

Typologies of Antagonistic Traits and their Associated Aggressive Behaviors

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INTRODUCTION

- Aggression is on the rise in the United States.
- The predominant typology of aggression includes three dimensions of aggressive behaviors: physical aggression, social aggression, and rule breaking.
- Risk factors for aggressive behavior include male sex and antagonistic personality characteristics.
- Among dimensions of personality associated with aggression are psychopathy (meanness, boldness, and disinhibition), narcissism, and Machiavellianism.
- It is unclear how these dimensions cohere into types and whether they interact with sex to predict aggression.

METHODS

- Study participants were 286 workers on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (see Table 1).
- Measures: STAB, TriPM, and SD3.
- We created clusters using model-based cluster analysis and compared aggression across clusters using ANOVA.

RESULTS

- Cluster analysis yielded four clusters: psychopathic, antisocial, narcissistic, and non-antagonistic (see Figure 1).
- The antisocial cluster demonstrated the highest levels of all 3 forms of aggression, followed by the psychopathic cluster (see Table 2).
- Although male sex was associated with higher levels of all forms of aggression (all d 's > 1.03), it did not moderate the influence of cluster on aggression.

Table 1

Sample Demographics

	<i>n</i> (%)
<u>Sex</u>	
Male	135 (46%)
Female	151 (54%)
<u>Race</u>	
White	240 (85%)
Asian	23 (8%)
Black	8 (3%)
Multiracial	8 (3%)
Other	5 (2%)

Table 2

Differences in Aggression by Cluster

	<i>F</i>	Psychopathic	Antisocial	Narcissistic	Non-antagonistic
Physical	95.81	2.76 ^a	3.46 ^b	1.80 ^c	1.47 ^c
Social	75.99	2.76 ^a	3.46 ^b	1.82 ^c	1.65 ^c
Rule-Breaking	100.70	2.58 ^a	3.44 ^b	1.49 ^c	1.14 ^c

Note. All F tests are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

- Antagonistic traits cohere in a way that is useful in predicting aggression.
- Findings suggest that those that are most likely to behave aggressively are those with comparatively higher levels of Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and disinhibition.
- Assessment of aggression risk should thus take a nuanced approach to considering antagonistic (and especially antisocial/psychopathic) traits.

Figure 1
Clusters of Antagonistic Traits

