersey wearing abundant, opulent and excessive jewellery? He's peacocking to welcome attention and wants to command respect by implying he's a force to be reckoned with both physically and economically.

Make-up is a bigger one in and of itself; it demonstrates vanity and a preoccupation with the perception of one's physical presentation. Makeup is worn by most women; their looks are both their strength and their weakness as it's their major and preferred tool for self-empowerment. Women who wear little to zero make-up and don't look like candle wax just melted are the natural genetic beauties. Women who wear abundant amounts are insecure of their natural beauty and trying to deceive you by employing illusion to convince you they are more sexually desirable than their genetics naturally signify. Every time they see a naturally pretty girl, they get jealous because women actively compare their own to beauty to other women's.

Through cold reading you will fine-tune your intuition to a point where you form heuristics that allow you to know things about a person without really being able to reason why you think these things, despite the high degree of accuracy said heuristic grants your perception. Once competent, your "intuition" or "gut" will be right the majority of the time about your deductions. The great thing about cold reading is it's called cold because it's covert, you can ascertain all this information, a plethora of it, via mere observation. You need not have any meaningful or probing conversation with the person in question (which would be overt/hot) – it's a great way to reconnoiter a person psychologically before having to deal with them head-on. You can then use this knowledge to make rational assumptions about a person and employ it as you see fit in your future interactions with them. This will aid in decision-making, protecting yourself, or if you should choose to, influence or befriend the person in question.

I recommend you sit around in public places, say coffee shops and just observe people. Listen to people earnestly. Look at them closely.

Eavesdrop profusely, don't stare just glance around, use your peripheral vision to "look, but not look at people." If you have sunglasses, great – you will conceal your line of sight, can be more overt but still conceal your intent. Observing how different types of people behave will only attune your ability to read people and discern things about them based on externalities. The more you do it, the better you'll get. Like anything, you will have to put the time in, but desensitising yourself emotionally and improving your powers of observation are capabilities which both fall within the realm of possibility.

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1) Preamble:

You must master the 'Analytical Mind' facet of cunning.

This facet is distinct from having a high IQ. To have a high IQ is to have immense cognitive processing power, whereas mastering the 'Analytical Mind' facet of cunning is to be capable of reading social interactions, body language, and vocal tonality with razor sharp accuracy.

There are many men with high IQs who are capable of mastering calculus but who are hopelessly incapable of accurately analyzing social interactions or reading body language. Highly functional autistic men are an iconic example of this.

Meanwhile few women are intelligent enough to be capable of understanding calculus, however most of them *can* accurately analyze social interactions and read body language.

This piece will detail information you ought to be aware of when analyzing social interactions and the personalities of others.

Including all information that could conceivably help you master the 'Analytical Mind' facet of cunning is impossible, but the content herein should help enhance your general level of awareness.

2) Cold Reading and Warm Reading:

Cold reading is analyzing a person's psychological profile based on nothing more than their physical appearance. Warm reading is doing such analysis after having spent time interacting with them and observing their behavior.

Inevitably your warm reads will be more accurate than your cold reads, however with skill and practice you can get to the point where your cold reads are accurate more than 80% of the time.

When it comes to reading the psychological profiles of others, it's like mathematics; **there are right answers and there are wrong answers.**

Your reads will never perfectly align with what a person's actual psychological profile is, but they don't need to; you just need reads that are *reasonably close* to the reality of their psychology.

Perfectly accurate knowledge of a person's psychology is not needed for the sake of predicting their behavior with a high degree of accuracy, just as perfectly accurate knowledge of physics is not needed for the sake of being able to predict that being punched in the face will hurt.

3) Heuristics:

"Stereotypes are just culturally codified observations of behavioral correlates. The correlation has been noticed so many times by so many people, that it enters the cultural consciousness as it's deemed judgmentally representative enough to form a heuristic basis for evaluation...Stereotypes are observations so commonplace even stupid people realise them. They are not imagined. Stereotypes are representativeness heuristics." –Illimitable Man

For the sake of reading people you should use heuristics to make accurate guesses. A heuristic is a rule of thumb; something that is usually true, but not in every single case.

For example, the statement "Men are lower on neuroticism than women" is a heuristic, which more specifically means "Men are on average lower on neuroticism than women. There may be exceptions; highly neurotic men, or extremely calm women."

A 'Stereotype' is a heuristic that is accurate but that offends people's sensibilities.

4) Judge People By What They Look Like:

You *should* judge people by what they look like.

Based on a person's physical appearance alone you can know a significant amount about their psychological profile. Your cold reads will not be perfectly accurate, but they will be far better than random guessing.

For example, suppose you see a man wearing a military uniform. You also notice he has a wedding ring, and a face with a square jawline and thin eye ridges.

The military uniform tells you his profession. The fact that he is in the military suggests he is probably significantly above average on conscientiousness; he is more hardworking than the average person. His square jawline and thin eye ridges suggest high testosterone levels, which suggests he ranks significantly below average on both agreeableness and neuroticism (high testosterone suppresses both agreeableness and neuroticism).

Most military members lean Rightwing, and married men are more likely to be Rightwing than single men; his uniform and wedding ring tell you his political preferences are most likely 'Right' of center.

How a person ranks on conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism, as well as their marital status and likely political preferences, is quite a bit of information to get from physical appearance alone.

5) Knowing Someone Better Than They Know Themselves:

"You have a self-limiting conception of yourself, because you don't know what you're capable of if you haven't visited the edge. You're not properly acquainted with yourself. Few are. That's why you surprise yourself in do-or-die situations. Part of you's completely alien to you." -Illimitable Man

Knowing a person better than they know themselves is a very low bar, since most people have very little self awareness. With cold reading alone, you can know most people better than they know themselves.

Self awareness varies from one trait to another.

Most smart people do realize they're smart, but most dumb people don't realize they're dumb; most people with IQs of 130+ realize they are smarter than a majority of the population, but most people with IQs of 90- don't realize they are dumber than a majority of the population.

Most women don't realize they're hypergamous.

Most narcissistic men don't realize they are narcissistic

6) Reading People, How Much Should You Bother?

How much time you dedicate to analyzing a person's psychological profile should be proportionate to how important that person is to your life.

If they have profound power over your fate in life you should dedicate significant time to consciously analyzing their psychology. Bosses, coworkers, parents, and potential spouses would all fall into this category.

For such people use physical sheets of paper to write down everything you possibly can about their personalities.

In your network you will have around 1,000 contacts. Chances are around 900 of them are trivial; they have little impact on your life. 90 of them will be significant. 10 of them will be absolutely critical.

For your roughly 10 critical contacts, no amount of time spent analyzing their psychologies is superfluous.

7) Conceal How Observant You Are:

"Too much perception can niggle a person's paranoia, perceptiveness is threatening to those aware of their ill-nature.

In suspicious company, appear less perceptive...Too much perception is threatening, even intimidating, people distrust you when they realise you are as perceptive as you are, even if you mean them no ill will. When people know you have the potential to destroy them, like nuclear material, they quarantine you." -Illimitable Man

There is a paradox.

On one hand you must closely observe people's body language, vocal tonality, word choice, and behavior so that you can accurately understand their psychological profile and the subtext behind what they say overtly.

At the same time, if people realize you are closely observing them it causes them to distrust you. Your perceptiveness doesn't make them view you as intelligent; it makes them view you as cunning, and most people conflate cunning with evil.

Be very observant, but don't appear to be very observant; appear to have the same level of awareness as the average person.

Only show off how perceptive you are on those rare occasions when you need to use intimidation rather than charm.

8) Avoid Solipsistic Cold Reading:

"The most common means by which people give away who they really are is projection." -Illimitable Man

Many people engage in 'Solipsistic Cold Reading'; they assume everyone else thinks the same way they do. They project their own psychological profile onto others.

A 150 IQ nerd thinks "Calculus is easy for me. It must be just as easy for everyone else as it is for me."

Psychopaths often assume everyone else is as ruthless and untrustworthy as they are. Agreeable people often assume everyone else is just as kind and compassionate as they are.

Essentially, many people who are outliers don't realize they are outliers; they think they are roughly average and everyone else (or most other people) are similar to the way they are.

Ensure you yourself aren't engaging in Solipsistic Cold Reading.

You need to be able to read people's psychologies accurately; assuming everyone is the same as you is problematic because it gives an inaccurate read.

9) Metrics to Search For:

When reading people there are several metrics that can be used as a general framework for understanding a person's psychological profile.

- Gender**
- Racial/Ethnic Group**
- Religious Beliefs**
- Political Beliefs**
- Intelligence/IQ**
- Cunning Level (Machiavellian Intelligence)**
- Big 5 Personality Traits**
- Education Level**
- Profession**
- Income Level. Status in the macro dominance hierarchy.**

Metrics and heuristics will never give you a perfectly accurate view of a person's psychology, however they can be used to give you a *general profile* of what a person's mind is like.

Very often, a generally accurate view of a person's psychology is sufficient for all practical purposes.

10) Big 5 Personality Traits:

The Big 5 Personality Traits are good heuristics for understanding an individual's personality.

10A) Extroversion, Neuroticism, Agreeableness

3 of the Big 5 Traits can easily be detected through a brief and casual interaction with a person: Extroversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism.

Extroversion:

People who smile and laugh a lot are extroverted. Meanwhile, those who smile and laugh little if at all are introverted.

To be extroverted is to have immense enthusiasm, to be introverted is to lack enthusiasm.

Neuroticism:

Those who appear fearful (shaking voice, twitching or abnormally fast body movements) are high on neuroticism. Also, those who are prone to bursts of anger are high on neuroticism.

Those who appear calm (slow movements) are low on neuroticism.

Agreeableness:

Those with feminine facial features (big eyes, soft jawline) tend to be agreeable, while those with masculinized facial features (thin eye ridges, sharp jawline) tend to be disagreeable.

5 Minutes Needed:

After just 5 minutes of conversation with a person, you should be able to judge how extroverted, agreeable, and neurotic they are.

Of course, you don't know what they are like most of the time; you will only know how they appeared to be during the singular interaction you had with them. They could very well be wearing a mask that's very different than their real self.

10B) Conscientiousness and Openness:

Conscientiousness and Openness are 2 of the Big 5 traits that *cannot* be easily gauged after a brief casual conversation. To know how a person ranks on Conscientiousness and Openness you will most likely need to spend a significant amount of time with them.

Certain professional choices correlate with Conscientiousness, and others with Openness.

Those working in finance, law, or medicine tend to be very high on conscientiousness, while people who choose to become artists, actors, musicians, or entrepreneurs are almost always high on openness.

You can accurately guess a person's political preferences based on how they rank on Conscientiousness and Openness.

High conscientiousness and low openness cause people to be politically conservative, while low conscientiousness and high openness cause people to be politically liberal.

11) Intelligence:

Judging someone's level of intelligence is easier than you might think.

Cold reading and casual conversation alone won't be enough to get a precise calculation as to what their IQ score is, but you can quickly detect if a person is significantly smarter or dumber than average.

11A) Education and Profession:

Intelligence, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status (income level) are 3 separate things, but they all correlate positively.

If a person has a college degree and works in a lucrative profession, they are probably smarter than average. If a person has only a high school diploma and works low end jobs, they are probably dumb or of average intelligence.

11B) Speaking Style:

Speaking style is a decent indicator of intelligence level.

If a person uses complex sentence structure and big words, it indicates a significantly above average IQ.

Of course there is the question; is the complexity of their language natural and something they use for the sake of communicating information as precisely as possible, or is it complexity they manufacture for the sake of trying to show off how smart they are?

If the former, they probably have an IQ of 130+. If the latter, they probably have an IQ in the range of 110 - 120.

11C) Extroversion and Intelligence:

Extroversion and IQ correlate *negatively*; most extremely high IQ people (130+) are introverted, while most people who are dumb or of average intelligence are extroverted.

If you detect that a person is significantly less enthusiastic than average (introverted), they are probably smart. If a person is significantly more enthusiastic than average (extroverted), they are probably dumb.

11D) Openness and Intelligence:

Openness and IQ correlate positively.

Caveat: Among low and average IQ people, they are all low on openness. Among high IQ people, some are high on openness while others are low on openness.

If a person is very interested in abstract ideas and creative endeavors (things typical of those who rank high on openness), they are probably high IQ.

People who rank high on IQ but low on openness make great accountants; accounting is a profession that requires one to be *intelligent, but not creative*.

12) Body Language:

Entire books have been written on the subject of reading body language (see the 'Relevant Reading' section at the end).

12A) Closed vs Open

As a general guideline, open body language indicates positive emotion (or at least a lack of negative emotion) while closed body language indicates negative emotion.

If a person has their arms folded and is hunched over, it indicates fear or sadness, or both.

If a person stands with their arms at their side and with upright posture, it indicates that they are calm or at least not experiencing any overwhelming negative emotion at the moment.

12B) Microexpressions:

The microexpressions a person shows on their face are critical, because they are difficult to fake.

Generally speaking when a person receives surprising news (whether good or bad) they will for half a second have an expression on their face (a microexpression), before becoming consciously aware of it and effort-fully putting on a new expression that is either neutral, or deceptively positive, or deceptively negative.

Microexpressions are the most difficult part of body language to read effectively (since they only appear for a nanosecond), and they are also the most important part of a person's body language to read (since they are the most difficult part of a person's body language to fake).

12C) Eyes:

"Eyes are portals to alien metaphysics. If you judge a person on anything, judge them by their eyes. The eyes do not lie, and reveal all." -Illimitable Man

Besides microexpressions, the second most important part of body language is the eyes.

Most people can easily fake gestures with their torso, arms, legs, and even face. However, most people find it difficult or impossible to fake emotion with their eyes.

Stare into a person's eyes and you will see what they are really feeling.

The best liars are those who can 'lie with their eyes'; they can intentionally modulate how their eyes look to display an emotional state other than the one they really have.

People who can lie with their eyes are exceptionally rare; if you want to be a contender in the game of power, you must be one of them.

At minimum, learn how to manufacture a smile that looks real.

12D) Smiles, Real and Fake:

The difference between a fake smile and a real smile is in the eyes; a real smile involves slightly squinting the eyes at the moment the smile starts, a fake smile causes no change in the eyes.

If a person is smiling with their mouth, but their eyes are just as wide as a normal person's eyes would be even when not smiling, their smile is fake.

There are people who can make their fake smiles look real by intentionally squinting their eyes when they initiate the fake smile, but such people are rare; ensure that you are one of them.

13) Hormones, Physical Traits and Personality:

There are certain physical and psychological traits that correlate with having high testosterone levels and low estrogen levels, and others that correlate with having low testosterone levels and high estrogen levels. You will find that the former are typical of men while the latter are typical of women.

There are feminized men who embody high estrogen traits, and there are masculinized women who embody high testosterone traits; such people are outliers.

13A) High Testosterone Traits:

Low Agreeableness
Low Neuroticism
Thin Eye Ridges, Small eyes, Hunter eyes
Sharp jawline
Deep voice
Uninterested in babies and small children
High sex drive, wants sex often, once a day

13B) High Estrogen Traits:

High Agreeableness
High Neuroticism
Large eyes, neotonous eyes like a child
Soft jawline, soft facial features
High voice
Thinks babies and small children are cute
Low sex drive, wants sex rarely (once a week or once a month)

13C) Physical Traits Correlate With Psychological Traits

If you notice that a person has high testosterone physical features (sharp jawline and thin eye ridges, deep voice), they probably rank low on agreeableness and neuroticism, and have a high sex drive.

If you notice that a person has high estrogen physical features (soft facial features and big eyes, high voice), they probably rank high on agreeableness and neuroticism, and have a low sex drive.

[Kellyanne Conway](#) would be an example of a woman who is an outlier; she is a female who embodies high testosterone traits: rugged facial features, low agreeableness, low neuroticism, and very likely has a high sex drive.

14) Personality Archetypes:

“I’m of the opinion most personalities conform to a number of preset templates, differences are mainly in idiosyncrasies, aesthetics (looks) and details (names, places).

What is most significant is least varied, and what is most varied is least significant.

When you get wise enough, and can match the patterns in front of you with the patterns you hold in your head, you know most people before you even meet them. And you know them better than they know themselves. See, once you've met enough people. You've met almost everybody." -Illimitable Man

Most people's personalities are not unique; there is a list of archetypes (personality templates) that 99% of people will have their personality be encapsulated within.

There are individuals who are truly unique; their personalities do *not* neatly fit into any previously defined archetype. However such people are rare; you will encounter only a few of them in your life.

14A) Common Personality Archetypes, Modern America:

Below are some common personalities you will encounter in modern America.

Feminine Woman:

A woman who embodies high estrogen traits: she's high on agreeableness and neuroticism, and thinks babies are cute.

Such women often become stay at home mothers. If they are in the workforce, they tend towards non-profit work, being a schoolteacher, or if they are in the private sector they're usually working in the human resources department.

They are kind, and they are also *very politically correct*; if you say anything politically incorrect in their presence they will despise you.

Spoiled Upper Class Woman:

A woman who grew up in a rich or upper class family, went to college, and then got married and now lives off her husband's money.

During childhood she lived off her father's money, in college she majored in one of the easiest subjects (women's studies, social sciences), and in adulthood she lives off her husband's wealth.

Feminism has convinced her that she is oppressed because she is a woman.

Fraternity Boy:

Men who rank high on extroversion, low on agreeableness, and low on neuroticism.

They are often found in fraternities at university, but not always. They usually have IQs in the range of 110 - 120; they are bright, but certainly not geniuses.

Don't underestimate them; they are smart enough to do most work in the corporate world effectively, and they aren't so smart that they're socially awkward nerds who will fail at office politics. Their high extroversion, low agreeableness, and low neuroticism also help them succeed in the corporate world.

The hobby they all have in common is binge drinking alcohol at parties with loud music.

Warrior:

Men who have high testosterone traits (low agreeableness, low neuroticism), and who also rank high on conscientiousness. They are ruthless, have a high stress tolerance, and are ambitious.

You will find them in the military, and also in finance and law.

Most are *not* psychopathic or narcissistic; they are disagreeable, but still psychologically healthy.

This is the type of man everybody wants their daughter to marry.

Autist, Highly Functional:

Men who are autistic, but still functional enough to work a normal job.

They are incredibly intelligent (great at logical reasoning), yet hopelessly socially awkward.

You will find them in the engineering departments of many corporations.

There are women who fit this archetype, but note that most autists are men.

15) Relevant Reading:

[The Definitive Book of Body Language \(Allan & Barbara Pease\)](#)

[What Every Body Is Saying \(Joe Navarro\)](#)

[Amy Cuddy, Ted Talk](#)

[Understanding Psychopathy \(Illimitable Man\)](#)