ABSTRACT

TITLE:	Psychopaths Among Us: What Predisposes People to Become Psychopaths
AUTHOR(S):	Corcorran, Brandon
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ABSTRACT: Psychopathy is one of the most difficult disorders to diagnosis and treat. Psychopaths can appear normal and charming, but they lack moral conscience and empathy. This lack of remorse and deviance makes them manipulative, and volatile which can lead to criminal behavior. What predisposes a person to become a psychopath? Do childhood environmental factors predispose people to become psychopaths? Or is it the way the brain is wired and functioning that helps explain why people turn to psychopathy? Biological and genetic factors can contribute to how a person acts, as well as show what they are capable of doing. A psychopath's brain functions differently than a non-psychopathic person's brain. Along with biological factors, environmental factors, such as low SES, and childhood tragedies, play a role in whether a person becomes a psychopath later on in life. With that said, this project takes a case analysis approach to understand potential factors contributing to the development of 2 serial killers, Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer. Both of these men are prominent figures that display psychopathy to its very core. What is found is that biological and genetic influences play a tremendous role in turning people to displaying psychopathic tendencies. Environmental factors can play a role with that, that finally pushes people over the edge.