



# PSYCHOPATHOLOGY IN JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

KATERINA MANIADAKI,  
EFTHYMIOS KAKOUIROS  
AND  
RANIA KARABA  
**Nova Science Publishers, Inc.**

*New York*

April, 2010

ISBN: 978-1-60876-975-9

## SUMMARY

In *Psychopathology in Juvenile Delinquents*, after a short presentation of the juvenile justice systems, the authors provide a global overview of the main mental health disorders usually diagnosed in the population of juvenile delinquents, with a specific focus on Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Disabilities and Mood and Anxiety Disorders. A developmental psychopathology perspective is used and specific attention has been given to gender and ethnic / minority issues. The aim of this overview is to clarify through integration of theory and research in this field, the possible link between mental disorders and delinquent behavior of youth and therefore, present some pathways to delinquency through psychopathology. Moreover, mental health services needed in juvenile justice are described and detailed recommendations are given for the prevention strategies and the social policies needed to be developed. The final objective of the book is to propose a direction western societies could turn to in order to face the multifaceted phenomenon of juvenile delinquency.

## FOREWORD

One of the greatest interests – indeed fascinations – of society today is to glimpse into the criminal mind. We search for understanding, knowledge and answers. We search for an explanation. We seek to find the bridge that links the innocence of childhood with acts of deceit, manipulation and aggression. *Psychopathology in Juvenile Delinquents* goes a long way in providing an explanation by

giving valuable and insightful information about the developmental pathway of young people involved in the criminal justice system. We know that disruptive behaviour problems and/or mental disturbance play a significant role and in the past few years practitioners have begun to respond by developing psychological interventions that aim to meet the specific needs of young people (many of whom are emotionally immature, vulnerable in some way and lack scholastic achievement) and reduce risk to society (e.g. the Reasoning and Rehabilitation program for antisocial youths and adults with ADHD).

However the authors push the reader to acknowledge that the gains we have made are random and not nearly enough. The authors highlight that these youths do not “come out of nowhere”. They draw our attention to the developmental signposts that illuminate the pathway. These are not old, faded or shaded signposts. They are brilliantly lit beacons that we cannot fail to miss. The authors provoke us to move away from a passive acceptance that in western societies we respond reactively and, often, punitively in our dealings with youth offenders and encourage us to move towards an undertaking to act proactively and intervene at the first signposts. Why do we not? Are these signposts so brilliantly lit that we are blinded to the obvious? Are there so many signposts that we become confused, indecisive and paralysed? Or do we deliberately look the other way preferring to walk a more familiar path?

The authors identify a pathway forward and argue their case well. What is clear is that social policy is not following in the footsteps of science. What is needed is a policy of rehabilitation, treatment, education and support. This means that social agencies need to join up and work together in a meaningful way towards common goals. There has been a lot of talk and agreement but not enough action. It is inexcusable that preventions are not applied early in the cycle. The authors lay down the challenge for this to be achieved.

These authors are experts in their field. Significantly, they are scientist-practitioners in child psychology with great insight into the developmental needs of antisocial youths, practical experience in managing them and the depths to which society fails them. This thoughtful, reflective book may be small but it is an important book and powerful in its message.

Susan Young, BSc, DCLinPsy, PhD

Department of Forensic and Neurodevelopmental Sciences

King's College, Institute of Psychiatry, London

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1. The Juvenile Justice Systems

1. Introduction
2. Historical Overview of the Juvenile Justice Systems
3. Legal Issues regarding the Juvenile Justice Systems

CHAPTER 2. Psychopathology in Juvenile Delinquents

1. Prevalence Rates
  - 1.1 Learning Disabilities
  - 1.2 Disruptive Behavior Disorders
  - 1.3 Substance Abuse Disorders
  - 1.4 Mood and Anxiety Disorders
  - 1.5 Other Mental Health Disorders
  - 1.6 Comorbidity Issues and Other Considerations
2. Gender and Race/Ethnicity Issues
  - 2.1 Gender Differences
  - 2.2 Racial/Ethnic Differences
3. Effects on Individuals and Society

CHAPTER 3. The Relationship between Juvenile Delinquency and Psychopathology

1. Difficulties in Understanding the Relationship
2. Psychopathology as a Consequence of Incarceration
3. Psychopathology as a Cause of Delinquency
4. Integrating Theory and Research

CHAPTER 4. Mental Health Services in Juvenile Justice

1. Identification and Assessment
2. Treatment
  - 2.1 Reasons that Underscore the Need for Treatment
  - 2.2 Evidence from Practice
3. Barriers to Mental Health Service Use

CHAPTER 5. Recommendations

1. Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

## 2. Social Policies and Interventions

CONCLUSION

REFERENCES

INTERESTING SITES AT THE INTERNET

SUMMARY

INDEX