

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

1. You don't matter *enough*

2. 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

3. Expected cost != actual cost

- **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 -> less positive attitude towards contraception
 - **motivation can create "tunnel vision"** -ex. what addicts are willing 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:** willing to do anything for the goal, 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)

1. 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

2. 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 vs 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)**

3. 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 further disgrace too"

Individual Differences

Some do... and SOME DON'T

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 endorsement overtime, making it a possible engine. Dark Triad= strategies and justification in service of appetite for "more".
 - Where does this appetite come 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

WHAT IS HATE?

- **Hate is a MOTIVE**. Motives involve goals. Hate is about the intent to harm, diminishing the well-being of the other.(What is love? Preserving and promoting the well-being of the other). **Love and Hate are both motives, not feelings**.
- Motives are **THERMOSTATIC**. Stay on until it hits that set point and then it turns off. Switch on, goal done, switch off.

- Hate is frowned upon. You can fantasize about it, but you won't do it. **Hate is gonna stay stable because it stays switched on.**
- Instrumental or ultimate goals - Something can be a means to an end or an end in itself. Different types of hate. **REDRESS** - revenge-oriented hate. It is a means to an end to restore order. **TETHERING** - willing to hurt somebody in order to keep them close so they don't abandon you
- .Altruistic love is an end in itself. Hate is not an emotion, but it can be triggered by emotions.

HOW DO WE KNOW?

The Prototype Study

How would you define hate? 200-something responses → 50 statements. Then to what degree does this capture hate as you. A 1 to 7 scale.

| motive to harm | "strong" emotion | "weak" emotion |
|----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | intense emotions - disgust, etc. | agitation, irritation, jealousy |
| 4.84 > | 4.02 > | 2.56 |

Desire to harm == hate. Emotion is not irrelevant, but not as important.

The "Thought Quote" Study

If you were inside a person's head. How much these thought quotes capture hate.

Winner: "I want to hurt him. Period." [5.99]

You just have to want them to be hurt. "I don't want him to be hurt" → "That's not hate."

Thus...

1. People may have trouble spontaneously defining hate - **they do not focus on intent to harm right away.** They **focus on the emotions.**
 2. But... they know it when they see it.
 3. Still, they have to "see it" to "know it".
- Word-completion tasks: HA_E. Neutral and Religious [28%]. Evil [49%]. There is an **implicit cognitive link between evil and hate.**
 - Cain and Able - God makes him a social outcast. Cain: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." **Cain intentionally harmed his brother.** When we label someone as evil, it's like labelling them with "the Mark of Cain". Toxic and stigmatizing.
 - **Hate = "evil" minus justification**
 - If you're going to hate somebody, you better damn well have it justified. **Haters should be motivated to self-justify. If we do not, we end up in the situation where we are fitting the "evil" prototype.**

IF HATING IS TOXIC...

- **1st line of defense: simple denial?** > "I just intensely dislike them." People deny instead of admitting that they hate.
- **2nd line of defense: "populist normalizing"?** > "Everybody makes mistakes." People say that everyone would hate them too.

- Charles Manson: How can you condemn me, I'm just a reflection of you.

Class Data

a) **manipulate accessibility of "Hidden Observer"** - "Have you ever hated anybody?" Hidden Observer is like a Dr.Phil

b) **manipulate salience of social judgement** - Before asked whether or not you've ever hated anybody. Half did a thing on rewards on being good, half did a thing on being bad.

c) examine effects on admissions of hate and framing one's experience as commonplace.

- Hidden Observer > No Hidden Observer. **71% admitted hating anybody. 87% with a Hidden Observer. If people aren't getting pushed, they deny.** The Hidden Observer is a part of ourselves that knows all that is going on. Once it was brought online, it was easier to admit to hating someone.
- Social judgement was manipulated. **Rewards turned down social threat (HO didn't matter). Costs turned social threat up. Costs + No HO = don't need to justify myself. Costs + HO = need to defend myself.**

AN EASY WAY TO JUSTIFY HATE IS TO...

- **Label the hated "EVIL". It's okay to hate evil.**
 - Endless cycle: Hate begets "evil," which begets hate, which begets "evil"...
 - Easiest way to not see myself as evil is to see you as evil. They don't want that label, they're going to see you as evil.
- **Deflecting- label the hate as love**
 - Henton et al(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 shows 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 worse 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?

It's **an instrumental form of hate**, by **harming other**(physical, psychological), and **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
- thus 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 lol" -> 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" about intimate partner violence
- **it's hard for people to live with, so victims avoid going there** -as "SADISM" IS A DEALBREAKER

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 (DSAR)**
 - 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 - **IMPORTANT: only when long-term harm is likely**

Sadism's Great "Disconnect"

1. **"tunnel vision"**-> **"harmful fun"** : i.e. "birthday prank would be hilarious"
2. **conscious goal v. nonconscious trigger**: "I'm not feeling hateful, I just feel giddy" but there is simmering hate underneath. **Address DSAR-> defuse sadism.** i.e. Daddy-O Five

The motivational structure is the same regardless if it is a cake in face or torture chamber

Serial Killer

For most people, what would it take for most people to kill?

1. perceived **threat** - to lessen the negative D
2. perceived **alternatives inadequate**/ exhausted

Serial Killers are not most people: most of C

What is a serial killer?

- minimum: 2 motivationally distinct murders
- **motive: "personal gratification"** - does financial benefit counts? they could also misrepresent motivation

person or protagonists?

Getting good data is difficult. Obstacles:

1. **adequacy of sample**: increasingly rare, peaked in 1987, hard to gain access(dead, not caught)
2. **accuracy of data**: self-report reliance, some may exaggerate the body count or deny
3. **attitudes** toward SKs:
 - **bogeyman**: distraction, exaggerated threat - massive fear
 - **antihero/celebrity**: trivializes victims' suffering
 - **mythology obscures motivation**
 - "incomprehensible" = "insane"? legally few claim it and fewer wins, less than 40% actually have disorder
 - "expectations of a monster" : what to do with the mundane and the prosocial?

Why are serial killers?

There are no "one-size-fits-all" recipe

1. **more remote in time = less predictive** i.e. 10% of SKs have head injury, way above baseline, but many people with head injury does not become SKs
2. SKs are **heterogeneous**: women(15%), non-violent(poisoning), non-sexual

SKs as sadism's most extreme?

- "deviant leisure": killing for fun, compare big game hunting - hunting humans
- Classification based on Holmes& Holmes - men 96% fall in top3 category, women 73%
 1. **Hedonistic: excitement, comforts**
 2. **Power/Control: satisfaction**
 3. **Mission: pride**
 4. **Visionary: psychosis**
- **displaced aggression?** YES
 - case study: Elizabeth Wettlaufer - Ontario nurse, minimum 8 deaths, 2007-2016, confessed during hospitalization due to suicidal tendency, she got reassigned to monitor school children
 - **"red surge"-> harm->"the laughter"**: anger at job, life and relationship. felt put upon, provoked, multiple justifications(P/C or visionary). not psychotic, not legally insane, not an outlier
 - talks about pranking the nursing staff
 - many female SKs work in health industry

How are serial killers?

- same menu of deflection strategies
 - minimize harm? not really
 - decreased perceived intent? sometimes
 - **invoke justifications? YES** - "I was abused by mommy so I will abuse this woman that looks like her"
 - **asserting power/invulnerability: YES** - "I am beyond this all"