



Stability and Change of Psychopathic Traits in Adolescent Offenders

Zina Lee, Jessica R. Klaver, Stephen D. Hart,
Marlene M. Moretti, & Kevin S. Douglas

The University of Alabama

Kirby Forensic Psychiatric Center

Simon Fraser University

[Adolescent Psychopathic Traits]

- Evidence for the reliability and construct validity of adolescent psychopathic traits
- A debate over “adolescent psychopathy”
 - Developmental principles
 - Downward extension of adult construct
 - Negative consequences of labeling
- Definition of psychopathy in adolescence

[Stability of Psychopathic Traits]

- Stability of psychopathy in adults
 - Moderate to high stability (.60 to .89)
 - Stability may be an artifact of the assessment procedure
- Stability of child and adolescent psychopathic traits
 - Moderate to high stability (.31 to .88)
 - Low base rate of psychopathy in community samples

[The Current Study]

- No studies have examined stability of psychopathic traits in adolescent offenders with severe manifestations of psychopathic traits
 - How stable are the interpersonal, affective, and behavioral indicators?
 - What is the nature of change?

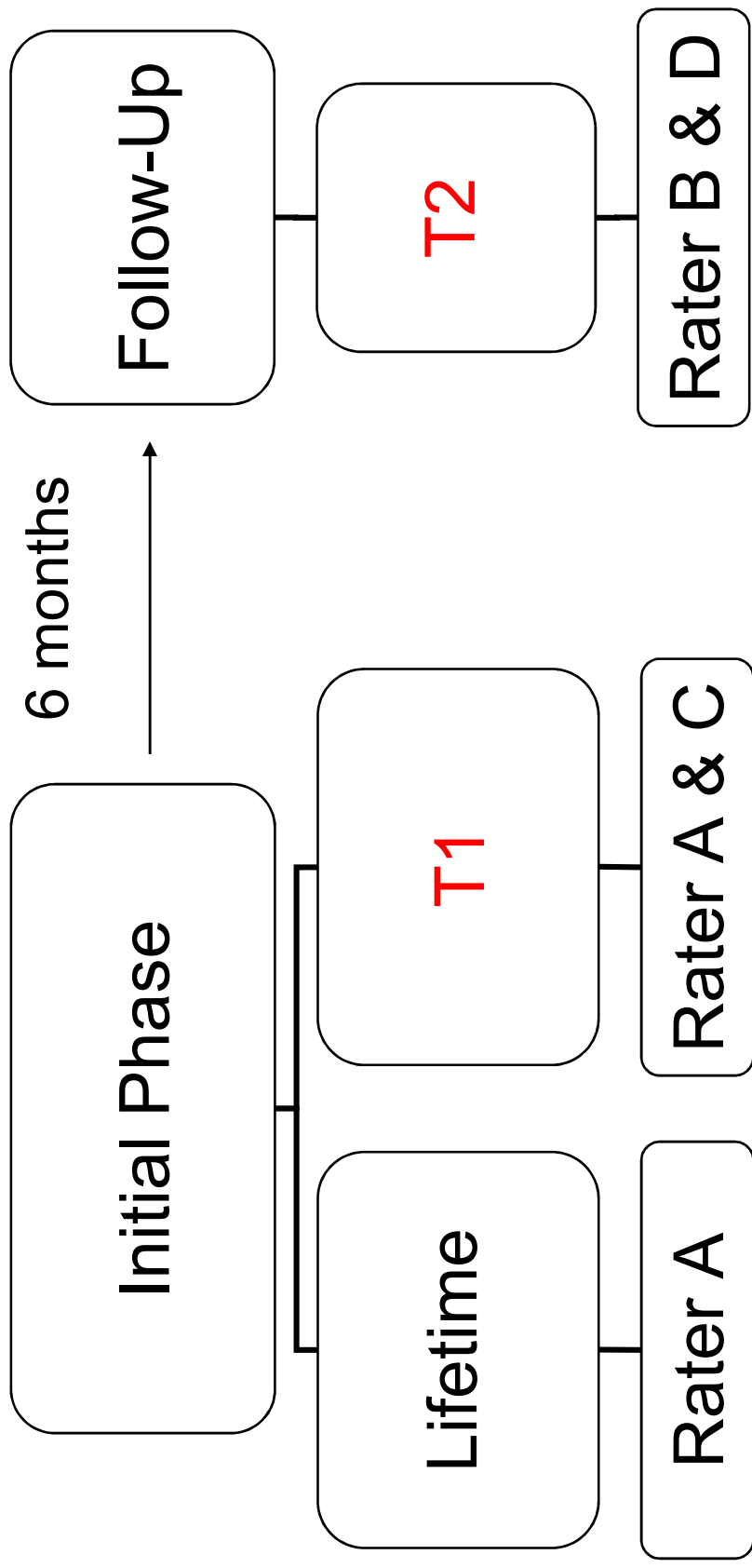
[Participants

- 112 male adolescent offenders at T1
 - 13 to 20 years ($M = 16.29$, $SD = 1.42$)
 - Caucasian (51%), Aboriginal (40%), Other (9%)
 - Maximum (64%) and Minimum (36%) Custody
- 83 male adolescent offenders at T2
 - 14 to 20 years ($M = 16.73$, $SD = 1.48$)
 - Caucasian (47%), Aboriginal (42%), Other (11%)
 - Juvenile Custody (66%), Probation (31%), Adult Custody (2%)

[Measures

- Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version (PCL:YV)
 - 1 of 3 trained raters based on file and interview
 - Good to excellent interrater reliability (.72 to .95)
 - Total scores ranged from 9 to 39 ($M = 26.70$)
- Self-Report Antisocial Process Screening Device (APSD)
 - PCL:YV raters blind to scores
 - Total scores ranged from 3 to 28 ($M = 16.90$)

[Method: PCL:YV]



[Results: Interpersonal Items]

	PCL:YV (.72)	APSD (.60)
Impression Management	.43	.27
Grandiosity	.41	.45 / .25
Pathological Lying	.33	.55
Manipulation	.32	.39

[Results: Affective Items]

	PCL:YV (.49)	APSD (.30)
Lack of Remorse	.40	.16
Shallow Affect	.34	.27 / .50
Lacking Empathy	.35	.36 / .27
Failure to Accept Responsibility	.18	.44

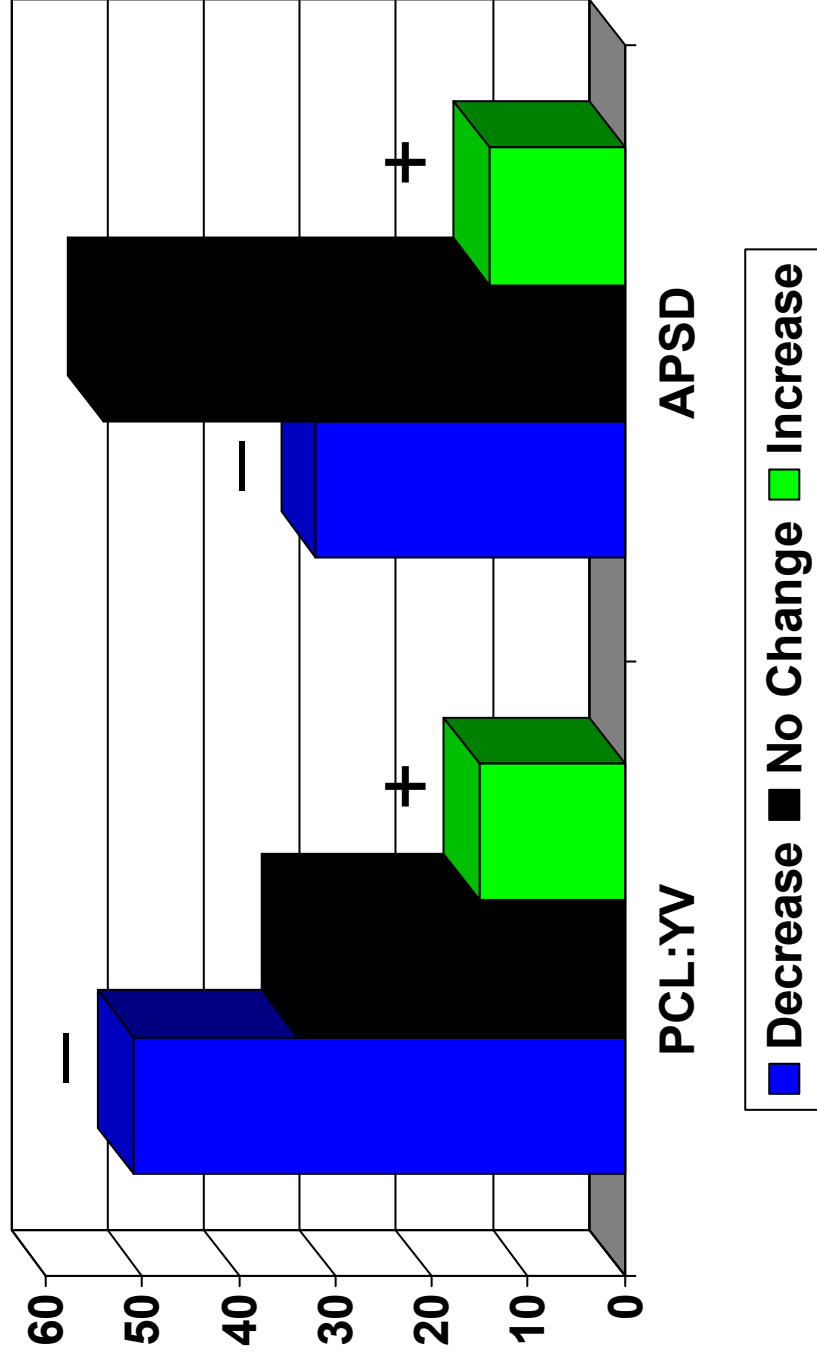
[Results: Behavioral Items]

	PCL:YV (.70)	APSD (.62)
Stimulation Seek.	.43	.30 / .51
Parasitic	.08	
Lacks Goals	.31	.19
Impulsivity	.38	.44
Irresponsibility	.33	.39 / .38

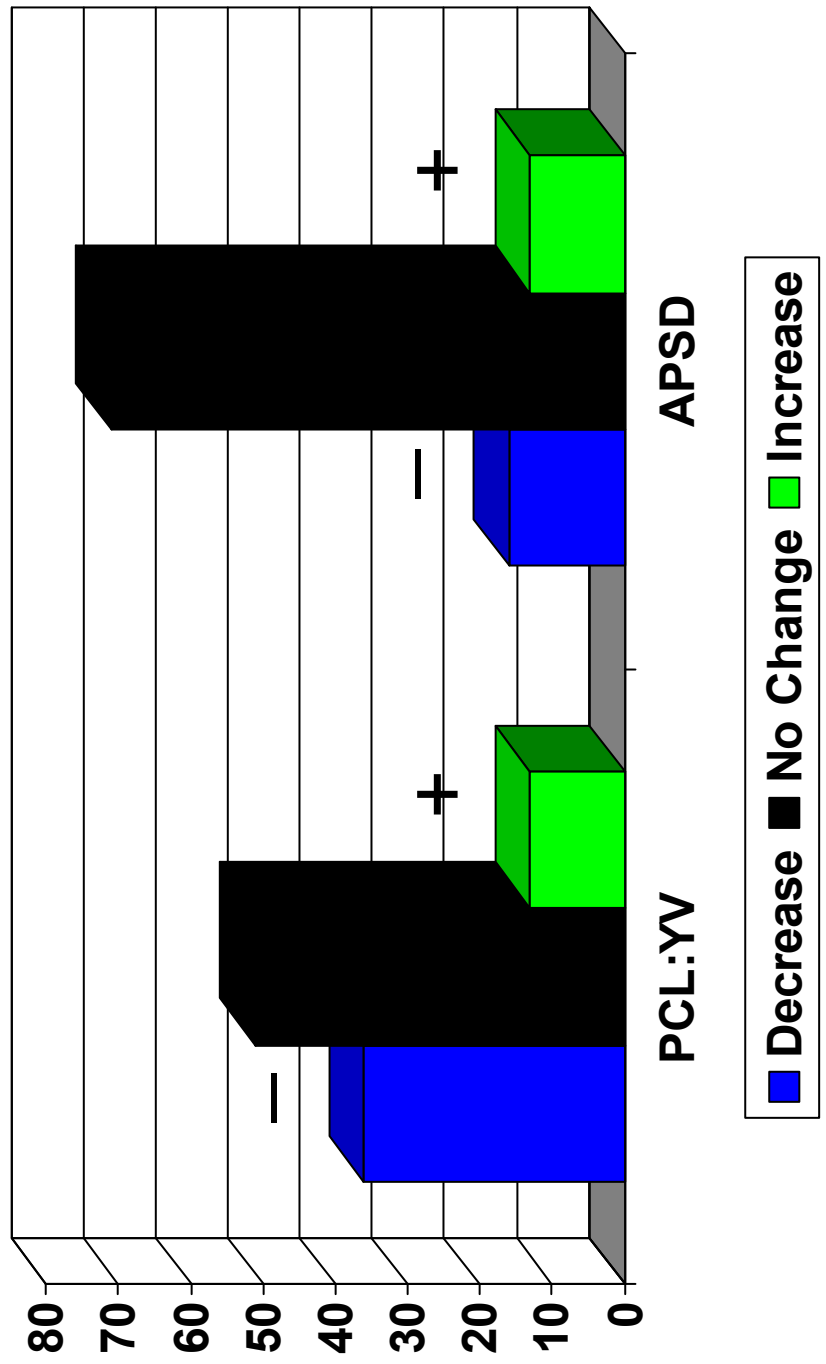
[Results: Mean Changes]

PCL:YV	Time 1	Time 2
Total **	20.90 (7.51)	18.01 (7.66)
Interpersonal	3.48 (2.18)	3.31 (1.84)
Affective **	4.59 (1.73)	3.99 (1.86)
Behavioral *	5.91 (2.28)	5.27 (2.40)
APSD	Time 1	Time 2
Total **	16.74 (5.49)	15.06 (5.72)
Narcissism	4.73 (2.76)	4.23 (2.53)
Callous	2.79 (1.31)	2.80 (1.51)
Impulsivity **	5.34 (1.91)	4.79 (1.95)

[Results: Magnitude of Change (Total)]



[Results: Magnitude of Change (Affective)]



[Conclusions

- Low to moderate stability of psychopathic traits in adolescent offenders
 - Indicators with low relative stability may reflect traits that are normative or transient
- Magnitude of change suggests instability
- Clinical rating vs. self-report
 - Greatest variability in behavioral indicators
 - Difference in the magnitude of change with respect to affective deficits

[Implications and Future Directions]

- Inform intervention strategies
- Developmental appropriateness of existing measures
- Multiple assessments across adolescence
- Factors that influence (in)stability

Acknowledgements

- CIHR Institute of Gender and Health (IGH) in partnership with the CIHR Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH) through a New Emerging Team Grant awarded to Dr. Marlene M. Moretti (CIHR #54020)
- Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) British Columbia
- Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)
- Data Collection Team (Vancouver Site): Rosalind Catchpole, Kim DaSilva, Ingrid Obsuth, Maya Peled, Stephanie Penney, & Andree Steiger

