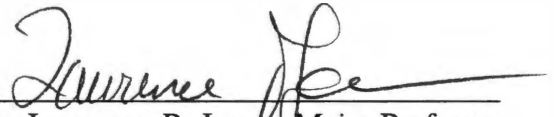
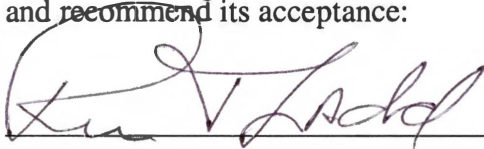


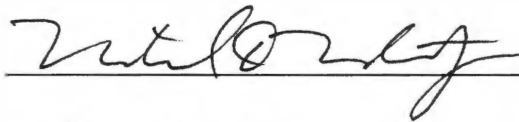
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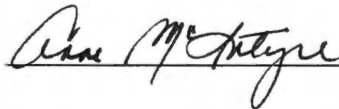
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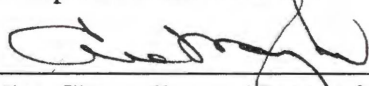
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and recommend its acceptance:







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Vice Chancellor and Dean of
Graduate Studies

JUSTIFICATION OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

William R. Walton

August 2004

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all the family and friends who have
helped me along the way, but especially to:

Pops, Peg, and Boo-Boo.

You helped get me started; I just wish you were here to see it finished

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to further the study of conditional reasoning (CR) methodology to study personality. The direction of the expansion was two fold. First, was to increase the content area of the study of aggressive personality by developing justification mechanisms (JMs) for antisocial behaviors. Second, was to determine the feasibility of using different reasoning-based tasks to measure JMs. Thus the development of a CR based reading comprehension task to measure antisocial JMs was undertaken. This study represents the preliminary investigation of the viability of this measure.

The Conditional Reasoning Reading Comprehension test (CR2C) was administered to 833 undergraduates at a large Southeastern university, along with the Conditional Reasoning Test for Aggression (CRT-A), the CPI Socialization scale, and another self-report measure of antisocial tendencies. The student's records were also accessed for violations of the university's code of conduct. Items from the CR2C meeting selection criteria were kept to form a preliminary empirically derived key for the measure. The key held up to cross-validation and a confirmatory factor analysis and thus was retained for further analysis. This preliminary key showed solid psychometric properties and was a good predictor of student conduct-violations. The key also demonstrated discriminate and convergent validity with the CRT-A and the self-report antisocial measures.

Strengths and weaknesses of the current study are discussed, as well as future directions for research.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary study of aggressive individuals has identified a series of defining characteristics stemming from their motives and trait-based behavior. These characteristics include (a) choosing to use some form of aggression to deal with evocative, especially frustrating situations; (b) dislike if not hate the target of aggression; (c) desire to inflict harm on the target; (d) diminished self-regulatory capacities, which suggests underdeveloped internal prohibitions or standards against aggressing; (e) sees limited response options, which denotes that aggression is seen as the most efficacious response to frustration and anger (cf. Bandura, 1973; Baron & Richardson, 1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Gay, 1993; Huesmann, 1988; Laursen & Collins, 1994; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, & Glew, 1996). James (1998) used this description of the aggressive individual in the development of the conditional reasoning test of aggression (CRT-A), focusing primarily on the first three descriptors. These three descriptors emphasize how the individual comes to be primed to aggress and then justifies using an aggressive response. The final two descriptors accentuate the nature of the act to be committed, and whether or not the aggressive act escalates to the violent antisocial level. These descriptors reflect the antisocial tendencies that may be associated with aggression.

Specifically, antisocial individuals lack the self-regulatory mechanisms that most of us have in place, to direct our behavior toward socially acceptable outlets. In addition, the antisocial individual frequently is able to rationalize violence to be an effective and

appropriate course of action. Removal of regulatory mechanisms to discourage violence and a tendency to defer to a violent response would seem to increase the likelihood that an individual will engage in an aggressive act. To continue the development of the conditional reasoning instrument, these factors need to be taken into consideration. Thus the focus now shifts onto these last two descriptors.

The roots of scientific study on antisocial behaviors (AB), and those who routinely engage in them, can be traced at least as far back as the mid-19th century when it was referred to as “moral insanity” or “moral idiocy” (Toch, 1997). Sufferers from this disease were considered to be completely lacking in moral judgment, no better than savages, and the only treatment was to keep them locked away in asylums (Millon, 1981, Toch, 1997). The foundation for the modern study of the disorder is often credited to Cleckley (1988) and *The Mask of Sanity*. Within this book, Cleckley outlined characteristics associated with the psychopath, including, superficial charm, dishonesty, lack of anxiety, guiltlessness, failure to learn from punishment, egocentricity, absence of deep emotions and lack of forethought. It was these characteristics that made up the basis for the original DSM and DSM II criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD). However, these guidelines were very limited, consisting of only a few sentences and very general descriptions. The criticisms of these characteristics as a diagnostic set centered around low interrater reliability, based on the fact that clinicians could not directly observe interpersonal and affective characteristics (Lilienfeld, 1992; Robins, 1978).

Partially in response to criticism, and partially on the basis of emerging research (Robins, 1995) the DSM III moved away from a diagnostic set based on Cleckley’s

classification to a behaviorally based criteria. This behaviorally based criterion set in the DSM III and DSM III-R has also come under heavy criticism (c.f., Frances, 1980; Gunderson, 1983; Hare, Hart & Harper, 1991; Kernberg, 1989; Lykken, 1984; Millon, 1981; Perry, 1990; Rogers & Dion, 1991; Wulach, 1983). These criticisms centered around five basic premises: 1) failure to differentiate from traditional concepts of psychopathy; 2) overdiagnosis within criminal settings; 3) underdiagnosis in noncriminal settings; 4) difficulties in differentiation from substance abuse disorders; 5) an overly complex and cumbersome criteria set. (For a very thorough review of these issues, see Widiger & Corbitt, 1993, or Widiger & Corbitt, 1995). Further, when attempting to identify those that might be prone to engage in antisocial behaviors one is forced to rely on past history, during which a potential dangerous individual may not have committed any of these acts, may not have been caught, or may be unwilling to admit to them. Most troubling is that many of these same criticisms could be applied to the DSM IV, since the criteria found they are simply a modification of the DSM III-R guidelines.

The field of criminology, another discipline that focuses on the study of people who engage in antisocial acts, has largely rejected the psychological concepts of psychopathy and ASPD. This has occurred for a number of reasons, including these notable points. First, criminology generally falls within the discipline of sociology, therefore not being psychologists, they perhaps would not have the training or background to make a diagnosis of psychopathy. Antisocial personality as diagnosed by the DSM III and IV would provide a measurable criterion set; however, one that was not useful due to the populations in question. With the DSM criteria being based on criminal

acts, and criminal populations being the area of study, this ends up as circular logic (i.e. We know people commit crimes because they are antisocial. We know they are antisocial because they commit crimes). Thus, identifying upwards of 80% of your population as ASPD would provide little benefit and even less variance. Second, these labels have been rejected by some criminologists not only for their liberal application, but for the stigma attached with the diagnosis that those afflicted are unreachable and not worth helping (Toch & Adams, 1994).

This is not to say that criminologists do not study those afflicted by ASPD. Often the labels they attached to individuals and groups look very similar to ASPD. For example, low self control has been suggested as one cause of individuals engaging in criminal acts (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1993). Individuals with low self control engaging in criminal acts look for immediate gratification of desires, easy or simple gratification of desires, have few or meager long-term goals, and engage in little planning (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Very frequently synonyms for these concepts are used in antisocial research: i.e., need for stimulation/proneness to boredom; parasitic lifestyle; lack of realistic, long-term goals; impulsivity (Harpur, Hart, & Hare, 1994). The difference here is that criminologists are more interested in capturing the broad range of individuals that would engage in criminal acts than in the more narrow focus of psychologists studying ASPD.

When weighing these options what is left is either a set of criteria that have seemingly strong measurement problems, a set that is too unwieldy to use (and perhaps not even capturing the problem), or a criterion that doesn't address the needs of

psychologists. It is little wonder that researchers attempted to develop alternative means of diagnosing these disorders. Hare (1980) set out to develop an instrument that could identify psychopathy in the Clecklyan tradition, and provide more structure to diagnosis. What resulted was the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL), which is a 20-item list that is scored based on interviews with the subjects and collateral information (e.g., psychiatric files). The PCL has resulted in highly reliable diagnosis, and shown construct validity when measured against ASPD diagnoses, self-report psychopathy scales, demographic, behavioral and experimental variables (Hare, 1985; Hare, 1988; Hare et al., 1990; Harpur, Hakstian, & Harper et al., 1989; Hart & Hare, 1989; Kosson, Smith, & Newman, 1990; Hare, 1999).

While the PCL is frequently being used as a measure of ASPD (Cunningham & Reidy, 1998; ; Gancano, 1998; Gancano & Hutton, 1994; Rutherford et al., 1998), this may not be an appropriate use of the instrument. Development of the PCL showed the traditional notions of psychopathy to really be a two-factor personality disorder. The first factor measures callousness, selfishness, and remorseless use of others, while the second factor measures social deviance. Conceptually, the first factor relates to narcissism, while the second factor relates highly to ASPD, resulting in ASPD being a necessary, but not sufficient, component of diagnosing psychopathy. Hart and Hare (1998) have argued strenuously for differential diagnosis of the PCL and ASPD.

The success and frequency of use of the PCL demonstrates the need for an easily useable, valid measure capable of identifying individuals who may commit antisocial acts. One of the ways that this could be achieved is through the identification of the

justification mechanisms (JMs) used by antisocial individuals to rationalize their antisocial behaviors. Identification of these justification mechanisms would be interesting not only to help understand, but also to help identify the antisocial individual. James (1998) outlined a methodology by which personality constructs could be identified via the JMs. This methodology is called conditional reasoning.

Conditional Reasoning

Conditional reasoning is based on the premise that people generally do not engage in purely irrational behaviors. That is to say that at some point, some form of rational reasoning was performed to determine that the actions taken would be justifiable and suitable given the situation. People generally have a reason for acting the way that they do, and even the most bizarre or odious behaviors could be supported by some rationale if the person were questioned. This rationale may or may not be sufficient for supporting the behavior when viewed in a purely logical sense, but the individual's personality configuration may supply the necessary premises to make it appear so to him/her. The use of cognitive analysis (Bernard & Joyce, 1984) in Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) presumes that a behavior, no matter how deviant, can be understood when you look at the beliefs and reasoning behind it. This same idea can be used not only in therapy situations as with RET, but can be used as a testing procedure. The understanding of the premises supplied by an individual's personality configuration is the key to conditional reasoning.

Justification Mechanisms

Think of how ponderous life would be if each time someone is confronted with a situation, they must logically puzzle out what would be the correct action to take. Luckily

this is not necessary, and we have developed cognitive “shortcuts” to get us to an appropriate action quickly, often times without even being consciously aware of the decision being made. One way that these shortcuts are made is with schemas. Schemas have been called “an active organization of past reactions, or past experiences” (Bartlett, 1932). The formation of schemas has considerable consequence on how an individual views the world; how new situations and information generalize to old, what information is remembered, and what information is remembered. There are many influences on the formation of schemas, but of interest here is how an individual’s personality configuration and underlying motives can influence these shortcuts. This influence takes place via the justification mechanisms developed by the individual to validate acting in a manner consistent with the salient personality constructs.

The use of JMs allows individuals to use what they believe to be logical reasoning to reach conclusions on what would be acceptable behavior that are consistent with their underlying motives. This can lead the individual to conclusions about what is acceptable behavior that when scrutinized objectively by an individual without the personality configuration influencing their perspective would be considered biased. This is particularly true when the influencing personality configuration is an abnormal one like antisocial/aggression. In purely logical reasoning, an argument is based on a set of premises being used to reach a conclusion. If, while assuming all the premises to be true one can logically reach the conclusion, the argument is said to be valid. However, this says nothing about the quality, or soundness, of the argument. To determine this you must look at the legitimacy of each of the premises, and determine if they are indeed true

or not. In conditional reasoning, individual's determination of the soundness of the argument presented for the behavior is skewed, because the premises are supplied by their JMs, and since they are motivating to the individual, are assumed sound.

It is easy to see how the addition of unchallenged biased (to the impartial observer) premises to an argument can lead to irrational decisions. Tests of conditional reasoning (CRTs) are designed to trigger the justification mechanisms used by individuals with the personality construct being sought, and thus supply the necessary premises. For example, examining one of the CR items used to measure aggression:

One-half of marriages end in divorce. One reason for the large number of divorces is that it is easy and quick to get a divorce. If a couple can agree on how to split their property fairly, then they can get a divorce simply by filling out forms and taking them to court. They do not need lawyers.

A reasonable inference based on the information above is:

- A. people are older when they get married.
- B. if one's husband or wife hires a lawyer, then he or she is not planning to play fair.
- C. couples might get back together if getting a divorce took longer.
- D. more men than women get divorced

We see that the non-aggressive response (C) can be reached based on the information in the stem with the implicit assumptions based on prosocial values (i.e., people want to get along and resolve conflicts in an amicable manner). However, if a further premise was added stating that usually people's actions have a malevolent intent, then the aggressive response (B) can also be reached. The JM of the hostile attribution bias provides just that premise, and thus makes the argument more appealing to adherents of this JM.

The influence JMs provide in how an individual views the world and interprets information effects how their schemas are formed. As shown in the example above, one of the primary JMs for the aggressive individuals is the hostile attribution bias, which is

defined as the tendency to see malevolent intent in the actions of others. The individual views the world through a “prism of malevolence” which causes benign and even friendly actions to seem insidious and corrupt. Clearly this has an important effect on how the individual frames the world, the actions of others and even what is seen as meaningful data (Dodge & Schwartz, 1997, Gouze, 1987, Dodge & Frame, 1982). It is based on this idea, that JMs can work as a filter through which data that can be interpreted as salient to the individual and is congruous with their personality configuration, passes through the easiest, that a new item format for conditional reasoning is proposed.

The development of CR problems has its roots in common inductive reasoning problems. To this point CR problems have been modeled after two of the most common inductive reasoning problems; forming a conclusion based on the information presented and detecting the underlying assumptions in an argument. The success of these item formats has been shown through the consistently high validities achieved (cf., James, 1998; James & Mazerolle, 2002; James et al., in press). However there are other ways which people use inductive reasoning in their daily lives, and thus it follows that there should be other formats which lend themselves to the construction of conditional reasoning problems. Proposed in this paper are items based on how people read, interpret, and process information.

Reading Comprehension

Research has identified at least three major characteristics that reading comprehension shares with inductive reasoning which distinguish it as being conducive to conditional reasoning research. The first is that reading comprehension is heavily

dependent upon schemas. The ability to comprehend written information is dependent upon being able to process and retain complex propositions, and to be able to tie them together with propositions previously read and those still to come. To avoid placing an overwhelming burden upon short term memory propositions are melded together into logical patterns. These patterns are compared to, and linked with, knowledge already retained by the individual (i.e., previously existing schemas). Inductive reasoning also involves the processing of information and combination with existing schemas to make logical sense out of the propositions presented. The use of schemas that, as discussed above, an individuals JMs played a significant role in forming.

The second similarity is that reading, and tests of its comprehension, involve making a series of inferences. Just as one must make a series of “logical” inferences in solving inductive reasoning problems, reading comprehension involves making at least four kinds of inferences. The first is that inferences must be made about which schema to select for organization when reading a text. In real life sometimes it is obvious, even with situations that have many similar components. What if you came across a scene where a man, who has a lot of blood on the front of him, wearing a mask and wielding a knife, was standing over an unconscious woman? Should you try to help the woman? That probably depends on what other clues you can gather. If this is taking place in a dark alley then the answer is probably yes. However, if it is taking place in a brightly lit room where the man is dressed in white, then the woman probably doesn’t need to be rescued from her surgeon. When situations are ambiguous, other factors can influence schema selection. For example, Anderson, Reynold, Schallert and Goetz (1977) showed that

athletes were more likely than psychology students to attribute a wrestling connotation to an ambiguously worded paragraph about escape.

The second inference occurs when assigning the information you are reading to role within the schema. When reading a mystery it is necessary to resolve who are the good guys and who are the bad guys. Many times this is not explicitly stated to allow for plot twists later in the story. The plot twists wouldn't work if characters had not implicitly been assigned roles and thus certain behaviors expected of them. In addition, information must be categorized. At a simple level this may just be categorizations of what information is important and what is not. This leads to the third inference which is assigning default values to slots in the schema that are not filled by the information presented. If the story you are reading is a western, the default value is that the bad guys have the black hats while the good guys are the ones in white. Another example of this phenomenon would be if the story said that someone was shot, the assumption generally would be that a gun had been used. This information will not be challenged unless explicitly so within the text, such as by a statement that they were shot with an arrow.

Finally, inferences are made when drawing conclusions from the text that must be based on lack of knowledge. Frequently in reading comprehension tests the reader is asked to respond to which of the pieces of information would the author also support. Since the reader has no way of knowing for sure, they are attempting to draw a logical conclusion based on the information that they already know, or have interpreted, that the author supports.

The previous two similarities to inductive reasoning indicate a third; Reading is a problem solving exercise (Thorndike, 1917; Baker, 1979). The above discussion shows that just as in inductive reasoning there is an active, albeit sometimes unconscious, process and structuring of information in an attempt to reach a logical conclusion. For inductive reasoning, this conclusion is the correct answer, and in reading it is the correct meaning. This pursuit of meaning should be susceptible to the influences of JMs just like the pursuit of answers.

The information presented in Conditional Reasoning Test of Reading Comprehension (CR2C) is designed to evoke JMs. These items are like common reading comprehension items in that the test takers are presented with a passage of text and then are queried on their understanding of the content. The difference is that the CR2C passages are designed to be particularly evocative to ABs and the individual's comprehension is to be determined by a series of true/false statements. These statements are geared toward JMs that are pursuant to ABs (to be discussed below) and could be interpreted from the readings if the JMs are in place. By evaluating the pattern of information that the individual has taken away from what they have just read, and thus whether or not the JMs are salient to the individual, their potential for engaging in antisocial acts can be gauged.

Identification of the JMs used by individuals for whom a personality construct is salient allows the creation of CR items designed to measure that construct. By creating a series of these CR items the individual's responses to the items creates a "cognitive fingerprint" of their personality configuration (James, 1998). This paper is an attempt to

identify the motives and dispositions for individuals who are cognitively primed to engage in antisocial behaviors (ABs), and the JMs used to support these drives, and then creating a CRT.

As indicated earlier, the basis for the identification of ABs in this paper focuses on two of the defining characteristics of aggressive individuals. These characteristics are the diminished self-regulatory capacities of aggressive individuals, and a limited set of usually violent response options seen by the aggressive individual. Diminished self-regulatory capacity in an AB is justified because the AB feels a sense of self-absorption, which supercedes social norms, and thus is free to act in any way that they see fit. The response set that the AB uses to react to situations is influenced through two means. One, the AB displays a generalized reactance toward the world and any form of authority. Thus they deal with their environments via a “prism of regard” in which interactions are analyzed on the basis of whether or not there is someone or something trying to control them. Maintaining immoderate autonomy and being shown deference is such an important issue for the AB that if it is determined that the proper level is not being shown then they are compelled to action, and even violent retribution is deemed as warranted. Further the AB’s view of the world as a place where violent acts are being perpetrated constantly not only mitigates their acting in kind, but also advocates its effectiveness. Thus the primary JMs for ABs to be discussed here are the egoism bias, the generalized reactance bias, and the efficacy of violence.

Egoism Bias

As earlier noted, within the field of criminology one of the primary explanations for antisocial behaviors that has been forwarded is low self-control. Making the connection between low self-control and AB is reasonably clear (many of the terms used in the PCL and in the DSM, [impulsive, irresponsible, reckless] could be synonyms for low self-control), and is important when seeking the JMs of ABs. The research done on those labeled as having low self-control provides understanding of their motivations and insight as to how it influences their behavior. For ABs low self-control works as a motivator by not engaging inhibitory mechanisms (Plutchik & Van Praag, 1997). If the AB sees something they want, they take it. If they want to do something, they do it, without concern (or perhaps even regard) for the ramifications.

Low self-control is justified to the AB because they equate “what is right” with “what is right for me,” often with a sense of entitlement toward whatever they want (Bush, 1995). The entitlement stems not from a feeling of superiority necessarily, but more from an individualistic sense of sovereignty and total selfishness that overwhelms whatever inhibitory controls that might be in place. They do not feel guilt over taking what they want any more than a socially adaptive individual would feel remorse for taking something from their own home. All situations are categorized by the criteria of how they benefit the AB. They view the world as being made up of three categories; “suckers” to be taken advantage of, “bastards” who resist their machinations, and themselves (Karpman, 1961). Rude, boorish behavior is not viewed as tactless because

sensitivity offers no gain for them. The fact that the object of their desire can be obtained many times in this manner serves as the reinforcement for the behavior.

This self-centeredness manifests itself often as a lack of inhibition and indifference to social norms. Removal of the norms of society, and the inhibitions associated with them, the AB is free to act in any fashion they wish and do not understand that repercussions may follow, or the nature of their disturbances (Salama, 1988). They may not view themselves as having committed crimes because the laws are unfair and do not apply to them. They may complain of others not “playing by the rules” because they violate what the AB sees as the norms (e.g., involving the police in a fight between individuals; using a bottle during a fistfight). Drug abuse is prevalent among ABs as a way to fulfill the thrill seeking they crave with little control to stop. What matters most is themselves and all other things come after. The reasoning associated with this can be seen in the following conditional reasoning item:

The strength of this group comes from your willingness, as a member of the group, to support each other and provide assistance to each other. In a crisis the members of the group have to pull together and help one another in order to achieve the best results for the group, even if it means individuals making sacrifices. This is what is known as group cohesion.

Which of the following would provide the biggest obstacle to group cohesion?

- A. Members of the group not doing their share
- B. The goal of the group not going along with your own goals

Similar to the aggression item above, the pro-social response (A) can be concluded based on the information contained within the stem of the item. The AB response (B) can also be concluded if one were interested in the impact of a situation was on them without

regard to, or even at the expense of, all others. Such would be the case of an individual who used the egoism bias JM. What matters most is if it is good for them. The actions of others do not matter unless they benefit the AB, and as long as they are not trying to influence the AB. This latter issue deals with the next JM, the generalized reactance bias.

Generalized Reactance Bias

Related to the issues of self-control discussed with the egoism bias is the need for ABs to maintain the feeling that others are not controlling them and to exert control over others. Toch (1997) provides a series of case studies in his research on acts of violence. He describes violent acts as a game in which the players make a series of moves culminating in an act of violence. One of the moves in most all of the violent acts outlined by Toch involves a power play; either by the individual who committed the violent act or an attempt at control over the individual by the victim. The attempt to control need not be overt or even real, the AB displays an indiscriminate resistance, and unilateral contrariness to the world and those that undermine them.

Attempts at control by others are viewed as a lack of respect for the AB individual. The generalized reactance bias is the tendency for ABs to automatically take a divergent position of anyone that is trying to control them or exert authority over them. They view interactions with others as a test of whether or not they are getting the respect they feel they deserve from others. This respect need only be superficial in level and based on the recognition that the AB is in control of their own life and that they could exert control over others. By not showing the AB the proper amount of respect you are implying that they are not in control. This is probably not a good idea as respect is often

earned and maintained through violence (Toch, 1997). For example, studies have found that one third of gang members believes it is acceptable to shoot someone who “dissed” (disrespected) them (Nauth, 1995).

The lack of deference doesn’t have to be simply reactive to another’s manipulation; it can also appear to be proactive. ABs may cultivate underlying feelings of anger and resentment and view their actions as righteous retribution for the wrongs inflicted upon them by the world (Bush, 1995). In this case, the target of the retribution may not be the imagined originator of the slight and thus may appear to be an act of random violence, when in fact the justification may be based on a buildup of frustration. There need not even be real incidents to predicate the act, as ABs often view the world as out to get them (Bush, 1995; Salama, 1988). Also, the act itself may provide the reinforcement; “It’s like hitting someone and making someone’s jaw break. I like the feel of it. There’s a feeling of power, like I’m in control” (Nauth, 1995).

This level of reactance has ominous repercussions in many areas such as schools and businesses. Teachers must maintain orderly classrooms to facilitate learning, however the AB might see this as attempting to manipulate them. Supervisors must give orders, instructions on how to complete a job, and feedback on performance, all of which can be construed by the AB as attempts to limit their freedom and disrespectful.

Efficacy of Violence

To the AB, violent actions are a way of life and the need for violence in their world is far reaching. There are several reasons why a violent act is the one most frequently chosen, and the JMs already discussed help to support the pattern of violence.

Often the violent response is the quickest way to react to an offending situation. As outlined in the description of aggressive individuals, the AB has a limited response set and is looking for the quickest and easiest route will be the one taken. This limited response set combined with the entitlement they feel leads to failure to consider the consequences of their actions, or to conceive alternative plans which may be equally effective non-violent responses (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1993).

As indicated above, generalized reactance is another important mechanism for the AB. The extreme need for autonomy and deference justifies the use of violent behaviors. For example, to protect oneself from attack is considered justifiable. The legitimized level of force used in defense is generally considered to be equal to the force of the attack (i.e. a verbal jab should be countered with a witty rebuttal, attack with a knife would justify physically disabling your attacker). Violence is warranted as a response because disrespecting the AB constitutes an attack that is at an equal level. The AB sees the act of control, even necessary controls, as an act of violence itself, "They tried to control me through violence, by locking me up" (Nauth, 1995).

Of most importance to this JM though is why violence is the preferred choice of responses. Many times it is because they have learned that this is the most effective way of achieving their goals. Often, it may be the only way the AB has learned to experience their own power and efficacy, a cycle that only continues to feed itself by reinforcing the violent behaviors each time they are successful. They have little respect for those who won't stick up for themselves or fight back; therefore they feel that the only way others

will respect them is through force. Further, by truly believing that the world is against them, and having nowhere to turn the only alternative is to fight; to not react violently will allow the world to overwhelm them (Bush, 1995).

Summary and Overview

The identification of some of the primary JMs used by antisocial individuals enables us to build a conditional reasoning based measure. The three JMs discussed above certainly do not represent an exhaustive list of the justifications used by ABs. These were provided as those that, based on the literature, appear to be three of the most important, and should provide a solid basis for identifying individuals who may engage in antisocial behavior. Based on these JMs, and existing CR theory, a reading comprehension test designed to measure the JMs can be developed.

This research represents an initial demonstration study designed to determine if a reading comprehension task is a reasonable approach to measure justification mechanisms, and to determine how such a task would correlate with other predictors of antisocial behavior and measures of aggression. The following research questions are posed:

1. Could a reading comprehension task be developed to measure antisocial JMs?
2. If so, would the task be viable alternative to the CRT-A?
3. If so, would results be predictive of behavioral criteria?

Chapter II describes the development of this test and discusses the samples and procedures for data collection. Chapter III presents the validity and reliability analyses on

the CR2C. Finally, Chapter IV reviews the findings from Chapter III, discusses potential limitations of the current study, and offers directions for future research.

Chapter II

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Data were collected from students at a large university in the Southeastern United States. All participants used in this dissertation were treated in accordance with the APA Ethical Guidelines (American Psychological Association, 1992). Students were enrolled in an undergraduate course in management information systems (N = 833) over the course of two semesters and received extra credit for participating. Assignment into one of two samples was done randomly. Sample 1 consisted of 411 total students with a mean age of 23 years, the majority of whom were White (88%) and male (52%). Sample 2 consisted of 422 total students the majority of whom were also White (89%) and male (52%), and had a mean age of 23 years.

Data Collection Procedures

Participants were asked to complete the measures used during class periods throughout the semester. The surveys were administered separately so as to minimize potential context or cueing effects (Council, 1993; Harrison, McLaughlin, & Coalter, 1996). Thus, four independent data collection periods took place with the data being matched by student identification number. Once all data were collected and matched the identification numbers were radically altered to protect participant anonymity.

Measures

Conditional Reasoning Test of Reading Comprehension. The measure developed to test the feasibility of measuring justification mechanisms via reading comprehension consisted of an essay, designed to evoke JMs, as well as true-false questions designed to measure the presence of the JMs based on the participant's response. The passage and the questions, when taken collectively, will be referred to from here on out as "problems" while the individual true-false questions will be referred to as "items." Initially three CR2C problems were developed and reviewed by no less than 5 subject matter experts. After several iterations of comments and revisions it was decided to use two of the three problems that had been developed. The final problems used for this dissertation, which can be found in the Appendix, were approximately 1,000 words in length for the essay, and had 15 scored items. In addition, 5 distracter items were included that dealt directly with the essay without the influence of the JMs. These were included to help reduce the transparency of the measure by not having every item dealing with antisocial issues, as well as to test for spurious relationships.

By examining the essays and the items together you can see the implicit nature of the measure. The participants are asked to determine whether the statements made in the items were implied or stated in the essay. A review of the items shows that none of the scored items have a direct correlate to information presented in the essay. That is, none of the items are explicitly stated in the essay, however, it could be possible to infer the statement based on the information in the essay. This is particularly true if you factor in the JMs discussed above. The essays were written in such a way that when the

information presented is read and filtered through the JMs it would evoke a response similar to the statements in the items. Thus when the items are read and the participant is asked to recall whether the statement was present in the essay it would result in a response scored “AB” for those with the JM present. Without the JM through which to filter the information the participant would respond in a prosocial manner.

An example of how the problems work can be seen in the first paragraph of the first problem:

Morals, ethics, good behavior, responsible citizenship, family values; all of these are buzzwords that are used by politicians and the media. But do these words have any value other than to gain support from the public? What do they mean? Who decides what is morally good or ethically right?

The passage from the essay refers to morality in less than favorable terms by referring to it as a “buzzword” and poses questions about the value of a generally accepted code of morality. Individuals who use the egoism bias JM are predisposed to reject the commonly held ideas of right and wrong, instead referring to a more individualistic code that relies on how the behavior effects them as the guide to their behavior. Therefore, the negative implications in the passage presented would likely be sentiments with which they agreed, and be salient in their recall of information presented. Thus, when they are later presented with the item:

T F Morality is just an idea made up by politicians and the media.

they would have already been primed in this direction and be more inclined to agree that this had indeed been expressed in the essay.

Individuals who do not possess the egoism bias have no such inclination to be cynical about morals, ethics or societal norms. The passage presented would then have

little congruence to their own beliefs and therefore they would be primed to refute the statement made in the item. This contrasting set of responses then represents a single indicator of the presence or absence of the egoism bias in the individual. Using multiple items like this should result in a good indication of the influence of the JMs on the individual. The system is implicit because the participants are unaware of the underlying bias that they are reporting with their responses, and because their response is influenced by implicit mental processes.

The two problems were each administered during their own data collection period. The problems were presented as a timed test in which the participants were given seven minutes to read the essay portion, at the end of which the passage was taken away from them. They were then given an additional three minutes in which to answer the true-false items. The essays were taken away so that the participant had to rely upon their own perceptions of what had been stated rather than being able to simply refer back to the text to verify the information. Pilot testing of the instruments demonstrated that this was sufficient time for participants to complete each task. The items were scored a +1 for every response given that corresponded with an AB JM, and a 0 for every response that did not. In Sample 1 there were 322 participants who completed problem one and 286 participants who completed problem two. Sample 2 had 315 participants completing problem one, and 291 participants completing problem two.

Conditional Reasoning Test of Aggression. The CRT-A consists of 22 inductive reasoning problems that are designed to assess implicit cognitive readiness to engage in aggressive behaviors (James, 1998; James et al., in press). Items are scored such that a

+1 is given for each response based on a JM for aggression and 0 is given for all other responses (i.e., socially adaptive responses and distracter responses). The resulting number provides an index of implicit cognitive readiness to engage in aggressive behavior. The potential range of this scale is from 0 to +22, with higher scores indicating a greater propensity to engage in aggressive behaviors. In Sample 1 there were 388 participants who completed the CRT-A, and 383 participants in Sample 2.

California Psychological Inventory-Socialization Scale. The CPI (Gough, 1987) is an omnibus personality inventory consisting of 426 items scored on a true-false scale. The So scale is the 46 items that remain from the original scale developed as the “Delinquency” scale, but later scored in the direction of prosocial behavior and change to “Socialization” or “So” (Gough, 1994). This scale has shown good psychometric properties as well as correlations with other measures of antisocial tendencies such as the Psychopathy Checklist, and the Psychopathic Deviance scale of the MMPI (Gough, 1994). The So scale has also correlated with antisocial behaviors including sexually aggressive behaviors, alcoholism, substance abuse, criminal recidivism, and criminal activity and deviance (Rapaport & Burkhart; Cooney, Kadden & Litt, 1990; Conway, et al., 2003; Ge, Donellan & Wenk, 2003; Gough & Bradley, 1992). In Sample 1 there were 324 participants who completed the CPI-So, and 340 participants in Sample 2.

Self-Report Antisocial Scale. A ten item self-report measure of secondary psychopathy developed by Levenson, Kiehl, and Fitzpatrick (1995), was also included in the study. The two-factor model of psychopathy postulates that there are two components involved in its diagnoses (Harpur, Hart & Hare, 1994). While primary psychopathy

encompasses the aspects associated with narcissism, secondary psychopathy deals with the antisocial component. This particular measure was chosen because of its validation on a non-institutionalized sample. Items were answered on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” Sample items include “I find myself in the same kinds of trouble time after time” and “I have been in a lot of shouting matches with other people.” In Sample 1 there were 319 participants who completed this scale, as well as 315 participants in Sample 2.

Conduct Violations. The University registrar provided records of violations of the student code of conduct. These violations cover a wide range of behaviors including plagiarism, theft, public drunkenness, possession of illegal drugs, physical assault, forgery, vandalism, and cheating. Approximately 7% of Sample 1 on which this data was available had a conduct violation (28 of 402 participants). Similarly, 6.4% of Sample 2 had a conduct violation reported (27 of 420 participants). Unfortunately the registrar did not provide information on what type of violation had occurred, simply whether or not there was a violation on record. Both the list of behaviors covered by the conduct violations as well as the low base rate for occurrence of these behaviors signifies that the majority of these violations are severe enough to be indicative of antisocial behavior on the part of the violator. Engaging in behaviors that are contraventions of societal rules to the degree that only the very small percentage of individuals have in this case is a solid operational definition of antisocial behavior. Therefore, the variable was dichotomously scored, +1 if a violation was present, or 0 for no violations and was used as the measure of antisocial behavior in the criterion-related validity analyses.

Key Development for the CR2C

In a manner consistent with early validation efforts of the CRT-A, in which items were empirically keyed against an appropriate aggression criterion, each item on the two CR2C problems was keyed against the criteria of conduct violations. The empirical key was based on polychoric correlations between each item and the conduct criteria.

Polychoric correlations were determined to be the appropriate statistic since both predictor and criteria were categorical characterizations of continuous latent constructs.

Items that correlated .20 or greater with the criterion were retained for inclusion into the scale for that problem, with separate scales being constructed for each problem. This was undertaken in both samples, thus four separate scales were constructed, one for each problem in each sample. Each scale was then cross-validated on the other sample, thus resulting in a double cross-validation design with two initial validities and two cross-validities for each problem. Results of all analyses are presented in Chapter III.

Chapter III

RESULTS

Development of Scoring Keys

Problem 1. As outlined in Chapter II, any item correlating .20 or greater was included in the composite key. For Problem 1 there were five items in Sample 1 that met this criterion and thus composed the key for Problem 1. The initial validity for this key with the criteria was .68. In Sample 2, five problems also met the selection criteria and were retained with an initial validity of .57 (see Table 3-1). Note that the cross-validities for the keys are equal to the initial validities in each Sample. This is because the five items that emerged in Sample 1 were the same items which emerged in Sample 2. Thus Key 1 is the same as Key 2 for this Problem.

Problem 2. Using the same process of selecting items as for Problem 1, there were three items in Sample 1 that met the .20 criteria with an initial validity of .48. There were also three items making up the key in Sample 2 with an initial validity of .58 (see Table 3-1). As with Problem 1, the items that made up Key 1 were the same as the items that made up Key 2, therefore the cross-validities are equal to the initial validities for this Problem as well. Cross-validities of this magnitude suggest that the items making up the keys were highly predictive of the conduct violations criteria and not simply a matter of random chance or due to sampling error.

Total Key. The next step was to determine whether the items from the two

Table 3-1

*Initial- and Cross-Validities for the CR2C**Problem 1*

	Key 1	Key 2
Sample 1	.68	.68
Sample 2	.57	.57

Problem 2

	Key 1	Key 2
Sample 1	.48	.48
Sample 2	.58	.58

Note. Key 1 = key developed in Sample 1. Key 2= key developed in Sample 2.

Cross-validities are in bold.

Correlations are based on N=316 and N=313 for Samples 1 and 2, respectively for Problem 1, and N=284 and N=297 for Samples 1 and 2, respectively for Problem 2.

problems could be combined into one key. It should be noted that because the items from the two Problems were the same in both Samples, it was deemed appropriate to combine the two Samples into one. All results presented from this point forward will be based on this one sample unless otherwise noted. Internal consistency reliability was estimated using a derivative of the KR-20 formula (see James et al., in press; LeBreton 2002), which computes internal consistency reliability using item-total polyserial correlation coefficients. Using this formula, a reliability estimate was obtained using all of the items that keyed from both problems. The reliability coefficient obtained using this formula was .80. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggest the lower bound reliability for tests in the early stages of development should be at least .70, the estimate exceeded this threshold, indicating modest to strong level of internal consistency.

Next, the eight items were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis testing a one-factor solution. This solution showed reasonable model fit ($\chi^2=33.08$, $df=20$, $p=.03$; $RMSEA=.038$, $GFI=.99$, $CFI=.89$, $RFI=.71$). The data were also fit to a two-factor model, based on which problem the items came from, which also demonstrated reasonable fit ($\chi^2=32.94$, $df=19$, $p=.02$; $RMSEA=.04$, $GFI=.99$, $CFI=.89$, $RFI=.70$). Since the one-factor model showed equivalent fit to the two-factor, the most parsimonious model would be the one-factor solution.

Because the two problems were administered at two different times the number of participants who have scores from both problems is considerably lower than those who have at least some portion. There were 637 participants who completed Problem 1, and 584 who completed Problem 2, but only 492 having data on both. This is in comparison

to 724 participants who had scores on at least one of the problems. To counteract this loss of data it was decided to compute a mean score for the key which was a ratio of the number of items the participant answered as antisocial divided by the total number of items to which the participant responded. It is this mean score that is used for the CR2C for the remained of the analyses.

Additional Validity Evidence

Above we showed that empirically derived item keys from the two problems not only correlated with the behavioral indicator of antisocial behavior, but these correlations held up to cross-validation. While this provides the strongest evidence of construct validation (Binning & Barrett, 1989; James, 1973; Ozer, 1999; Schmitt & Landy, 1993), secondary evidence can be sought by investigating the relationship with other measures of antisocial behavior. Previous research on implicit measures, and particularly conditional reasoning based methodologies such as the CR2C, have shown modest to near zero correlations with explicit measures (cf. Bing et al., 2002; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; James, 1998; James, et al., in press; LeBreton 2002; Lilienfeld, et al., 2000; McClelland et al., 1989; Winter et al. 1998). It is expected that this relationship will hold with the two explicit measures, the CPI-So scale and the Levenson et al. scale, included in this study. The relationship between the two implicit measures in the study is expected to be modest as well. This is due to the central focus of the two measures. The CRT-A is designed specifically to identify aggressive individuals. As discussed above these individuals may also have antisocial tendencies, which could exacerbate their aggression,

however, the measure was not purposely designed to tap into these tendencies. Further, the JMs being explored by the CR2C are different than those measured by the CRT-A. Evidence of secondary validity is presented in Table 3-2. The correlations in these samples between the explicit and implicit measures are consistent with previous research. That is, for the most part there are generally modest correlations. The CRT-A correlated significantly with the CPI-So and the CR2C, but actual effect size was quite small. The CR2C, however, showed modest correlations with both of the explicit measures, demonstrating further construct validation for the measure. Finally, the self-report measures of antisocial behavior also achieved significant correlations with the conduct violation criteria.

The CRT-A was not predictive of conduct violations. The distributions on the CRT-A are consistent with previous research; the means and standard deviations are similar to those reported in the test manual, and both samples had a significant positive skew (Sample $t(770) = 7.09, p < .01$) (see Table 3-3 for descriptive statistics for the CRT-A, the CR2C and conduct violations). Although the CRT-A has shown predictive ability in some previous studies, this study would seem to be consistent with several attempts to replicate these findings, which have met with mixed results at best (see LeBreton, 2002). It had been theorized from these previous findings that the conduct violation criteria is less an indication of aggression, which is one possible cause of receiving a violation, and more an indication of antisocial behaviors, which as discussed above, most all these violations undoubtedly are. It was in part because of this that conduct violations were chosen as the primary criterion for this study.

Table 3-2

Supplemental Validity Evidence

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Conduct					
2. CRT-A	-.06	<i>.75</i>			
3. CPI-So	-.37**	-.09**	<i>.64</i>		
4. Levenson	.33**	.04	-.49**	<i>.65</i>	
5. CR2C	.64**	.07*	-.17**	.19**	<i>.80</i>

Note. Conduct=Conduct Violations; CRT-A = Conditional Reasoning Test of Aggression; CPI-So = CPI Socialization scale; Levenson = Levenson et al. scale; CR2C = Conditional Reasoning Reading Comprehension test. Correlations are based on sample sizes ranging from 620 to 760. Internal consistency reliability estimates are presented in italics.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3-3

Comparison of the Distributions of CRT-A, CR2C, and Conduct Violations

Variable	N	Mean	St.Dev.	Skew	(st.error)	Kurtosis	(st. error)
Conduct	821	.07	.25	3.47	(.09)	10.07	(.17)
CRT-A	770	3.83	2.02	.62	(.09)	.52	(.18)
CR2C	724	.21	.20	1.01	(.09)	1.05	(.18)

Note. Conduct=Conduct Violations; CRT-A = Conditional Reasoning Test of Aggression; CR2C = Conditional Reasoning Reading Comprehension test. Because conduct violations are dichotomously scored, the means correspond to the proportion of individuals having a registered conduct violation.

The correlation between the CRT-A and the CR2C, while significant, was small in actual size. As stated above, this is not surprising given the divergent purpose of the CR2C. In addition, the lack of relationship between the CRT-A and conduct violations, which were used to develop the keys, would suggest that the connection would not be strong. However, since aggression and antisocial could share commonalities, it was decided to see if any items from the CR2C would correlate with the CRT-A. The original split samples were used to generate new keys that might be indicative of aggression. Using the procedures for key development described at the beginning of the chapter, except replacing the CRT-A for conduct violations, there were three items from each problem that emerged in both samples. Table 3-4 and Table 3-5 contain all items for Problem 1 and Problem 2, respectively, and information on which key, if any, the items were included. The items from Problem 1 form key-Ag 1, while the items from Problem 2 from key-Ag 2. The correlations between the CRT-A and key-Ag 1 were .39 in both Sample 1 and Sample 2. The correlations for key-Ag 2 were .36 in Sample 1 and .32 in Sample 2. In the combined sample the correlation for key-Ag1 was .39 and key-Ag 2 was .34(see Table 3-6).

The predictive ability of the measures was further tested through multiple regression. Using the conduct violations as the criteria once again, regressions were run entering first the CPI-So as the predictor, then the Levenson scale, and finally the CR2C. Each predictor contributed significantly with the R^2 for the full model equal to .48 (see Table 3-7). A dominance analysis (Budescu, 1993) was also performed to determine the relative contribution of each variable to prediction. This analysis involves a pairwise

Table 3-4

Summary of Keyed Problem 1 Items

Item	Key	p-value
Theft can be excused if you are taking something to which you feel you are entitled	Conduct	.28
An individual's beliefs are more important than the rules of society	None	.48
Laws against drug use are an example of flawed morality being enforced through law	None	.29
Morality is just an idea made up by politicians and the media	Conduct	.21
The best moral code is to only act how you think you should	None	.41
The success of individuals such as Martin Luther King Jr. in changing society's views is usually by peaceful actions	None	.30
Breaking the law is always acceptable behavior as long as you have a good reason	CRT-A	.21
If you break the law you might just be ahead of your time	CRT-A	.34
Ninety-two percent of successful executives have committed serious ethical violations	Conduct	.32
The self-defense argument states that it is acceptable to hurt someone if he or she is bothering you	Conduct	.26
An example of a minor ethical transgression would be sabotaging a competitor's project	None	.40
Violence is justified if someone is trying to take credit for your work	Conduct	.06
Exceptions to laws should be made for individuals who feel they are entitled to special privileges	CRT-A	.22
Violence in the workplace is most often a result of an individual not getting the respect he or she deserves	None	.31
Almost all successful executives have committed violations that could get them fired	None	.57

Note. Conduct= Item met the criteria to be included in the key for this sample for

antisocial behavior; CRT-A = Item met the criteria to be included in the key for

aggression; p-value = the proportion of participants who answered with an AB response.

Table 3-5

Summary of Keyed Problem 2 Items

Item	Key	p-value
One reason why inmates in the experimental cellblocks make parole more often is because the Correctional Officers are not always picking on them	None	.35
You have to take what you want in order to make your way in the world	CRT-A	.24
The unwritten rules in prison are the same as those in society	None	.39
In both normal society and in prison violence is a good way to get what you want	CRT-A	.13
Being respected for being tough is just as important in society as it is in prison	Conduct	.26
Being remorseful for injuries you have caused others is an important part of being accepted in society	Conduct	.20
Getting into a fistfight to release some anger is an example of a "recreational crime"	None	.39
Many people are sent to jail because they are being hassled by the police	Conduct	.14
The "revolving door" on prisons is because of the remorseless nature of criminals	None	.31
Society owes prisoners something for incarcerating them	None	.06
Dealing drugs is the best way out of poverty	CRT-A	.16
The most important life skills taught to prisoners in the experimental cellblocks are how to stand up for themselves and how to show others respect	None	.58
If a prisoner has too many conduct violations while in prison to make parole it is probably because a Correctional Officer is holding him to an unreasonable standard	None	.20
Being able to force someone to do what you want is just as important in normal society as it is in prison	None	.15
By keeping the toughest criminals under tighter security prison officials are causing themselves problems by creating a power void at the top	None	.33

Note. Conduct= Item met the criteria to be included in the key for this sample for

antisocial behavior; CRT-A = Item met the criteria to be included in the key for

aggression; p-value = the proportion of participants who answered with an AB response

Table 3-6

*Correlations for the Aggression Scales on the CR2C**Sample 1*

	CRT-A	Key-Ag 1
Key-Ag 1	.39**	
Key-Ag 2	.36**	.20**

Sample 2

	CRT-A	Key-Ag 1
Key-Ag 1	.39**	
Key-Ag 2	.32**	.29**

Total Sample

	CRT-A	Key-Ag 1
Key-Ag 1	.39**	
Key-Ag 2	.34**	.24**

Note. Sample sizes range from n=247 to n=310 for Sample 1, from n=248 to n=289 for Sample 2, and from n=495 to n=599 for the Total Sample.

** $p < .01$

Table 3-7

*Regression Analyses**Model Summary*

Model	R	R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
				R ² Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.37	.14	.23	.14	98.02	.000
2	.41	.17	.23	.03	22.10	.000
3	.70	.48	.18	.32	378.94	.000

Note: Dependent variable: Conduct violations; Model 1: CPI-So; Model 2: CPI-So and Levenson Scale; Model 3: CPI-So, Levenson Scale and CR2C.

Dominance Analysis

Measure	Zero Order R	Beta Weight	General Importance	Relative Importance
CPI-So	-.37**	-.21**	.066	13.64%
Levenson	.33**	.12**	.077	15.91%
CR2C	.64**	.58**	.341	70.45%

** p < .01

General Importance is the amount of the total R² accounted for by the variable; Relative Importance is the % of R² accounted for by that variable.

testing among all predictors in the regression, and by comparison of the semi-partial correlations of all possible subsets of regression analysis, provides an indication of the contribution of each predictor to the shared variance. The CR2C contributed the largest proportion at 70.45%, with the Levenson scale next at 15.91%, and then the CPI-So with 13.64%. Finally, a test for interactions was undertaken using the self-report instruments and the CR2C. As would be expected from the results above, with the additive model already accounting for such a large portion of the variance, there were no interactions found.

Relationships with Gender and Race

Correlations were run as a first step to determine whether a relationship existed between any of the scales and gender or race. The CPI-So (-0.09 $p < .05$) and the CRT-A (0.07 $p < .05$) both showed very small but significant correlations with race, so t -tests were performed to further examine these findings. The CRT-A showed no mean differences between the racial groups in the sample, and the only significant mean difference for the CPI-So was between Whites and Hispanics ($t = 2.16$, $p < .05$).

All of the instruments used in the study, except for the CR2C, had a significant correlation with gender. The CRT-A had a correlation of only 0.09 ($p < .05$), while the CPI-So and Levenson scale correlated -0.26 ($p < .01$) and 0.18 ($p < .01$) respectively. These correlations are consistent with previous research on gender and its relationship with the CRT-A and self-report aggression measures (James & Mazarolle, 2001). Additionally, they are not inconsistent with the correlation found in this sample with the conduct violations criteria, which was 0.15 ($p < .01$).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

At the end of Chapter one, three questions were posed as to the viability of a reading comprehension measure of conditional reasoning. The research presented here supplied as least initial answers to the affirmative. The first question had to do with whether a reading comprehension task could be developed to measure antisocial justification mechanisms. Above is outlined one possible avenue of measurement of JMs by reading comprehension through the use of essays on salient antisocial issues followed by a series of true-false questions. While there are certainly other methods that could be employed, this appears to be a reasonable system by which to measure JMs.

The second question posed was whether or not this measurement system would be predictive of appropriate criterion. In Chapter two we outlined the argument for why student conduct violations would appear to be a behavioral indicator of antisocial tendencies. By accepting this criteria, and because preliminary scales were extracted from the CR2C problems, this would be a leading indicator that the CR2C could be developed into a measure of antisocial tendencies.

Question three dealt with the relationship of the CR2C with the existing CRT-A. Because the CRT-A was not predictive of conduct violations in this study while the CR2C had some predictive ability, it would seem that the CR2C could serve as a supplement to the CRT-A when attempting to identify aggressive-antisocial individuals.

Further, some items on the CR2C problems were correlated with the CRT-A and would thus indicate that there may be the potential for some overlap between the two measures. Perhaps a reading comprehension test could be developed to serve as an alternate form of measuring aggression via conditional reasoning.

Limitations and Future Research

While there are positive indications in the development of the CR2C resulting from this research, further research is certainly needed. The primary limitation would seem to lie in the criteria. While the case was made for why conduct violations was an appropriate criterion, it is limited by being only a single indicator of antisocial behavior. Further investigations using other indicators of antisocial tendencies certainly need to be undertaken. Historically samples used in the study of antisocial behavior have included prisoners or individuals in drug rehab programs. The opportunity to study such a sample would certainly be beneficial to help establish an extreme.

A further limitation of this criterion is uncertainty about the exact nature of the behavior that resulted in the violation and thus the extent to which the behavior could truly be considered antisocial. A sample in which an accurate accounting of behaviors, either in a field sample that has a more precise classification (e.g., personnel record, criminal record) or such as in a laboratory setting, would further strengthen the findings. Finally, the history of this criterion in research on the CRT-A has shown it to be somewhat inconsistent in its relationship with the aggression measure. Certainly more research is necessary before it is determined which items would be included in scales for

the problems, but items that made up the aggression scales for the CR2C should be considered viable until proven otherwise.

Additional avenues of research on the CR2C would include exploration into other personality domains. The scales that correlate with the CRT-A indicate that reading comprehension could be a viable option for aggression research. Recent research on the CRT-A has shown that individuals are able to alter their response pattern if they are coached on the purposes of the test (Barksdale, 2004). Using different formats could help to protect the integrity of the CR measures by increasing the complexity of an overall instrument. Achievement motivation and fear of failure would be another area as there is already an inductive reasoning CRT developed here as well. As for new personality domains to be investigated, narcissism would be a natural progression. Based on the two-factor model of psychopathy antisocial and narcissism make up the primary components of the two factors. Developing a narcissism measure to go along with the developing antisocial one presented here could become a powerful new tool for identifying psychopaths.

Since this represents the first attempt by a CR measure to identify antisocial individuals, there remain a number of other research avenues based on the CR methodology. The first undoubtedly would be to pursue other JMs that might be influential to the reasoning of ABs. While the three presented in Chapter one are a representative sample of the JMs that might be influential they certainly are not an exhaustive list. One research area to investigate further for clues about antisocial JMs would include the addiction literature. Much has been written about the role of antisocial

in drug and alcohol addiction, and while the author reviewed this literature for general information on antisocial, it was a conscious decision not to include anything that dealt strictly with addiction. Since this was an exploratory effort into antisocial behavior it was deemed more appropriate to focus on the broader aspects, particularly with the population being studied, as addiction information would have been difficult to obtain. Other areas that would seem fruitful for JMs would include the attributions made by ABs (Tedeschi & Felson, 1995), the fatalistic attitude of ABs that some researchers report (Tedeschi & Felson, 1995), and the subculture of violence that some ABs associate with (Wolfgang & Ferracuti 1967).

Further research should also be pursued in regards the creation of other CR measures based on the JMs identified here. A logical first step would be the construction of an inductive-reasoning-based test of antisocial JMs. Before expanding even further into new measurement systems it would be beneficial to step back and take advantage of the existing technology. As for expanding the CR universe, one direction might be to develop a test of analogies. There has been some success in the use of synonyms to measure implicit framing (LeBreton, 2002) and it would seem that a similar system could be developed for analogies. These could take the common form of “‘A’ is to ‘B’ as ‘X’ is to ____.” The example analogy in the setup could take on the relationship of a positive or negative connotation, synonym, antonym or level comparison (greater than, less than) and the choices to fill in the blank be based on contrasting JMs.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken as an exploratory effort into the expansion of the conditional reasoning universe. The results of the study seem to indicate that there is some promise in that expansion in two directions; the expansion of personality areas as well as the expansion of the methodology used for measurement. The ability of a reading comprehension based test to predict an antisocial criteria like violations of the student code of conduct indicates, at minimum, the benefit of further pursuit of this line of research.

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APPENDIX

The following exercise is designed to test your ability to comprehend and recall information that you have read. For each section you will be given 7 minutes to read the passage as many times as you like. At the end of the 7 minutes the passage will be taken away. At that time you will be given an additional 3 minutes to respond to a series of true-false statements that are to be answered on the basis of what was **implied** or **stated** in the passage.

Morals, ethics, good behavior, responsible citizenship, family values; all of these are buzzwords that are used by politicians and the media. But do these words have any value other than to gain support from the public? What do they mean? Who decides what is morally good or ethically right?

Many of the world's religions have based much of their moral beliefs on the Ten Commandments. These declarations found in the Old Testament of the Bible outline what are supposed to be the basic rules of life. However most of the Commandments have been broken over time in the name of what is morally right. "Thou shalt not kill" has been violated many, many times by wars that have been fought in God's name. "Thou shalt not steal" can be flexible depending on the situation. For example, Robin Hood who stole from the corrupt rich is hailed as a hero. Another Commandment is to "honor thy father and mother," but every day thousands of fathers and mothers abuse and mistreat their children and are not worthy of homage. And what about "Thou shalt have no other god than me?" This is in direct conflict with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religious beliefs.

Usually the laws of a society reflect the morals and ethics of that society. Some laws are a direct reflection (i.e., almost all societies have laws against murder and theft) while others have more of an indirect relationship. An example of an indirect relationship would be speed limits. Few people would think that driving 55 miles an hour on the highway is a moral responsibility. However it does mean that people should behave in a manner that doesn't endanger others in the society. This is another case where we can provide many

examples of how these laws are broken but are accepted. To kill someone is against the law. However if you kill someone who is threatening you it is considered self-defense and is acceptable. Driving faster than the speed limit is against the law but police and firefighters exceed the speed limit every day as part of their jobs. In addition, police officers let people go without tickets all the time for moving violations. Someone rushing to the hospital to have a baby is excused, as are famous or powerful people. These exceptions are accepted in the same way that special privileges are made to individuals with disabilities. Speed limits aren't even uniform across the country. Some states have a 55-MPH limit on the highway while others go as high as 70-MPH.

Not only do laws differ within the country but also laws about acceptable behavior have changed over time. Many states and towns have laws on their books that seem ridiculous now. Laws against walking goats through a town square was needed at one time but doesn't mean much now. Also, women were not allowed to vote and were treated as second class citizens. At one time laws against the consumption of alcoholic beverages and now there are currently laws against the use of drugs. Is it simply a matter of time before these laws are repealed as well?

Just because there is a law against something doesn't always mean that it is wrong. You can also say that just because something is considered morally acceptable mean it is necessarily right. In the end what is considered right or wrong by a society is decided by a group of people. But sometimes an individual must make their own judgment of what is satisfactory behavior and act in a manner that is acceptable. Some of the greatest changes in history have come about because one person had the honor and courage to stand against what was considered right. In recent history Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi serve as positive examples of how to go about bringing change to a society. These were people who got the changes that they wanted by breaking laws they felt were unjust and didn't resort to violence.

This is not always the case and sometimes violence is necessary. Some argue that the militant actions of such black leaders as Malcolm X had as much if not more effect than the peaceful actions of King.

We usually refer to the morals that direct the business and professional world as ethics. Here too we run into the issue of this code being more of a suggestion, that some feel can be violated whenever they wish. Very often we hear of "gaining a competitive advantage," "doing what it takes to get ahead," and "creating your own opportunities" as keys to being successful. These phrases are simply a nice way of saying that you have to break the rules in order to succeed is the argument some would make. Often times it is small offenses that would not result in any action being taken against the person. Walking away with office supplies would be one example. Another would be taking more credit than deserved on a project, or manipulating data so that it shows you in a good light. However a major business school recently did an anonymous poll of top executives. Thirty percent of them said that they had performed actions that would be considered a serious violation of their company's code of ethics. Of those, 85% said that they had committed multiple infractions. Also, 92% credited their unethical actions as being key to their success.

Please respond to the following statements either "True" or "False" based on whether they were stated or implied in the passage you just read. Please circle your answer next to each question

- T F 1. Theft can be excused if you are taking something to which you feel you are entitled
- T F 2. You have a moral obligation to always drive the speed limit
- T F 3. The poll of executives was undertaken by a business magazine
- T F 4. An individual's beliefs are more important than the rules of society
- T F 5. Laws against drug use are an example of flawed morality being enforced through law
- T F 6. Morality is just an idea made up by politicians and the media
- T F 7. The best moral code is to only act how you think you should
- T F 8. The success of individuals such as Martin Luther King Jr. in changing society's views is usually by peaceful actions
- T F 9. Breaking the law is always acceptable behavior as long as you have a good reason
- T F 10. If you break the law you might just be ahead of your time
- T F 11. The Ten Commandments are in the Bible
- T F 12. Ninety-two percent of successful executives have committed serious ethical violations
- T F 13. The self-defense argument states that it is acceptable to hurt someone if he or she is bothering you
- T F 14. An example of a minor ethical transgression would be sabotaging a competitor's project
- T F 15. Robin Hood gave money to the poor
- T F 16. Violence is justified if someone is trying to take credit for your work
- T F 17. Exceptions to laws should be made for individuals who feel they are entitled to special privileges
- T F 18. Violence in the workplace is most often a result of an individual not getting The respect he or she deserves
- T F 19. Running a "Stop" sign is used as an example of a minor violation
- T F 20. Almost all successful executives have committed violations that could get them fired

The following exercise is designed to test your ability to comprehend and recall information that you have read. For each section you will be given 7 minutes to read the passage as many times as you like. At the end of the 7 minutes the passage will be taken away. At that time you will be given an additional 3 minutes to respond to a series of true-false statements that are to be answered on the basis of what was **implied** or **stated** in the passage.

The number of prisoners in the United States has increased severely during the second half of the 20th century. At the beginning of the 21st century, almost 7 out of every 1000 Americans are in jail. Critics of the prison system would argue that the number could change daily because of the “revolving door” that jails have. Prisoners are routinely set free after serving only a part of their sentence only to go back out, commit more crimes, and return to prison.

There are two main reasons for this revolving door. One is prison overcrowding and the other is the unrepentant nature of criminals. To see the first point you only have to look at the fact that the number of new prisons being built is not nearly as large as the number of new prisoners that need to be housed. Some of this may be due to the changing nature of the laws in this country. Many laws have been added to the books over the last 50 years or so that limit the activities in which people may engage. In addition, police forces have become larger and harder working by cracking down on any activity that may be criminal. Many “recreational” crimes that the police may have once looked the other way over are now being punished to the fullest extent.

By saying that criminals are unrepentant, what we mean is that many people who get sent to prison feel no remorse for what they have done and tend to commit crimes even after they have been to jail once. Like those who come from the so-called “criminal demographic” of being poor and having fewer opportunities. They often feel like they have not gotten a fair deal in life and that the world owes them something. This feeling leads them to try to take something back. They might see being sent to prison as just another example of how

unfairly the world treats them. By simply doing what they need to survive they are being punished. This becomes just one more score they need to settle. Others feel like they need to do anything they can to get out of their down trodden surroundings. They often see criminal activities as the only way to do so. For example, dealing drugs is a quick way to make a lot of money.

The solution to overcrowded prisons is a debate that is not easily worked out. For example, one answer is to continue to build more and bigger prisons. This is unpopular because that means more taxpayer money is needed. Another way to ease the population is to parole those prisoners who have demonstrated that they are remorseful for their crimes and can again be trusted in society. The problem here is “How do you decide which prisoners are ready for parole?” A lot of the time these decisions are based on how the prisoner acts while they are in prison. Parole boards usually treat individuals who have not had any conduct violations while in prison more favorably. This has problems also. Many times the prisoner who has been written up feels that it is unfair. They think they weren’t really doing anything wrong, it is just the Corrections Officers writing them up for petty things. Or maybe they are being held to what they feel are unfair standards. Also, many times the most violent criminals are under tighter security. These are the true leaders of various groups within the prison but do not have the opportunity to interact with the other prisoners and exert their will over others themselves. So even though they may be the worst of the bunch, they may have fewer violations than those under easier security.

In 1999 alone there were 14,000 violent crimes committed by people who were on the streets as part of either an early release program or out serving their parole sentence. On top of this, 79% of all violent prisoners released from prison early commit violations of their parole. This has implications when dealing with repeat offenders. Some states have adopted the “three strikes and you’re out” policy. Under this policy criminals who

are convicted of three crimes are sentenced to life in prison without a chance of parole. While this policy ensures that these people will no longer commit crimes, it simply worsens the problem of overcrowded prisons. Some argue that being sent to prison simply serves as advance training for criminals. While they are in prison they interact with other criminals, learning their skills and mistakes. Then when they hit the streets they have more information about crime than when they went in. Maybe now they know how to not get caught. Those that argue prisons should work toward rehabilitating criminals say that this is one of the ways that prisons fall far short of their goals. Instead of releasing who are ready to be productive members of society, they are instead releasing more hardened criminals.

One attempt at rehabilitating criminals is experimental cellblocks that allow the prisoners much more freedom. Many features of these cellblocks are intended to mirror life on the outside. The prisoners are free to come and go from their cells during daytime hours as they please. They are not allowed outside of their cellblock, but they are free to spend time in common areas with TVs, computers, and access to library and exercise areas. They are not required to wear a prison outfit, they are responsible for washing their own clothes, there are no scheduled times for most things other than meals and lights out. In addition, they are required to keep all the areas clean. Correctional Officers in these areas maintain more of a distance. They still watch over the prisoners, but much less intrusively than in the traditional system. All of these ideas are a radical break from the historical thinking on how to run a prison. They are aimed toward making the prisoners take responsibility for themselves and to maintaining basic life skills that they will need when they are released.

Just like society has unwritten rules of how people should act, these cellblocks do as well. In prison new inmates learn quickly that the most important person is himself. They need to always be on the lookout and always have their own best interests in mind because no one else will. Another important thing to remember in

prison is always show respect to the other prisoners. To not show respect to another prisoner is to challenge their status. Among the ways that disrespect is shown is through staring or cutting in line. Doing either of these things indicates that you have nothing to fear from that inmate and do not consider them worthy of your concern. The system works through a power structure that is based on respect. Respect is earned by being the toughest, the meanest or the most willing to start violence. In addition to earning respect, it ensures that you get what you want. Might makes right and being able to force someone to do what you want is the best way to get what you want.

Whether or not these experiments will work remains to be seen. They have not been in place long enough to make any long term conclusions about their success. However, early results show that those that serve their entire sentence in the cellblocks have a higher rate of achieving parole and a lower rate of return to prison. Only time will tell if these patterns hold up and if the reasons above are the cause.

Student ID #:

Please respond to the following statements either "True" or "False" based on whether they were stated or implied in the passage you just read. Please circle your answer next to each question

- T F 1. One reason why inmates in the experimental cellblocks make parole more often is because the Correctional Officers are not always picking on them
- T F 2. The "criminal demographic" refers to people who are likely to have been the victims of crime
- T F 3. You have to take what you want in order to make your way in the world
- T F 4. The unwritten rules in prison are the same as those in society
- T F 5. In both normal society and in prison violence is a good way to get what you want
- T F 6. Being respected for being tough is just as important in society as it is in prison
- T F 7. Parole boards are always made up of men
- T F 8. Being remorseful for injuries you have caused others is an important part of being accepted in society
- T F 9. Getting into a fistfight to release some anger is an example of a "recreational crime"
- T F 10. Many people are sent to jail because they are being hassled by the police
- T F 11. The "revolving door" on prisons is because of the remorseless nature of criminals
- T F 12. Society owes prisoners something for incarcerating them
- T F 13. Dealing drugs is the best way out of poverty
- T F 14. Building more prisons is one of the solutions to overcrowding
- T F 15. Prisoners in experimental cellblocks are allowed to go home on weekends
- T F 16. The most important life skills taught to prisoners in the experimental cellblocks are how to stand up for themselves and how to show others respect
- T F 17. If a prisoner has too many conduct violations while in prison to make parole it is probably because a Correctional Officer is holding him to an unreasonable standard
- T F 18. There have been changes to the law in the last 50 years
- T F 19. Being able to force someone to do what you want is just as important in normal society as it is in prison
- T F 20. By keeping the toughest criminals under tighter security prison officials are causing themselves problems by creating a power void at the top

VITA

William Robert Walton was born in Detroit, Michigan on December 19, 1970. He is the youngest of six children born to John Grant Walton and Shirley Walton Zabka. He attended St. Mary Magdalen Elementary School, Beecher Junior High School and Hazel Park High School. He earned a B.S.A. in Business Administration with a minor in Psychology from the University of Michigan-Dearborn in 1993. In the fall of 1994 William began pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He received his doctorate in the summer of 2004, working with Dr. Lawrence R. James.