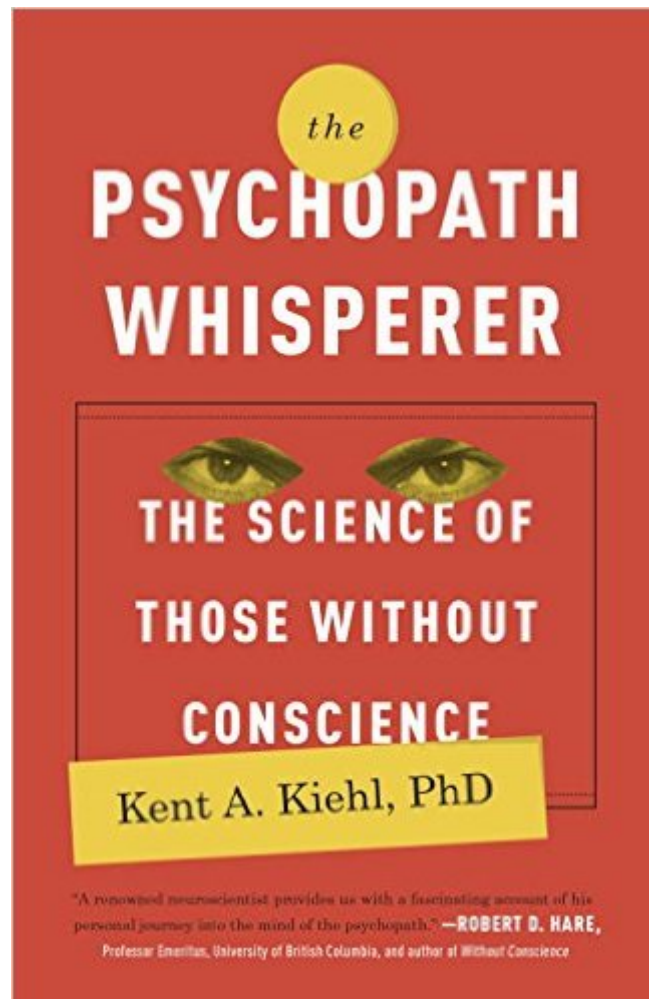


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The Psychopath Whisperer: The Science Of Those Without Conscience



Synopsis

A compelling journey into the science and behavior of psychopaths, written by the leading scientist in the field of criminal psychopathy. We know of psychopaths from chilling headlines and stories in the news and movies—from Ted Bundy and John Wayne Gacy, to Hannibal Lecter and Dexter Morgan. As Dr. Kent Kiehl shows, psychopaths can be identified by a checklist of symptoms that includes pathological lying; lack of empathy, guilt, and remorse; grandiose sense of self-worth; manipulation; and failure to accept one's actions. But why do psychopaths behave the way they do? Is it the result of their environment—how they were raised—or is there a genetic component to their lack of conscience? This is the question Kiehl, a protégé of famed psychopath researcher Dr. Robert Hare, was determined to answer as he began his career twenty years ago. To aid in his quest to unravel the psychopathic mind, Kiehl created the first mobile functional MRI scanner to study psychopaths in prison populations. The brains of more than five hundred psychopaths and three thousand other offenders have been scanned by Kiehl's laboratory—the world's largest forensic neuroscience repository of its kind. Over the course of *The Psychopath Whisperer*, we follow the scientific bread crumbs that Kiehl uncovered to show that the key brain structures that correspond with emotional engagement and reactions are diminished in psychopaths, offering new clues to how to predict and treat the disorder. In *The Psychopath Whisperer*, Kiehl describes in fascinating detail his years working with psychopaths and studying their thought processes—from the remorseless serial killers he meets with behind bars to children whose behavior and personality traits exhibit the early warning signs of psychopathy. Less than 1 percent of the general population meets the criteria for psychopathy. But psychopaths account for a vastly outsized proportion of violent crimes. And as Kiehl shows, many who aren't psychopaths exhibit some of the behaviors and traits associated with the condition. What do you do if you discover your roommate, or boss, or the person you are dating has traits that define a psychopath? And what does having a diminished limbic region of the brain mean for how the legal system approaches crimes committed by psychopaths? A compelling narrative of cutting-edge science, *The Psychopath Whisperer* will open your eyes on a fascinating but little understood world, with startling implications for society, the law, and our personal lives. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I found the Psychopath Whisperer to be generally a let down. However, that could have been due to my expectations. I expected in depth analysis of psychopaths including what they had done in their lives, how they felt about it, how truthful they were, and how they came across to the author. I didn't get much of that. Instead, I heard all about how the author began his studies and how he felt at the time. That was fine, but from the start, he struck me as too gullible. He took the criminals he interviewed at their word. From the start, he listened wide eyed to their stories and never mentioned once what liars they could be. He only referenced that psychopaths are liars but it never came across in his interviews. He struck me as a sort of groupie, all worried about what danger he was in, impressed with what they had done and how normal they seemed. Then at the end of what I considered interviews with no information or insight into the particular individual, he gave his conclusion of their rating on the popular psychopath scale. His book came across as an autobiography, and it reminded me of some of the writing by so-called ghost hunters. With not much information, they tend to focus on their own thoughts and feelings throughout the story. Somehow psychopaths have become our latest craze, and it amazes me how gullible people can be when they think that they have met one. The author never once questioned why he met so many psychopaths so quickly. Can it be that these inmates are bored, know very well what he wants to hear and love to talk about themselves? Did it ever occur to him that just because they did terrible things and don't seem too concerned that it might just mean that they're bad people, but not psychopaths?

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