Becoming Evil

Mind over Matter Principle(MioMa)

- "I don't mind, you don't matter"
- individuals will engage in "evil" behaviour if **there is expected net benefit to self/ingroup, outweighing expected costs to victims**

Derivations

You don't matter *enough*

Not mattering

action or *inaction* - neglect /overlook concerns i.e. leaving a child in hot summer car seat. no need to be directly responsible for the harm, as long as people perceive them having misplaced priority

Expected cost != actual

- **victims**: ignored, minimized, justified

- **perpetrators**: awareness of possible costs to self+ perceived likelihood of costs

    - **the disconnect b/w the perceived cost and actual cost**, "America's dumbest criminals"

    - Ariely& Loewenstein(2006): sexual attitudes- same participants answer questions in normal state and aroused state. When respondents are aroused 1. less positive attitude towards contraception

        - **motivation can create "tunnel vision"** -ex. what addicts are wiling to do for the next high
    - **the perceived ability to manage potential costs**

        - interpersonal: "evil personality"(Peck)-> scapegoating. They are doing harmful things but also deflecting responsibility.
        - organizational: "negative externality" -> deflect costs. "Let's dump it into the water and let others worry about it"
        - managing costs can feel rewarding. Lammers& Maner(2016): higher the occupational status more likely to engage in infidelity, despite having more to lose. The rush of outsmarting others.

MioMa triggers - Chasing feelings

"If I do A, then B will happen. If B happens, then I will *feel* more of C/less of D"

- B-> C/D may not be consciously articulated.

- actor's perspective =/= other's perspective

    - i.e. going to prison, maybe it's better than sleeping on the streets?

B->C: anticipated positive states

- self-expansion, whatever the cost to others, like cancer

    - example: the travel agent creates fake ticket, call in da bomb threat at the airport

- example: the tube prankster.
- example: the pro assassin(Shlesinger,2001) - tears up when he talks about his family, "it may not be the right way but my only way. I need to provide for my family sending children to private school"
- Eliminating goal blockers: common feeling is anger
  - example: contract killings(Mouzos& veditto): in Australia 1/3 of the cases are related to "I want to be with someone so I need to get rid of the other person"
  - example: road rage

B-> D (anticipated relief from negative state)

example: simple annoyance(Mouzos& veditto)

Fear

response to threat, motivate us to deal with the threat. "run" or neutralize the threat.

- example: "preemptive strike"(Simunovic)- choose to press the button or not. press the button with cash incentive where neither of you press the button

Disgust

rejection or purification, the need to purge the physical or moral **contamination**.

- example: "wet wipes for the soul"(Ritter&Preston) religious Christians rate lemons more disgusting after looking at atheist manifesto, but physically wipes their hands eliminated the reaction
- example: "poisonous Western fizz"(Bloody Cartoons)
- **disgust sensitivity** -> less aggression & nastiness. "I'd rather not engage", but if it is the "cause" of disgust -> target of nastiness
  - Set up arbitrary ingroup, outgroup, exposed to images. When it comes to disgusting images, there is a distinct ingroup/outgroup bias
- disgust and anger are both responses to moral violations.
  - when they see themselves as the **victim, anger** is the predominant response and leads to direct retaliation.
  - When they **perceive the third party is a victim**, it leads to disgust and "coordinated condemnation".
  - **Political speech + "disgust"-> violence**, disgust is a better predictor in violence to outgroup than anger.
- **AVOID if you can. ATTACK if you must. OUTSOURCING is best (good propaganda tool)**

Shame

response to rejection,which is about trying to protect the **self**, "I am a mistake"

- in contrast to shame, guilt is a response to a behaviour, "I made a mistake, thus I feel motivated to fix that."
- public shaming-> humiliation -> Mark of Cain: "there is something wrong with you and everyone should know it"
- if people feel like they cannot escape the message, they harm others to deny helplessness, assert power
  - familicide(Webs): killings inside family

- **livid coercive**: the perpetrator has a history of controlling behaviour, emotional/physical abuse in the family. the trigger is the impending loss of the relationship, usually self-inflicted since the perp is not treating people well. "if I can't have you no one can"
- **civil reputable**: everything looks fine on the outside. "A gendered failure": a family with very stereotypical division of labour, a sense of "I've failed, I'm shamed, and I'm gonna save my family from furthur disgrace too"

Individual Differences

Some do... and SOME DONT

there is observable trend, but it does not mean it will happen to everyone

"The Dark Triad"

Descriptive, traits tend to **co-occur** and common core is" MioMa is a *LIFESTYLE*". It is a summary, not a cause.

1. **psychopathy**: careless of other people
2. **Machiavellianism**: how to get the edge over others, cynical, low opinion of other people. Manipulative, tell people what they want to. Long con.
3. **narcissism**: grandiose

What's the engine?

- Desire for power/dominance and less interest in belonging. "It's risky to trust because it makes you vulnerable"
- **Appetite for "more"**: greed predicts fluctuations in dark triad indorsement overtime, making it a possible engine. Dark Triad=strategies and justification in service of appetite for "more".
  - Where does this appetite comes from? **Unpredictable, harsh environment**(Brumbach) - follows American teens over years, and witnessing violence and inadequate parental care predicts dark behaviours. It creates a **survivalist** worldview, "in stuff we trust since nobody else is here for you".

Shame sensitivity

- When "unpleasant" becomes "intolerable"
- **Abuse/trauma(implicating the SELF) -> PTSD -> shame processing bias** "you think I suck" - negative problem is not something to be solved, but something about the self **-> violence**, narcissistic personality disorder(boost yourself), borderline personality(unstable)

Hate

- Deflecting- label the hate as love
  - Henton et all(1983)-high school couples, motivation?
    - Abusers: 54% angry, 60% confused, 3%hate, 31%love
    - Abused: 71% angry, 59% confused, 4%hate, 27%love
  - Dunn(1999)-stalking
    - "no contact" ex shoes up with flowers or gifts
    - flattered(and frightened) <-> "love" and mayhem
- Justified Admission: "I hate X because X is EVIL"

- Normalized Admission: "Yes I hate, but we all hate. Hate happens"
    - subliminal prime "I hate" very clear pattern where they are more likely to engaged in normalized admission, comparing with other primes
    - "You would, too/I'm no wore than you."
- "Real" hate... doesn't require action, it can simply require the desire of wanting the target to suffer. Hate is not always a eventuated behaviour, but without hate the action will not happen
- why "hate"?
    - chasing a feeling(MioMa)

Sadism

What's sadism?

an instrumental form of hate

means: harm other(physical, psychological)

ultimate goal: positive effect for self

- if the want is here, whether or not they act upon it or if there is payoff, is still sadism
- "want" without the pursuit of positive emotional goal is not sadism
- coerced harmful behavior - "I need to do this because I'm under threat" is not sadism
- "harming" to gratify target is not sadism - genuine sadism will deny harming others if they enjoy being hurt
- sadism is a luxury.

Is sadism evil?

- part of the MOPE
- LEAST acceptable justification
- the ultimate MioMa- "I'm willing to harm you for the lel" -> Mark of Cain
- assert invulnerability or minimize/justify
    - "I am so badass that I can admit I'm sadistic. What are you gonna do?"

Who "isn't" sadistic?

- intimate partner violence: perps and victims(Neal&Edwards,2017) - of all the reasons of motivations, sadism is not listed by neither abusers nor victims.
- Arriaga(2002):"joking" intimate partner violence
- "SADISM" IS A DEALBREAKER - it's hard for people to live with, so victims avoid going there

Sadism as an individual difference

- dark triad + (dispositional) sadism = "DARK TETRAD"
    - descriptive summary: lots of nasty correlates

What does sadism feel like?

- hearing stranger's severe injury, crushing defeat -> schadenfreude(sadistic emotions like satisfying,enjoyable)
- reading story about perps attempt harm -> sadists "joy" -> gives lenient moral judgement
- violent scenes->"positive"; peaceful/joyful ->"negative"
- unrelated to emotional instability, linked to expressive suppression(control my emotions by controlling their expression, emotional poker face)

Why sadistic motivation?

1. Perceived insults to the self
2. (nonconscious) motivation to restore the self
3. **displaced** intent to harm - not striking back at people who insulted me, but at others
4. (Temporary) elevation of self, positive emotional payoff

Evidence for the model?

Boosting the self via pranking?

- disrespect sensitivity+ anger rumination
  - predicts dispositional sadism and
  - prank-related: sadistic thoughts, positive emotions, justifications, desire to prank again

Boosting the self via watching pranks?

- disrespect sensitivity+ anger rumination
  - predicts dispositional sadism and
  - sadistic motivation, self-elevation/victim derogation - only when long-term harm is likely