Psychopathy constructs and the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL) in its various editions have been of great help in criminology in the identification of recidivistic offenders whose basic attributes are self-centeredness, callousness, a lack of remorse and empathy for victims, and untreatability. The construct of psychopathy has a long history in criminology, from the *manie sans délire* of Pinel and the *folie lucide* of Trelat, to Lombroso’s “born criminal,” to the appellative of savages by von Kraft-Ebbing, culminating in Cleckley’s definition of a grandiose, arrogant, callous, superficial person with a very serious, genuine mental disability.

Yochelson and Samenow (1976) well described the psychopath’s irresponsibility, self-indulgence, interpersonal intrusiveness, and antisocial tendencies, and Blackburn (1988) pointed out the psychopath’s dysfunctional tendencies and his view of the self, others, and the world on the basis of his personal biases.

In this issue of the *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Melissa Magyar and colleagues present a study of patients from a state psychiatric hospital (a civil psychiatric sample) assessing the relationship between criminal cognition and psychopathy. Essentially, the researchers assessed the relationship between psychopathy and those thinking styles that support a criminal lifestyle using the Psychological Inventory of Criminological Thinking Styles (PICTS; Walters, 1995) and the short version of the PCL (PCL:SV; Hart, Cox, & Hare, 1995). Their findings put into evidence that not only is psychopathy related to a general criminal type of thinking but it is also related to a set of criminal cognitions largely responsible for that association. More specifically, they found that Entitlement was a significant predictor of Factor 1 in the PCL:SV and Superoptimism well correlated with Factor 2 scores in the same PCL:SV. The Self-Assertion/Deception factor in PICTS, which assesses the tendency to exercise power over others in order to achieve one’s aims, regardless of the harm that may ensue to the other, composed of Entitlement and Superoptimist scores, was a stronger predictor of psychopathy.

These findings point out the egocentric interpersonal behavior characteristics of psychopaths and their cognitive distortions due to their superoptimistic attitude. Indeed, psychopaths believe that they can manipulate their way out of punishment for their negative behaviors. Furthermore, the results of the Magyar study may encourage
treatment of psychopaths. I believe that in spite of what has thus far been common opinion, personality disorders, including psychopathic behaviors with their cognitive disorders, are essentially dynamic, not fixed, entities and in most cases are amenable to treatment.

All articles in this issue, including such varied topics as the biosocial correlates of neuropsychological deficits (Beaver et al.), tattooing among Russian prisoners in Israeli prisons (Shoham), and financial crimes in Nigeria (Sowunmi et al.), will certainly be of interest to the Journal readers.

As the year 2010 comes to an end, I wish to thank the many scholars who have contributed their articles to the Journal, the many reviewers who promptly and enthusiastically gave their time to review the articles, and, of course, the IJOTCC editorial board. Special thanks go to Adrienne Palermo for her very efficient management of the Journal. The IJOTCC continues to achieve greater national and international recognition, thanks to all of us, and we hope it will continue in 2011. Best wishes to all readers for a new year of personal success and good health.

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References