

A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF THE AMERICAN POVERTY
EXPERIENCE ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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Institute for Clinical Social Work in Partial Fulfillment
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Abstract

This study used the NEO FFI 3 to collect quantitative data from persons who experienced domestic poverty during their early developmental years. Data was also collected from persons who did not experience domestic poverty during those years in order to serve as a control group for sighting similarities and differences in personality development that continue on even after the economic circumstances for the individual have improved. This study serves to provide us with more information about the long-term impacts of poverty on social and emotional health that have yet to be thoroughly examined in psychoanalytic literature.

For Xander Douglas and Tristan Nathaniel

Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter.

~African Proverb

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Chapter One:

Introduction to the Study

General Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative study is to understand the long-term impact of American poverty on the personality of the individual. The study will survey two groups. The first is American adults who are not currently impoverished but have an early poverty experience. The second group is American adults who are not currently impoverished and did not have an early poverty experience. At this stage in the research, the personality will be defined using the characteristics on the NEO-Five Factor Inventory-3 (NEO FFI-3). The NEO-FFI 3 is a validated personality assessment that quantifies five non-pathological personality traits: openness to new experiences, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Significance of the Study for Clinical Social Work

This study will gather data on the impact that growing up in American poverty has on the development of personality structure for the individual. An examination of healthy personality structure will be conducted using the five-factor model, which explores openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism (OCEAN). This study aims to increase awareness about the impacts to the personality

for individuals growing up in poverty compared to those who did not grow up within the subculture of American poverty. This study will provide meaningful insights into the psychosocial framework of individuals who have undergone their primary development in impoverished conditions. The study will explore if these impacts remain even if the individuals do not continue to live in those conditions as adults. Understanding the way that clients have formed their identities is a cornerstone of providing psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

Empathic understanding is a primary tool of psychoanalysis. In order to assist clients with being able to visualize hope and become motivated toward enacting life-altering changes, clinicians need to understand their client's existing experiences, anxieties and motivations. When this issue of poverty arises, the reaction is often based on the personal situation of the impoverished person. While people who are living in poverty in other countries are often looked upon with empathy and understanding, those who experience American poverty are often looked upon with judgment and criticism (Hosmer, 1974). It is assumed that persons in American poverty have more opportunities from which to elevate themselves from their economic status that are overlooked, wasted or purposely rejected. American society's ability to empathize with impoverished persons is hindered by the assumption that all Americans share the same middle-class values and opportunities; therefore, people in American poverty are either choosing their misfortune, or that they value misfortune and therefore are not in need of

assistance or empathy.

Psychoanalytic research has examined the impact of early life experiences on both personality structure and interpersonal relationships for decades (Osofsky, 1993). This research posits that practitioners understand, when working with clients, that exposure to neglect, violence or instability can have lasting effects on the way the individual is oriented to understanding the rest of the world. The question that has yet to be explored is how one's personality structure is impacted while being immersed in American poverty. Particularly, what is the impact of experiencing poverty in a society where not everyone is poor and those who are poor are seen as personally responsible for their misfortune. This early life experience of growing up in poverty may have influenced the psychological part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex, as well as the long-lasting impact on the personality structure of the individual. It is not yet understood how development within these types of chronic interpersonal and intrapersonal stressors impacts, not only the current worldview of the person, but also how it molds their definition of their future experiences and opportunities. It is possible that what is quickly labeled as maladaptive, poor decision-making or anti-social behaviors may actually be characteristics of a very valid organizational thought process developed during childhood and adolescence in persons with an American-based poverty background. Psychoanalytic research stems from the belief that understanding what a patient needs is rooted in understanding where they started (Osofsky, 1993). However, little efforts have been made to understand

impoverished Americans or to acknowledge that the previous experience of poverty may have had any lasting effects on a person, their self-perception or their perception of the wider society after their economic situation has changed.

Statement of the Problem

Societal Problem

The United States is notably one of the most powerful nations in the modern world. While the United States has been a worldwide leader with regard to industry, military forces and financial structures, the United States falls behind other industrialized countries when it comes to providing services and opportunities for impoverished citizens (Fisher, 2012; Foster, Greer, Thorbecke, 1984). Poverty in America has been culturally viewed as an individual problem, and tales of pioneer settlers forging through untamed lands to create a life for themselves and various other rags to riches stories, have resulted in a lack of empathy or understanding for anyone who may find themselves unable to improve their lives without the assistance of others (Delaney, 2015; Rupp, 2015).

American social service programs have a long history of dissecting why someone is impoverished before allowing them to receive assistance (Ambrosino, Heffernan, Shuttlesworth, 2001). Widows, children and persons with disabilities that are easily

visible are found deserving of help while single mothers, able-bodied adults and those with hidden disabilities are often scoffed at for their assumed lack of pride and resilience (Delaney, 2015; Lees, 2007). When poverty is discussed, it is discussed only as a temporary situation (Badger, 2013). Poverty is not considered to be an impactful enough event that it would carry negative, lifelong consequences that may affect the individual even after their economic situation has changed (Osofsky, 1993). To the contrary, having an impoverished background and an affluent present is an American badge of honor, representing humility and nobility of character (Osofsky, 1993). American politicians often introduce themselves by first stating that either their parents or that they themselves had “humble beginnings”. This context leaves an undercurrent message that people may actually be better off if they are first allowed to struggle in order to meet basic needs in their lives.

Outside of the Balken states and the autocracy of Belarus, the United States is the only developed country to lag behind with regard to providing basic needs, like universal healthcare, to its citizens (Fisher, 2012). This continues despite the fact that the United States is the richest country in the world and spends more per capita on each individual for healthcare than any other country (Fisher, 2012). Americans hold tightly onto the belief that people must make their own way, “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” largely ignoring the systemic contributions to individual poverty.

Clinical Problem

Clinical work with clients involves having an in-depth knowledge about various factors in their past and present lives, including the client's value structure, psychology and the cognitive and emotional understanding of their past experiences. Failure to understand that the early-life experiences of poverty, especially in a country where poverty is frowned upon socially and morally, is a barrier for a clinician involved in the treatment process. Clinicians have long since acknowledged that past experiences can have a grave impact on the present-day personality structure of the individual (Erikson, 1968). Various helping professions now dedicate much of their time and resources to exploring the client's genetic, religious, ethnic, and abuse/trauma histories and the cultural environment(s) that may have had various levels of impact on shaping the client and who they have become. However, socio-economic status, if looked at in any way, is not assumed to have the same potential long-term impacts, if it is not the client's current situation. To work with someone and not examine the socio-economic history is to potentially miss a large piece of the information needed to work with the person.

Research Problem

There are many research studies involving the topic of poverty spanning multiple disciplines. The vast majority of political and economic research involves quantitative studies that measure issues concerning unemployment, homelessness, inflation, what constitutes a living wage and average household incomes. (Foster, Greer, Thorbecke, 1984; Perry, 2002; Ellis, 1952; Datt, Ravallion, 1992). Research studies that evaluate the

lived experience of persons in poverty tend to be conducted by various sociological researchers and tend to be quantitative studies (Carlson, 1996; Alexandrov, 2000). Sociological studies also tend to focus on specific characteristics surrounding race, gender, age and gender when discussing poverty, both American and foreign (Javier, Yussef, 1995; Javier, Herron, 1992; Lawrence, 1982). This study is only interested in examining the dynamics within the subculture of American poverty, without the further separations of the above listed subgroups. There are also numerous neurological research studies that examine the stressful and/or negative impacts of the poverty experience. (Kolb, 2012; Badger, 2013; Wicherts, 2013) These studies are very informative about the neurological and physiological symptoms that occur with maintaining the high levels of chronic stress that is a given within the poverty experience due to the psycho-social pressures and the lack of basic needs. However, there appears to be a gap in the literature of researchers who are exploring the long-term effects of poverty on the individual either socially, emotionally or psychologically.

The information obtained from this study has the possibility to enrich, not only the field of social work, but the above mentioned fields of study as well. American poverty is a multi-dimensional issue that requires an understanding by everyone in our society of the multiple ways this phenomenon is harmful to the society at-large and the impact that it leaves behind.

The influences that impact the identity formation of an individual are very

significant for effective social work practice. An individual's personality development, sense of affiliation, personal identity and ability to establish a reputation within their interconnected subsystems are all dependent on the person's self-identity (Pine, 1988; Erikson, 1968). Self-concept is an imperative part of a person's ability to individuate and greatly impacts their beliefs about future options and possibilities (Pine, 1988, Erikson, 1968). If these important pieces of information are missing when a client is working in a psychodynamic setting, it will not be possible to accurately interpret or provide treatment interventions that address their worldview.

Understanding the psychosocial implications of current poverty legislation and the ways that it enhances or detracts from future orientation can assist in collecting the evidence that is needed in order to make alterations to current legislation. It will also assist agencies that provide assistance to people in poverty with creating policies and processes that are more geared to address the further development and enhancing community interconnectedness, instead of merely assuming that once the financial need has been relieved that the person will naturally become open to being an integrated member of the larger society.

Researching the impact of poverty on childhood and adolescent development can also provide many treatment options for clinicians working with youth in psychotherapy. Understanding how development is affected creates an opportunity for observation and intervention that may improve understanding, communication and connection for the

therapist, family, school and community. The information gathered may also serve to reverse public stigma and self-stigma regarding Americans who live in impoverished conditions.

Hypotheses and Research Questions to be Explored

The primary research question is, “Does growing up within the subculture of American poverty have a long-term impact on the personality structure of the individual?” There are five general hypotheses for this study. They are as follows:

1. In the area of *Openness to Experiences*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
2. In the area of *Conscientiousness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
3. In the area of *Extraversion*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
4. In the area of *Agreeableness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.

5. In the area of *Neuroticism*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.

Theoretical and Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the listed terms will be defined as follows:

1. Poverty: subjects who receive a score of ten or more on the Childhood Poverty Screening Questionnaire
2. Adult: anyone who is age eighteen or older
3. American: any person who spent the majority of their childhood in the United States. It is not a statement of legal documentation or citizenship for this study.
4. Client: an individual seeking professional services with a social worker or therapist
5. Therapist/Clinician: professional individual providing licensed, mental health services

Statement of Assumptions

1. There is an accepted lack of empathy in American culture for impoverished Americans. This lack of empathy is rooted in a moralistic judgment about the

individual circumstances of the poor.

2. American society holds a generalized belief that hard work, dedication and personal ethics are a cure for poverty, if so chosen by the individual.
3. Impoverished Americans are marginalized on multiple levels throughout society and have a unique sub-culture that consists of its own shared history, vernacular, value system and social norms.
4. The majority of American society holds a middle-class American value system, which comes with its own history, vernacular and social norms.
5. Clinicians who are working with clients value obtaining accurate background information in order to understand their clients and assist them with moving forward toward their personal goals.
6. Personality characteristics are primarily framed prior to adulthood, based on the individual's personal experiences and overall worldview.

Epistemological Foundation

This quantitative study is rooted in a contemporary positivistic foundation. While it is clear that each person will have their own individual experiences, this study aims to discover the potential difference and or commonalities within specific aspects of personalities developed in the midst of the early poverty experience. This study does not seek to understand the entire scope of each individual experience. This information aims

to obtain generalizable information about the impact of the early poverty experience on the five non-pathological personality traits examined in the NEO-FFI-3. For this reason, the most effective research method is a quantitative survey using pre-validated measures. The study will examine thirty participants in two comparative groups for a total sample size of sixty.

Foregrounding

My interest in the field of social work has always been rooted in social justice, community education and valuing the inherent worth of dignity of all persons. My personal experiences of being an African-American female, a religious minority and a person with a low socio-economic background have all influenced my worldview and the framework from which this research occurs. Although I was able to leave poverty through the pursuit of higher education, it was always shocking to me to hear the misguided beliefs and assumptions, and witness the either passive or open hostility that members of the middle-class displayed toward the poverty class. It quickly became my belief that the first step toward building a stronger socio-economic environment for all Americans is to create an understanding about the subcultural and environmental differences between the two classes.

As I have continued in my career as both a clinician and an educator, I have continued to witness these miscommunications as they go “un-interpreted” between

middle-class individuals or institutions and middle or upper-class individuals with a low socio-economic backgrounds. I believe that psychotherapists have a unique opportunity to understand human emotion and behaviors through a multiplicity of lenses.

Psychotherapists have been influential in assisting society with understanding many aspects of personhood, such as developmental markers, the impact of trauma and the phenomenon of both depression and anxiety. I hope that this research will aid to inform clinicians and the general public about the impact of poverty on the personality structure of people growing up in American poverty. Insight into this phenomenon can help to remove biases that prevent our society from assisting all citizens with socio-economic growth and security.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review outlines theory and concepts relevant to the understanding of the impact of domestic poverty on the lifelong personality structure of the individual. The goal of the review will be to examine three separate areas of this subject. The first is the history of American poverty. The reason for examining the historical background of American poverty is to gain an understanding of the social and psychological implications of economic insecurity for both the individual and for the wider society. While poverty is experienced in all countries, the United States has a unique historical and present-day relationship with economic success, oppression, social power and identity. A discussion about the impact of those experiences would be incomplete without an examination of the social, cultural and economic structures.

Second, the literature surrounding the experience of poverty and upward mobility for the individual will be discussed from both psychological and sociological literature. Understanding the social and emotional impact of these experiences will allow us to lay the groundwork for the importance of knowing these cornerstones of information within

the therapeutic setting. The psychoanalytic community acknowledged long ago the importance of understanding the human experience when working with individuals and families on their present-day issues. Psychotherapists regularly assess clients and families for their past experiences with abuse, trauma, abandonment or addictive patterns. They also openly address issues surrounding how the individual “fits” into the wider society, i.e. their educational experiences, their support systems and their religious communities. Overlooking the client’s history with economic status and their social identity with regard to that SES, leaves a large portion of who the individual is unexplored. This section will highlight how imperative it is to explore those dynamics.

Finally, there will be an examination of the relationship that the psychoanalytic community has had with poverty, how that relationship has changed over the years and where the relationship has room for future growth and understanding within the therapeutic milieu. This section will connect the previous two sections to the upcoming study, demonstrating the commitment that first and second generation analysts had to making sure that psychoanalysis was widely accessible to all. It will also discuss the slow progression away from that line of thinking that has resulted in the psychoanalytic community’s marginalization of those in poverty, becoming very reflective of the wider, westernized society. Finally, this section will talk about what has been lost in that process and how steps can be taken to turn it around.

Social History of U.S. Poverty

The United States is often perceived as a country with an abundance of resources and opportunities. There is little more than an occasional, fleeting reference to systemic issues that create and maintain poverty for certain populations, especially women, children and various minority groups. As a result, little empathy and understanding is given to people in poverty in the United States, either by governmental policy or public opinion. This is in stark contrast to the American view of poverty in third-world countries, where it is generally accepted that the entire region is lacking in adequate access to resources, therefore eliminating the individual blame for someone's personal circumstances. The American poor are often seen to be complicit in their misfortune and as such, have developed a subculture from which to operate and obtain different types of opportunities, ideals and support than are available in the middle and upper classes in the United States.

The policies and attitudes surrounding American poverty are rooted in the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1601. These laws and attitudes were the norm for European settlers who began establishing social structures in the United States. Prior to the establishment of the Church of England, care for the poor was seen as a Christian expectation of the church. However, it eventually became necessary to find other ways to manage the increasingly visible presence of poverty. The Elizabethan Poor Laws were designed to help the public manage the issue of that visible presence (Ambrosino, 2001;

Garnier, 1895; Lees, 2007; Sparke, 1622). These laws were not put in place with the objective of assisting the poor to improve their situation. The laws had numerous guidelines that made it very clear that the objective was to ease the burden on society, not the individual or family system.

The poor were broken into three categories, the worthy poor, the able-bodied poor and the idle poor (Sparke, 1622). As the years went on, the able-bodied and idle poor became one indistinguishable group known as the unworthy poor. The worthy poor, (aka the impotent poor) were people who were physically disabled, elderly, sick or orphaned. In the early years of the law, these people were allowed to have outdoor relief (in-kind food, money or clothing) or indoor relief, i.e. sick taken to hospital, young children taken to orphanages, sent to another parish to work for other families or artisans or almshouses (Ambrosino, 2001; Garnier, 1895). Children were taught a trade or skill in order to work as apprentices as soon as possible so that they would not continue the cycle of being a financial burden on society. The able-bodied (or unworthy) poor were people who were physically able to work but who were “out of work”. This was a loose category determined by the individual overseer or citizens from moment to moment. This category of people was given work assignments and paid small wages or in-kind relief for payment during the early years of the law (Garnier, 1895; Sparke, 1622).

Finally, the idle poor were able-bodied people who were determined to not want to work, called Rogues or Vagabonds. Idle poor persons were determined to not be

worthy of assistance at all, but punishment and moral direction instead (Garnier, 1895). Members of this group were often whipped in the streets, kicked, burned or otherwise tortured by officials and residents of the parish. After the laws were amended in 1834, they were also often jailed, sent to the galley, exiled to other parishes or sentenced to death (Garnier, 1895).

These alms were paid with a special tax on property owners in each parish. Each parish had to elect two overseers annually to supervise the operational functions of this tax. This position was unpaid and the appointees were often given these responsibilities against their will. The overseer had to determine how much money each landowner should be forced to pay, collect the funds, distribute the goods or monies given to paupers and supervise the poorhouse in the parish (Garnier, 1895; Sparke, 1622). Overseers and residents also had the right to look out for potential applicants for parish funds, in order to control parish costs. For example, if an unmarried woman were suspected of being pregnant, anyone could interrogate, or even detain, her in order to obtain information confirming her pregnancy or the identity of the father so that the local parish would not be left with the financial responsibility.

The awkwardness of unwilling, upper and middle-class citizens being cast in an unpaid position of taking money from wealthy property owners every year to give to the poor led to a lack of enforcement with regard to the collecting of funds. In the *Annals of British Poverty*, Russell Montague Garnier stated that, “The parochial authorities still,

however, hesitated, even though several statutes in the reigns of James and Charles confirmed that Elizabethan Poor Laws. Thus in 1622 we read that the numbers of the poor had increased, that collections for their support had ceased to be made for several years, that lusty labourers, and worse still, soldiers maimed in their country's service, were being turned off to beg, filch, and steal, 'until the law brought them unto the fearful end of hanging'." (Garnier,1895).

Being poor in and of itself was not enough for someone to receive aid. They had to apply for the assistance and there were many rules and guidelines surrounding the eligibility criteria. One such criteria for receiving aid was the establishment of residency. No parish wanted to be responsible for paying for a different parish's poor citizens. The guidelines were as follows:

- To be born in a parish of legally settled parent(s)
- Up to 1662 by living there for 3 years. After 1662 you could be thrown out within 40 days and after 1691 you had to give 40 days' notice before moving in.
- Renting property worth more than £10 per annum in the parish or paying taxes on such a property.
- Holding a Parish Office
- Being hired by a legally settled inhabitant for a continuous period of 365 days. (most single labourers were hired from the end of Michaelmas week till the beginning of the next Michaelmas so avoiding the grant of legal settlement). By the time you were married, had proved your worth and gained experience then longer hirings were possible therefore changing legal settlement.
- Having served a full apprenticeship to a legally settled man for the full 7 years.
- Having previously been granted poor relief. This condition implied that

you had previously been accepted as being legally settled and was usually only referred to in settlement examinations.

- Females changed their legal settlement on marriage, adopting their husbands legal place of settlement. (If a girl married a certificate man in her own parish and he died, she would automatically be removed to his place of legal settlement along with any issue from the marriage).

(Garnier, 1895)

Employers began to offer only “short contracts” of either 364 days or 51 weeks. A person could live in a parish for 20 years working short contracts and never be eligible for relief because the employment was not continuous. The individual would also lose their ability to receive relief from their parish of origin. If someone was going to move in search of work, they would need to get a Certificate of Settlement from their original parish stating that if they fell on hard times the parish would take them back and accept responsibility for them. This discouraged/prevented an individual’s ability to move in search of employment, especially in overpopulated areas. With these new policies in place, employers also quickly started dropping wages with the influx of mandated work and youth apprenticeships. Many people working these jobs still found themselves in need of assistance (Garnier, 1895).

Citizens began to demand that alms houses be built connected to prisons. Newspaper articles and headlines became heavily dedicated to themes that vilified the poor. Numerous brochures began to be printed and distributed to the middle-class public spreading these themes and inaccurate accounts poverty. These dynamics

created a social resentment between the wider society and the poor. The structure, and implementation of that structure, sent a message that a person's poverty is evidence of their irresponsible, lack of consideration for everyone else, and that poor people were literally taking something from hard-working people. Likewise, poor citizens were both socially and physically ostracized from being integrated members of their communities. No other characteristic trumped the identity that came with socio-economic status. Your SES became who you are, with little to no consideration for circumstances. Being visibly identified as poor not only cost an individual or family social power, but it also cost them inclusion and identity.

The Elizabethan Poor Laws were abolished in Europe in 1930, but that was long after European settlers had colonized North America. The primary economy in Colonial America was based on agriculture. Labor from African and American-born slaves, as well as indentured servants from Europe fueled the economy for the wealthy class. Indentured contracts were ways for poor Europeans and/or criminals to receive passage to America. The slavery class were not the only lower-class citizens. Small farmers who could not mass produce as well as the day laborers for larger farms, sea ports and merchant shops were among the poorest American citizens (Garnier, 1895; Trattner, 1974). Walter Trattner, Emeritus Professor of Social Welfare and Social History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, described the attitude of the public and political policy at the time.

“[Early American observers] concluded that no one ought to be poor, and there was little tolerance for the able-bodied pauper. The only cause of such poverty, it was assumed, was individual weakness...[B]y the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Americans began to believe that poverty could, and should, be obliterated-in part, by allowing the poor to perish...stereotypes rather than individuals in need dominated the public mind.” (Trattner, 1974).

The assumption that people who are living in poverty are personally flawed and a burden to the good, middle and wealthy-class citizens has continued on through to our present day. The moralistic view of economic status has had a large impact on government policy and public opinion. For example, there are currently thirteen states that drug test welfare recipients and nineteen others who are considering adopting that type of legislation (Delaney, 2015; Rupp, 2015). Despite the fact that states who have implemented these types of policies have found that they have spent millions of dollars to find a minute amount of drug use, in some states only single digit numbers, an on-going public opinion poll at www.isidewith.com shows that of the over two million citizens polled, 79% are still in favor of these policies. None of these states have entertained legislation that would drug test middle or wealthy class citizens whose salaries come from public tax dollars.

While this is only one example of the social separation between the poverty class and the rest of generalized society, it is a clear example of how being identified as a member of the poverty class in America comes with assumptions about the individual's

character and personality. It would be impossible for members of the poverty class to go unaffected by these divisions as they grow, develop and socialize. The view that a member of the poverty class would develop, not only of themselves but of members of the wider society, are going to be established all throughout their early life experiences.

Impact of the Poverty Experience and Upward Mobility

Advancement into higher socioeconomic statuses are possible in the United States and not uncommonly experienced. There is a gap in the research when it comes to examining individuals who have experienced, not only the trauma associated with a deficit of their basic needs, but also a deficit of societal support and camaraderie from the American public due to having those experiences. We have not studied the long-term impacts to the individual, how these experiences shape their worldview, their feelings of inclusion into society, perspectives surrounding future opportunities and most importantly, their self-view.

Upward mobility is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as, “the capacity or facility for rising to a higher social or economic position” (Merriam-Webster, 2016). When an individual becomes socially and/or economically mobile and experience an improvement in their financial and/or social status, they don’t necessarily become “of” the next class. While someone may be “in” the next class, who we “are”, and who we are accepted as being, consists of far more than where we are presently. Dr. Glenda Russell

defines internalized classism as “the process by which a person’s experience as a member of the poor or working classes becomes internalized and influences (his or) her self-concept and self-esteem as well as (their) relationships with others” (Russell, 1996). In other words, our internalized concept of who we are, and who “they” are, is formed during our early years through our economic and social experiences and the experiences of those around us.

In psychotherapy, attention is always given to the internalized experience of the individual. However, when the topic of poverty is being discussed, it is usually the external manifestations, such as hunger, violence or an overall lack of resources, that are discussed. An exploration of the internal manifestations remains neglected, like how the client feels about their deprivation, how they make sense of it, how they view the oppressors/bystanders and how their view of themselves has been influenced by their experiences (Russell, 1996). These explorations are imperative to the understanding for both the client and the therapist as identity, interpersonal dynamics and self-deficits are explored.

Dr. Ruby Payne wrote the book, “A Framework for Understanding Poverty” (Payne, 2005). Her research is surrounding the cultural aspects of the poverty class, the middle class and the wealthy class. Payne discusses the importance of teachers, employers, service providers and policymakers understanding the frameworks of the people they serve and how those frameworks may conflict with the frameworks of the

services being provided. This is especially true for clinicians exploring a client's internal manifestations. Payne agrees that we all bring with us the hidden rules of the class in which we were raised. Even though the income of the individual may change drastically, "many of the patterns of thought, social interactions, cognitive strategies, etc., remain with the individual" (Payne, 2005).

Some of the first exposures to middle-class norms for children in poverty come from their attendance at school. Both schools and businesses operate from norms and hidden rules of the middle-class (Payne, 2005). The rules, or normative expectations, of any class are not openly discussed or even consciously acknowledged by those who live them. Individuals consider the rules of their class to be baseline behaviors and typical expectations. There is also very little discussion of other socio-economic classes having differing norms. For this reason, there are often assumptions that are made about the choices, behaviors and thought processes of others who have either a different socio-economic class or a different socio-economic background.

One of the most common assumptions in the middle-class is that people in poverty would live differently if they had the chance to do so (Payne, 2005). This assumption ignores, or is ignorant of, the cultural aspects of poverty beyond the financial deprivation. While most people of every socioeconomic class would increase their funds if given the opportunity, lack of money is not the primary distinction between the cultures. Payne states that, "There is a freedom of verbal expression, an appreciation of

individual personality, a heightened and intense emotional experience, and a sensual, kinesthetic approach to life usually not found in the middle class.... These patterns are...intertwined in the daily life of the poor...” (Payne, 2005). The passion of connection, honesty of expression, and social relationships of poverty make upward mobility a difficult choice for those who have the opportunity. To move from one class to another, an individual must make the choice to trade their relationships for achievement (Payne, 2005). Not only is this trade an emotional one, but the new relationships with a segment of society that has traditionally been responsible for your oppression and judgement are not necessarily replacements for what is lost. This dynamic also contributes to previous relationships and supports feeling betrayed, judged and abandoned by the upwardly mobile individual.

Relationship Between Psychoanalysis and Poverty

At the 5th international congress in Budapest in 1918, Freud implored analysts to start outpatient clinics that allow people to receive psychotherapy services free of charge. “The poor man should have just as much right to assistance for his mind as he now has to the life-saving help offered by surgery.” (Danto, 2005). Freud also acknowledged that government would struggle to see providing mental health services to the poor as an urgent matter and encouraged others to lead the charge by way of private industry. Freud believed that psychoanalysis would help oppressed people to find the personal insight that would lead to a natural psychological independence. In 1920 Karl Abraham and

Max Eitingon started the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute. Less than ten percent of the funding for the institute came from charging clients. Eitingon financed the institute almost in entirety. He structured the institute to have three primary components: training in psychoanalytic theories, undergoing personal analysis, and working with clients while under analytic supervision (Encyclopedia of Psychoanalysis, 2017). Freud opened the Ambulatorium, an outpatient mental health clinic for adults, children and families, in Vienna in 1922. Between 1920 and 1938, ten cities in seven countries had built free treatment centers of psychoanalysis (Danto, 2005).

However, in 1933 the Nazi Party took power in Germany. Freud's books were burned, Eitingon immigrated to Jerusalem, and many psychoanalysts began migrating out of Europe into the United States. As German analysts took over clinics, psychoanalysis became a way of feeding the Nazi's extermination program. Eliminating Jews, Communists and homosexuals that did not respond to being "retrained" were at the forefront of these programs (Danto, 2005). Likewise, in the United States, a battle was brewing between American psychologists and European psychoanalysts. The field of psychology, already battling with the medical community for credibility, was insulted by psychoanalysts lack of concern with proving their methods as well as their claim that only those who had themselves been analyzed could truly criticize the profession. Worldwide there was an unprecedented movement that allowed behavioral scientists to shape political and social policy. This provided them with an opportunity to prove the

practical worth of their theories and techniques during an international time of civil unrest. Even after WWII, discussions about civil rights for racial groups, women, and for all sexual orientations created a need for nationwide understanding of personality development, attitude formation, and the art of persuasion (Samuel, 2013).

At this time the leading psychologist at Harvard University was Edwin G. Boring. He worked for twelve years to obtain departmental status for psychology at Harvard and was finally successful in 1934. That same year, Boring was struck by a car on a rainy night and was hospitalized for six weeks with a skull fracture. He suffered amnesia, depression, anxiety and at times an inability to complete his work. He entered psychoanalysis out of desperation, despite his science-based bias against the process. He told colleagues that he was undergoing analysis for research purposes only. He sought out Hanns Sachs, who was directly from Freud's inner circle. After ten months of attending five days per week and spending nearly \$2,000, which he reported as almost bankrupting him at today's equivalent of almost \$36,000, his hopes of "a new personality" through free association plummeted. He wrote an article to the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* entitled, "Was This Analysis a Success?" and encouraged the journal to obtain more articles from psychologists who had ventured into the world of analysis (Boring, 1940). The article quickly sold out and the field of psychology spent the next 30 years seeking to disprove the scientific validity of each psychoanalytic concept (Samuel, 2013).

All of these dynamics created an environment of pressure for psychoanalysts in the United States to have more documentation of successful analytic cases. However, it is worth noting that these European analysts went from providing free services as part of their training and on-going duty to the field, so coming to the United States and charging rates that put a financial strain on the top-rated psychologist at Harvard University. In the biographical memoir about Dr. Boring's life, he reported received a discount of half price for his analysis with Sachs (Stevens, 1973). It goes without saying that analysts abandoned Freud's notion of the poor having "just as much right to assistance for his mind" as people without excessive means.

Otto Kernberg was born in Vienna and emigrated from Germany to Chile in 1939. After his training in biology, medicine and psychoanalysis he emigrated to the United States. Kernberg never discussed socioeconomic status, but he famously outlined the pathological traits associated with a borderline personality structure (Kernberg, 1975). Kernberg believed that patients with these types of ego weakness and primitive defenses were unable to tolerate the insight and interpretation involved with analytic treatment. He viewed certain values, thought-processes and behaviors as evidence that an individual would be unable to endure or accept the process. The characteristics he listed included free-floating anxiety, phobias focused on physical appearance/social inhibitions, dissociative reactions, impulse control neuroses, addictions, paranoia and obsessive-compulsive thoughts and behaviors (Kernberg, 1975).

Dr. Fred Pine agreed with the ego-deficit framework discussed by Kernberg. He writes about Hartman's emphasis on how the lack of an optimal environment during early development results in an ego deficit, or a lack of capacity of the individual for adaptation, reality testing, and the development of mature defenses. (Pine, 1988) People who are living in poverty meet all of the criteria listed by Kernberg and Pine as ego-deficits. Their framework created a justifiable reason to avoid working with people who had complicated social life experiences, including an inability to pay the crippling fee. Psychoanalysts in the United States became increasingly removed from the realities, social norms, and complexities of daily life for anyone who was not a member of elite society. Persons who experience chronic poverty have multiple sources of potential anxiety. However, the anxieties are not always surrounding the things that are assumed by others to be anxiety-producing. To anyone who is unfamiliar with the realities of poverty, it may be assumed that the anxieties being experienced are free-floating or just a general state of defensiveness. It may be difficult to understand the frequency with which persons in poverty experience legitimate anxieties, many times from the rest of society.

Many of the social and emotional dynamics associated with working with this population are quickly labeled as acting out behaviors and are interpreted as the client's inability to tolerate the process (Hosmer, 1974; Pine, 1989; Altman, 1993). A reciprocal process begins; since poverty clients are not seen, their behaviors are misunderstood.

Since clients in poverty are generally not seen, there is little to no research about their lived experiences or the meanings associated with those experiences. This continues the lack of understanding, which leads to them not being seen as analyzable and not being seen in treatment.

This issue does not solely impact people who are currently impoverished in the United States. As previously discussed, it is not uncommon for people in the United States to grow up within the subculture of poverty, yet become financially successful at a later time in their lives. However, just like being a member of any other cultural/subcultural group, the experience of being financially successful in the present in no way erases the personality and worldview obtained throughout childhood. We easily acknowledge this to be true when thinking about other characteristics/situations that occur during development, such as race, religion, country/region of origin, educational experience, familial experiences and trauma to name a few. But poverty is viewed largely as an unfortunate, temporary economic issue. It is often overlooked that there are many social and emotional givens that are attached to that experience that can have a significant impact on the self-view and the view of the other, who in this case, is the society-at-large. The social norms developed by the individual, ideas about how the individual fits/does not fit with the middle-class, and their beliefs about building and maintaining relationships are not instantly altered once they receive more money.

Not having an awareness that these issues exist serve as a hindrance to the

therapeutic process as the analyst attempts to achieve an attuned connection with the client as well as understand and interpret the meanings and associations connected with their behaviors, thought processes and experiences. This lack of attunement creates a disruption in the effectiveness of the treatment since both participants in the process are deprived of the insight into unconscious understanding that is necessary for forward movement and lasting changes. An example of this type of disruption is seen in Neil Altman's article, *Black and White Thinking: A Psychoanalyst Reconsiders Race* (Altman, 2000). Altman disagrees with Pine that the characteristics Kernberg called borderline traits mean that a client is not analyzable. Altman believes that these traits are unconscious communications by the client to the analyst that can further the treatment if the analyst is aware of the communication and can interpret the meaning of it.

In *Black and White Thinking*, Altman describes his work with an African-American lawyer who was originally from the South Bronx before moving on to receive an Ivy League education on academic scholarships. At the time that this client, called Mr. A, began seeing Altman, Mr. A was in private practice and employed a secretary. Mr. A was struggling with his relationship with his father, who since getting remarried was demanding a repayment of tens of thousands of dollars he had given his son. Mr. A felt that this request was spearheaded by the new wife, but did not share his anger with his father or resist paying back the money.

It wasn't long before Mr. A began having his secretary call Altman to cancel

sessions, which he was made aware he still needed to pay for. He was agreeable to paying for the missed appointments, but soon began to bounce checks to Altman and moved to paying him in cash. It wasn't long before he started being delinquent on his bill for services. Altman was hesitant to discuss the issue with Mr. A due to his own discomforts surrounding being Jewish and demanding money from an African-American who wasn't paying for services. He was also struggling with guilt surrounding the fact that part of him expected Mr. A to have trouble paying his bill, despite his current social status. When the conversation eventually occurred and Altman inquired about the dynamic between them and the parallel process between their situation and his situation with Mr. A's father, Mr. A did not have the same focus. Mr. A stated that his biggest concern was surrounding his pattern of allowing relationships to die and that was why he was concerned about staying on top of paying Altman.

Altman was encouraged that Mr. A was concerned about keeping the relationship, but the misattunement continued. Eventually Mr. A stopped attending, answering Altman's calls and never paid his large, delinquent bill, even after being sued and served with a judgment to do so. This case is a perfect example of the impact of not understanding a poverty-based framework when working with persons who developed in a domestic poverty setting. Altman was looking at the discomforts between them through a racial lens because that was where his discomforts were. However, the client's discomforts were clearly surrounding the importance of finances on the quality of his

relationships. It is part of Mr. A's worldview that being honest about a lack of money results in a loss of intimate relationships and respect for his character. Despite the fact that this makes him feel hurt, rejection and anger, it is hardwired for him that this is not an interpersonal issue that can be addressed but a universal truth that must be accepted. When his lack of funds becomes undeniable, he severed the relationship as to not be present as the relationship deteriorated. These were not issues that Altman could address because there is no avenue currently within psychoanalysis to assist him or others with being aware that these dynamics are occurring.

Americans who are in poverty differ from poor people in third-world countries in many ways, but one of the most prominent is the time, effort and expense they utilize in order to mask their poverty from others. This is often described as evidence of their poor impulse control or ignorance about financial responsibility. However, a blind eye is turned to the consequences of appearing to be poor in a country where opportunities are assumed and the benefits that become accessible to those who do not appear to be part of that population. Mr. A could have easily terminated his secretary in order to be more financially responsible toward his debts, however, doing so would impact the appearance of his professionalism, impact his ability to obtain and maintain clients and, as is his continued reality, reduce or eliminate his relationships with others in the middle-class. These factors are too vital to his survival and future potential to be placed at risk by paying debts. This leaves Mr. A with no other option than the choice that he made to

finance appearances over debts.

Psychoanalysis was born when Freud stopped using forced association techniques and began open-ended listening in order to hear the content of the client's associations (Pine, 1988). Finding the meaning of these associations is a joint process that utilizes the clinician's and the client's ability to recognize, understand and frame these experiences and associations in a way that leads to insight and self-discovery. However, that continues to be impossible if we are unaware of the implications associated with domestic poverty or the need to assess for that history, whether or not we are working with someone who is currently impoverished.

Philosophical Framework for the Study

Relational theorists have been at the forefront of acknowledging the importance of deconstructing social hierarchy within the therapeutic process. Relational theorists explore the relationship patterns of the client, both inside and outside of the therapy. While recognizing that both pieces of the therapeutic dyad enter the room with a framework for the conversation, relational theorists engage in a discussion that critiques the cultural biases within psychoanalytic practice (Brickman, 2003; Javier, R., & Herron, W., 2002; Javier, R., & Yusef, M., 1995; Herron, W., & Javier, R., 1996). Although much of this type of relational literature focuses on demographics such as gender and race and not socioeconomic status or history, it still demonstrates that the assumptions, or

prejudices, of both the profession and the individual psychotherapist can greatly impact what it is we feel that we are seeing in the room.

However, the benefits to adding an awareness of client socio-economic status and background to the psychotherapy setting is not limited to relational therapists. Ego psychologists see the individual in terms of their capacity to adapt and utilize their defenses both within their life and in the therapeutic setting. Developing the skills needed to adapt are slowly obtained and expand over time. Ego psychologists like Hartman and Pine have categorized behaviors like an inability to tolerate affect and control impulses as evidence of an ego deficit in the individual. However, a poverty class individual needs an intensity of affect and the ability to think quickly and act impulsively to be successful in their environment. Without an understanding of the skills required for their environment, it is impossible to determine where the developmental failures are or what they are. It is impossible to understand if a behavior is a skill or evidence of a developmental failure if the therapist has no frame of reference for the environment in which the behaviors were developed.

Object rationalists believe that the client is carrying memories in both their conscious and unconscious that are loosely associated with childhood experiences. These previous experiences color the client's understand and perception of their current experiences. It is imperative from this framework to understand the meaning of those previous experiences in order to understand the meaning being given to the client's

current experiences. Repetitions by the client are seen as unconscious attempts to repeat patterns of attachment. Knowing the experiences of how society and individuals attach to or relate with the individual from various socioeconomic classes will provide insight into the conscious and unconscious expectations of the client for their relationship with the therapist.

Self-psychology claims that the individual is in an on-going state of subjectivity. It states that the identity is formed based on the “client’s perception of the self” in relation to “other”. This view of identity that is highly structured around who “I” am and who “they” are is extremely relevant to class structure and identity. If throughout one’s life they are shaped by knowing that they *are* a poor person (as opposed to being a person who is currently without money) and all of the societal implications and assumptions that come with that, suddenly having more funds does not change the individual’s definition of the world and their identity in it.

Classical drive theorists state that individual development occurs through the struggle with base urges and desires, all which begin with early body and family experiences. All of these experiences become planted in both the conscious and unconscious as forbidden wishes. Drive theorists believe that the individual’s psyche is arranged around resolving these conflicts, which are experienced as anxiety, shame, guilt, inhibition and other pathological traits. Drive theorists can easily see that both the physical and experiential impacts of poverty are forever a part of the individual’s

conscious and unconscious self. Understanding those experiences in therapy are key to understanding the psyche of the adult individual.

Conclusion

The United States has a long and complicated history with the policies and attitudes surrounding its poverty-class citizens. These policies and attitudes are focused not on the economic issue of poverty, but are personified to include the individuals themselves. Socioeconomic status in America is not merely what you have, but who you are. Although upward mobility is possible in the United States and commonly experienced, upward mobility in adulthood in no way eliminates the impact of the childhood experience on the individual's sense of self. No matter the philosophical framework used by the psychotherapist, a lack of understanding about the environment, social dynamics and experiences during childhood create a void in the necessary information needed to understand the personality structure of the individual. Much in the same way that religion, trauma experiences and family dynamics are discussed during assessment, the client's socio-economic history is imperative to understanding the self-view, worldview and behaviors of the individual.

As psychoanalysis has moved away from mass exposures to clients of various socioeconomic statuses, the impact to our understanding can be seen in our theoretical explanations of behaviors and patterns that are seen in the room that are outside of upper-

middle class norms. This research seeks to quantify differences and similarities in the personality structure of middle and upper-class persons with and without socio-economic backgrounds that are rooted in the North American poverty experience.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study is to understand the long-term impact of American poverty on the personality of the individual. The study will survey American adults who are not impoverished currently but have an early poverty experience, as well as American adults who are not currently impoverished and did not have an early poverty experience. The childhood poverty experience will be defined using the Childhood Poverty Screening Questionnaire and the personality will be defined using the characteristics on the NEO Five Factor Inventory III (NEO-FFI 3).

Research Strategy

This study is derived from a post-positivistic epistemology. It is a quantitative research study using descriptive analysis to define the results. Quantitative methods are the most appropriate for this research study because it is focused on looking for an associated relationship between the variables of socioeconomic status (SES) background and the personality traits outlined in the NEO-FFI-3 (Babbie, 2010). The project will not be examining the individual experiences of the subjects during childhood or as adults, as would be explored in qualitative research. The project will be using two structured,

standardized instrument in order to obtain statistical data about the correlation between the variables of interest. The study is not intended to find causality in any way (Lamanna, 2012). The hope is that the study will be able to be replicated and generalized to the wider society (Lamanna, 2012).

Positivism is the philosophy that emphasizes the use of empirical data and scientific methods (Jakobsen, 2013). Positivistic researchers make inferences based on regularities that are detectable in observable or testable data (Jakobsen, 2013).

Positivistic research can be done with either experimental or non-experimental designs (Jakobsen, 2013; Lamanna, 2012). Experimental is considered to be the premier design because it establishes causality, where non-experimental designs, such as the one being utilized in this study, only establish a relationship that is associated between variables (Creswell, 2014; Lamanna, 2012).

Rationale for Quantitative/Survey Approach

Quantitative research provides us with generalizable information. It is the best form of research to use when attempting to ascertain if a certain cause generally results in a certain effect (Rubin/Babbie, 2016). For this study, the goal is not to understand the lived experience of the participants, as would occur in a qualitative study. Instead, the goal is to determine an association between childhood socioeconomic status and adult personality traits. This makes a quantitative study the most appropriate for collecting this

type of data.

This research will use two surveys to collect data. The first survey will collect information on the childhood poverty status of the participants. This survey will ask about the lived experiences the participants had during childhood, but not specified information about income, housing expenses, etc. Participants may not have had access to their families specific income and expense numbers as children, or the information may be too far in the past to recall accurately. This survey will be used to categorize participants into two groups before the second survey is administered. The second survey is the NEO-FFI 3 which is a pre-existing, validated measure for the “Big Five” personality traits. This survey will evaluate the personality characteristics of each participant so that the data from both groups can be compared.

An internet survey model will be used to gather data from research participants from various locations in the United States. Surveys will be distributed by sending a link to the email address of participants. These email addresses will be collected during the first survey. The survey design provides a numeric description of the trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014). The numeric sample results will allow for a generalized inference to be made (Creswell, 2014; Lamanna, 2012). There are many benefits of collecting data through conducting survey research.

There are many advantages to utilizing the internet and email for this type of research. One of the advantages that made using internet surveys an attractive choice for this study is that internet surveys provide access to groups and individuals who would be difficult to otherwise access (Wright, 2005). For this study, the goal is to reach a large number of people who will participate based on a history of having or not having experienced American poverty during childhood. In the book, *Conducting Online Surveys*, Sue and Ritter show that the vast majority of middle-class Americans utilize email on a daily basis, if they live in either urban or suburban settings (Sue/Ritter, 2012). Internet and email surveys also hold the benefits of being both more economical and less time consuming than paper surveys (Sue/Ritter, 2012). Since the study is targeting participants who are not currently experiencing poverty and have various economic histories, finding them in any one physical location could prove to be difficult. Being able to survey participants around the country via the internet will allow the researcher to locate participants that find the information being gathered relevant and useful in their lives. Having a wider range of participants also allows for more generalizable results.

Internet surveys also provide a convenience to the participant and is a time saver for the researcher (Wright, 2005). Participants may not have the time or desire to fill out a survey in person but may be more likely to agree to fill out a survey that they receive via email and are able to complete at home and at their convenience. Researchers are also afforded the opportunity to work on other tasks, such as preliminary analysis, while

waiting for more data to come in (Wright, 2005). This allows the process to be expedited through the multitasking of gathering, inputting and interpreting data at the same time.

Research Sample

This study will be using stratified sampling in order to ensure that the results will reflect equally a sample of a history of low SES background individuals and individuals without a history of low SES background. Stratified sampling is used when there are different subgroups and random samples are taken from portions of the population. It is important with stratified sampling that the subgroups, or strata, not overlap in any way so that certain participants do not have increased chances of being chosen for inclusion in the study. The sample will be recruited using various social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. For the total sample, the researcher will randomly select two groups of equal size: participants with low SES backgrounds (n=30) and half of the participants without a low SES background (n=30), for a sample size of sixty participants. Recruitment will be closed once the researcher has collected at least two groups of thirty each. If more than sixty individuals respond to the survey invitation, this researcher will randomly select the two groups of thirty and then exclude the remaining participants (though their basic demographic and screening information will be reported). The groups are being limited to thirty due to survey restrictions, which will be discussed in the data collection section of this paper. Each group will have their own set of inclusion and exclusion criteria (see below).

Group 1 (previously poor/currently not poor)

The inclusion criteria will include (a) anyone age 18 or older and (b) grew up in poverty (as measured by the study's screening instrument). The exclusion criteria will be (a) anyone under 18 years of age, (b) lack of or an inability to give informed consent or (c) emotional/psychological instability. The demographic information being collected will discuss the age, gender, racial background, current SES status and educational level.

Group 2 (previously not poor/currently not poor)

The inclusion criteria will include (a) anyone age 18 or older and (b) did not grow up in poverty (as measured by the study's screening instrument). The exclusion criteria will be (a) anyone under 18 years of age, (b) lack of or an inability to give informed consent or (c) emotional/psychological instability. The demographic information being collected will discuss the age, gender, racial background, current SES status and educational level.

Research Plan or Process

The following steps will be followed:

1. First, I will get permission from Psychological Assessment Inc. (PAR) to allow me to access the NEO-FFI 3 to include a link for participants who are willing to participate in both parts of the study.

2. I will pilot the poverty history screening tool with five key collaborators. Once all data has been processed I will publish the survey for data collection.
3. Next, I will create a Survey Monkey account and will build the screening questions, consent form, demographics. As data comes into the tool, it will be exported into SPSS. At this time, I will also develop a code sheet for SPSS analysis.
4. Next, I will create a recruitment invitation to be distributed to potential participants. The invite will be posted on social media sites (such as Facebook). The invite will include a link to Survey Monkey. The site will remain open until I achieve the targeted sample size of 30 low income history individuals and 30 individuals without a low income history. Any partially completed surveys will be deleted and that participant will be considered a “drop-out”.
5. From the total sample, I will randomly select two groups of 30 (30 participants with low SES history and 30 without low SES history). Those participants not selected will be used to replace any selected participant who does not complete the NEO-FFI-3. In addition, their demographic and screening data will be analyzed for clarity.
6. Next, 60 participants that agreed to move on to the second phase of the study will be sent a recruitment invite with a link to the NEO-FFI 3 to the email address they submitted at the end of the first survey. Once a participant has completed the

survey, they will be sent an electronic \$5 Amazon gift card.

7. Once all surveys have been completed, the data will be imported the into SPSS. I will use my code sheet to fix any import errors and finalize the database.
8. Next, I will conduct all of my analyses and write up my findings.
9. Once my study is finalized, I will send respondents a summary of my findings.

Data Collection

The survey design provides a numeric description of the trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014).

The numeric sample results will allow for a generalized inference to be made (Creswell, 2014; Lamanna, 2012).

Demographic Survey

Demographic information will be gathered in addition to the survey questions that assess for poverty history and personality traits. Information about the participant's age, race, education level and current SES status will be gathered for analysis.

Current SES level:

____ Urban

____ Urban-Suburban

____ Suburban

____ Suburban-Rural

____ Rural

Poverty History Screening Tool

The Childhood Poverty Screening Questionnaire is a 20-question tool that was developed by this researcher in order to assist with the complicated process of quantifying the American poverty experience during childhood. In searching for an assessment model, there was no existing measure for the experience. Affirmative answers to any of the questions listed can be indicators of the domestic poverty experience. A score of ten or more “yes” answers (not including ‘I’m not sure/I can’t remember’ responses) will be used as a clear indicator that the individual grew up in poverty. A score of nine or less “yes” answers will serve as an indicator that the individual did not grow up experiencing domestic poverty.

The experiences highlighted in the poverty screening tool are designed to cover a variety of domains within the everyday life of an American child. Some of these domains are housing, safety, nutrition, intrapersonal development, and societal inclusion. The range of experiences were an important aspect of creating a distinction between those experiencing domestic poverty and those experiencing a lower-middle class

experience or temporary economic rough patches throughout childhood. Developing the tool began with an acknowledgement that individuals who chose to participate in the study would all inevitably have differing ideas about how to classify their experiences, thereby eliminating the study's ability to make an objective comparison between groups. There were originally 22 questions in the assessment, but two were eliminated due to a decision that they were redundant to other questions already listed within the questionnaire.

NEO Five Factor Inventory-3

The personality survey instrument being used for this study is the NEO-Five Factor Inventory-3 (NEO-FFI-3). The NEO-FFI-3 measures the 'Big Five' traits of personality. These traits are based on the five-factor model (FFM), that is widely accepted in the field of psychology as describing the primary domains of human personality without overlapping (Popkins, 1998). Acronyms commonly used to refer to the five traits collectively are OCEAN, NEOAC, or CANOE. Within each personality trait, a cluster of correlated and more specific primary factors are found; for example, extraversion includes such related qualities as gregariousness, assertiveness, excitement seeking, warmth, activity, and positive emotions (McCrae, 1991).

The five factors are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. Empirical research has shown that the Big Five personality traits show

consistency in interviews, self-descriptions and observations (Popkins, 1998). Moreover, this five-factor structure seems to be found across a wide range of participants of different ages and of different cultures (Allik, 2002; McCrae, 1991; Popkins, 1998). The original version of the assessment is the NEO-Personality Inventory (NEO PI). It was a 181-item questionnaire developed in 1978 by Robert McCrae and Paul T. Costa, Jr. using adult volunteers ranging in age from 20 to 90 years old (McCrae, 2007). The 181-item questionnaire assessed the global domain scores (OCEAN) plus 18 additional subscales measuring six aspects of neuroticism, extraversion and openness to new experiences, for a total of 240 items (McCrae, 2007). A sixth-grade reading level is required to self-administer the assessment (McCrae, 2001/2007).

The NEO-PI became the NEO-PI-R in 1990 when it was revised and updated for changing norms. Although the tool was shown to have a high level of validity, it became clear that a shorter version of the instrument was necessary (McCrae, 2007). McCrae and Costa developed the NEO-FFI, which was a brief, 60-item questionnaire. Both instruments have continued to be updated, now being called the NEO-PI-3 and the NEO-FFI-3. There are paper and electronic versions, as well as versions for adolescents, self-rater (Form S) and researcher administered (Form R). Items use a 5-point Likert-scale format, with responses from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Keying is roughly balanced to minimize the effects of acquiescent responding (McCrae, 2007). Unlike the majority of psychological assessments, the NEO does not test for psychopathology of any

kind. The brief assessment should take roughly 15-20 minutes to complete.

Despite being significantly shorter, the NEO-FFI-3 has shown to be as valid and reliable as the longer, more detailed NEO-PI-3. Table 1 summarizes analyses of the reliability and factor structure of the NEO-FFI-3, as reported by McCrae and Costa in their 2007 article describing the brief assessment in the *Journal of Individual Differences*. Since children and adolescents will not be examined in this study, the chart has been modified to display only the results for the adults assessed. McCrae and Costa report:

Internal consistency across the two forms ranged from .72 to .88 in the adolescent and adult samples, with a median of .82. This value is comparable to the median value (.80) reported in the manual for the NEO-FFI in an adult sample. In the middle school sample somewhat lower values are seen, with a median of .76. Equivalence coefficients are calculated as the correlation between the full 48-item NEO-PI-3 domain scale and the corresponding 12-item NEO-FFI-3 scale. Most of these values are above .90 in the adolescent and adult samples, and near .90 in the middle school sample. These values are inflated to some extent by shared method variance, because both scales were computed from the same data. A more conservative procedure would be to correlate NEO-FFI-3 scales with the sum of the 36 remaining items from each domain. Across the two forms, these corrected part/total correlations ranged from .72 to .89, with median values of .83, .81, and .81 for adolescents, adults and middle school samples, respectively (McCrae, 2007).

Table 3.1:

Coefficient alphas, equivalence coefficients, and factor/scale correlations for NEO-FFI-3 scales

Adult (N=635)

Validity Tests	Form S Domain					Form R Domain				
	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>Coefficient</i>	.86	.79	.78	.79	.82	.86	.80	.77	.84	.88
<i>Equivalence Coefficient</i>	.93	.90	.91	.91	.90	.93	.91	.90	.93	.93
<i>Factor/Scale Correlation</i>	.96	.95	.97	.95	.94	.95	.96	.94	.95	.96
<i>Cross-Observer Correlation</i>	.52	.60	.50	.55	.49	.54	.60	.55	.52	.49

Note. Cross-observer correlations are between NEO-FFI-3 scales and corresponding NEO-PI-3 domains of the other Form, *N* values = 180 adolescents, 532 adults. All correlations are significant at $p < .001$.

Analysis

The following descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode and standard deviation) will be conducted on the following variables using SPSS: 1) age, 2) gender, 3) race, 4 etc...

The following five independent samples t-test will be conducted in SPSS to confirm or disconfirm the null hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1:

1. An independent samples t-test will be conducted to compare the NEO-FFI-3 Neuroticism subscale scores for low SES background participants

and without low SES background participants.

2. An independent samples t-test will be conducted to compare the Extraversion NEO-FFI-3 sub-scale scores for low SES background participants and without low SES background participants.
3. An independent samples t-test will be conducted to compare the NEO-FFI-3 Openness subscale scores for low SES background participants and without low SES background participants.
4. An independent samples t-test will be conducted to compare the NEO-FFI-3 Agreeableness subscale scores for low SES background participants and without low SES background participants.
5. An independent samples t-test will be conducted to compare the NEO-FFI-3 Conscientiousness subscale scores for low SES background participants and without low SES background participants.

Ethical Considerations

Every effort has been made to ensure that this study has been conducted ethically. One of the concerns is a potential for emotional harm if participants become emotionally activated by answering questions in the survey or by thinking about their past. For this reason, the consent form will contain information that informs participants how to access mental health support from a third-party should they need to do so following this survey.

Obtaining informed-consent is also an ethical concern for this study, as all of the

participants will be connecting with the survey virtually and not in a face-to-face format. Being under the age of eighteen is one of the exclusion criteria for this study. All participants should legally be able to provide consent to participate in this study. This researcher will also ensure that phone and email information are available to the participants in the event that they are in need of more information before agreeing to take part in this research study.

Since the survey instrument being used is a previously published, validated measurement, it is important that appropriate permission, and or payment, to use the tool has been obtained by its creators or their selling agents. These legal considerations were observed for this research.

It is also ethically important that the participants not be people that are connected to this researcher in any way. As an active social worker, student and therapist, it is important that the surveys are sent out in order to collect a random sampling of the population and that groups I do not have direct access to. Anyone that I share a dual role for could feel pressure to join the study or report more favorable results.

Validation Strategies/Trustworthiness

While the NEO-FFI-3 has been shown to be a valid and reliable instrument, there must also be effort on the part of the researcher to reduce any possible incidents of human error. This is very important with quantitative research where the number of participants

are larger and the data is largely numeric. All surveys will be coded as they are turned in. They will be given a number that indicates which number survey it is, as well as a letter that indicates if the survey is one with a low SES background or one without a low SES background. All information will be kept on this researcher's laptop, which is both private and password protected. After the data have been analyzed and written in the final report, all survey information will be destroyed to protect the confidentiality of the participant.

Limitations of the Study

The research study is limited by the fact that there have been no studies that look at the associations between these specific characteristics or the implication of SES background or upward mobility on the long-term personality structure of individuals. With a topic this large and a research study so small, no matter how the findings develop this study will only have the capacity to be the beginning of an inquiry that needs more exploration with more sample populations. This study also will not explore the lived experience of the participant's background in any way, as the purpose of this study was to quantify the potential relationship between these characteristics. Also, by not exploring specific experiences, the information obtained will be very general and will not account for other potential contributors to the personality development of the participants. While some demographic information will be added to the survey, the hypothesis for the project is focused primarily on SES, not other demographics such as race or geographical

locations, i.e. urban living versus rural living, structure of the home, or religious background.

Also, the SES of the participant is determined through their own self-report. This will limit the ability to assess if the severity of the individual's poverty experience had an impact on their personality score, or if their perception/definition of their poverty experience is an accurate one.

Role/Background of Researcher

My background is one that stems from domestic poverty and led to upward mobility. Throughout my experiences in the middle-class I have noticed repeatedly how various instances of confusion and misunderstandings occur when middle-class assumptions about values and/or behaviors are far different from those who are either currently in poverty or who clearly were in the past. These missed opportunities for connection and/or understanding are never as unfortunate as when they occur within the treatment setting. It is my belief that the data will show that there are distinct differences between the personality structures of persons with a low SES background and persons without a low SES background, however, I do not know where I think those differences will show themselves. The possibility of being able to make a contribution to the field of psychotherapy by creating an awareness about client and/or clinician experience is a thrilling one for me. I would also love to be able to create a public awareness about the

impact of poverty and social isolation on children and adolescents, sparking the desire for more such research to take place in the future.

Summary

This research study's epistemological roots are grounded in a contemporary positivist approach. It will be a quantitative survey that will use stratified probability sampling and primarily recruit participants via the internet. While demographic information will be gathered, the survey being used is the NEO-FFI-3, which does not assess for pathological personality traits but measures the Big Five traits of healthy personality structure; openness to new experiences, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. As participants turn in their surveys, they will be separated into groups based on their self-report of SES background. Then a random sample will be taken from each group until thirty participants from each group are chosen to have their data included in the study. These results will be analyzed so that any associations between the various data traits can be evaluated.

This study aims to add to the current literature, highlight the need for further research, create an awareness within the psychotherapeutic community and create another element for socio-political conversation about class warfare in the United States and the lasting effects that it has on children, families and individuals. Next, in Chapter Four we will review the results of the study.

Chapter Four

Findings

Introduction

The Childhood Experience Survey was designed to assess the experiences that are indicative of an American poverty experience. Participants who received a score at or above 10 of 20 were placed into Group A (grew up in poverty). Participants who received a score of 9 or fewer out of 20 were placed into Group B (did not grow up in poverty). Being in Group A does not mean for certain that the participant was poor anymore than being in Group B means that someone could not have been poor. However, having an answer of “yes” to ten or more of the survey questions shows that the participant had a social experience that is indicative of the American poverty experience. The survey was first given to a sample group of five persons, referred to as the Sample Cinco. These people and their socio-economic histories were personally known to the researcher. They were chosen to assist with validating the measure, to assess how long it takes to complete the measure, and to provide feedback on the questions, content, and layout.

Table 4.1 Demographics for sample participants

	Gender	Age	Score	Time
SC1	Female	38	12	5:54
SC2	Female	48	2	5:48
SC3	Female	31	15	8:53
SC4	Female	36	1	3:40
SC5	Female	41	1	4:05

The Childhood Poverty Experience Survey was sent directly to the sample set. The average time to take the survey was five minutes and 40 seconds. SC3 took the longest at eight minutes and fifty-three seconds, but stated that she was doing other things while taking the assessment. The feedback on the amount of time that was necessary to take the assessment was that it was not an intrusive amount of time and did not feel like a burden or inconvenience. There was feedback from SC2 that the second page of the assessment was not displaying due to the first page automatically moving her to the demographics page. That issue was resolved upon receiving the feedback. Skip logic

was also utilized so that if someone rejected consent, they were automatically redirected to the exit page. If consent was given for the study, the participant was forced to answer all of the questions in order to move forward to the next page.

The feedback on the content and the relevance of the questions was consistent among the sample members. The sample participants that scored above ten points on the assessment felt that the questions were comprehensive of their experiences in multiple areas of their lives during childhood. The participants that scored below ten felt that the questions created a space for them to look at their own privilege and understand all of the areas of life that are being impacted by children who are experiencing those things. SC3 stated that the question asking “Were you frequently responsible for the care of younger children in the family” was difficult to answer for her due being the youngest child in the home. She stated that even if that was the environment in the home, the younger sibling may feel they need to say no to that question. She also stated that an only-child may also be confused about the answer. Her suggestion led to an update on that question that states “Did you grow up in a home where it was common for older children to care for younger children?”

After the needed adjustments were made to the assessment, it was uploaded to various social media sites by both the researcher and the Sample Cinco. The post was listed on the following sites and encouraged others to share the posts with their contacts.

- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Facebook, including private groups (Appalachian Americans, Work From Home ASAP, Survey Takers and Money Makers, Medical Surveys for Medical Professionals)

The survey received 461 participants. 401 participants completed all of the questions. The first 211 participants that stated that they were willing to participate in the second part of the study were used to create the sample sets for the second survey. The first 211 participants ranged in age from 18 to 75 and were from 43 different states. The participants were divided into two categories: Group A and Group B. Group A consisted of participants that scored ten or more on the Childhood Poverty Experiential Survey. Group B consisted of participants that scored a nine or less on the survey. Once the participants were sorted based on their survey scores, any participant who did not complete the consents, did not grow up in the United States during their childhood, or did not complete all of the contact information were eliminated from the random selection pool. After these eliminations were made there was a total of 58 participants in Group A and 148 participants in Group B for a total of 204 participants. Through a random selection process, thirty participants were selected for Group A and thirty participants were selected for Group B. If a participant dropped from the study, the random selection process was repeated within the group where a new participant was needed. There were 15 participants in Group A and 14 participants in Group B who left the study before

completing the NEO FFI-3 assessment.

Selected participants received a link via email to the NEO FFI-3 personality assessment. If a participant dropped from the study before completing the NEO-FFI-3, another participant was randomly selected from their group. This process continued until the NEO had been taken by thirty participants from each group.

Group A Sub-Sample

The participants who were placed in Group A were individuals whose scores on the poverty assessment were ten or higher. This group was two-thirds female and one-third male. There were seven racial/ethnic groups represented in Group A and the participants ranged in age from 20 to 63 with an average of 37. The average household size was 3.6. The vast majority of this group (76.7%) pursued education after high school, with one-third having some college but not completing the degree. No one in Group A self-reported as currently being upper-class. 6.7% of Group A self-reported as currently being upper-middle class, 36.7% reported being middle-class, 33.3% reported being lower-middle class, and 23.3% reported being at or below poverty level.

Group B Sub-Sample

Group B participants received a score of nine or lower on the poverty assessment

tool. The group was 80 percent female and 20 percent male. There were six racial/ethnic groups represented in Group B and the participants ranged in age from 25 to 60 with an average of 39. The average household size was 3.3. The vast majority of this group (86.7%) obtained a bachelor's' degree or higher as adults. No one in Group B self-identified as currently being upper-class. 20% of Group B reported being upper-middle class, 53.3% reported being middle-class, 26.7% reported being lower-middle class, and none reported being at or below poverty level.

Table 4.2: Sample description for Groups A and B and total sample

Demographics	Group A	Group B	Total
Gender			
Female	20 (66.7%)	24 (80.0%)	44 (73.3%)
Male	10 (33.3%)	6 (20.0%)	16 (26.7%)
Race			
Asian	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (3.0%)
Bi or Mult. Race	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (3.0%)
Black	4 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)	8 (13.3%)

Hispanic/Latino	2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	3 (5.0%)
Indian	0	0	0
Native American	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (3.0%)
Other	1 (3.3%)	0	1 (1.2%)
Pakistani	0	0	0
White	20 (66.7%)	22 (73.3%)	44 (73.3%)

Age

Avg	37.8	39.0	38.4
Min	20	25	20
Max	63	60	63

Household Size

Avg	3.6	3.3	3.5
Min	1	1	1
Max	9	7	9

Class Identification

Upper class	0	0	0
Upper-middle class	2 (6.7%)	6 (20.0%)	8 (13.3%)
Middle class	11 (36.7%)	16 (53.3%)	27 (45.0%)
Lower-middle class	10 (33.3%)	8 (26.7%)	18 (30.0%)
At or below poverty	17 (23.3%)	0	7 (11.7%)

Education

Doctoral	0	3 (10%)	3 (5.0%)
Master degree	1 (3.3%)	11 (36.7%)	12 (20.0%)
Bachelor's degree	4 (13.3%)	12 (40%)	16 (26.7%)
Associate's degree	8 (26.7%)	0	8 (13.3%)
Some college, no degree	10 (33.3%)	1 (3.3%)	11 (18.3%)
High school or GED	6 (20.0%)	3 (10%)	9 (15.0%)
Less than high school	1 (3.3%)	0	3 (5.0%)

Residential Settings

The participants were asked to discuss both the setting where they grew up and the setting where they currently live. Participants were asked to label their setting as either urban, suburban, or rural. One-third of the participants in Group A grew up in an urban setting and the same number remain in an urban setting currently. In Group B, 30% grew up in urban settings, while only 16% report currently living in urban settings.

There were 40.3% of participants in Group A who reported growing up in suburban settings; 43.3% report living in suburban settings currently. In Group B, one-third of the participants (33.3%) reported growing up in a suburban setting, but the number increases to half (50%) when asked who currently lives in suburban settings.

In the rural setting, 23.3% of participants in Group A reported living in a rural setting during childhood and the same number continue to live in a rural setting in the current day. For Group B, there were 36.7% of participants who grew up in a rural setting. The amount of Group B participants who currently live in rural settings is 33.3%.

Table 4.3: Participants in urban settings

Group Type	Urban only	
	Place growing up	Place living now
Group A (N=30)	10 (33.3%)	10 (33%)

Group B (N=30)	9 (30%)	5 (16.7%)
Total (N=60)	19 (31.7%)	15 (25.0%)

Table 4.4: Participants in suburban settings

Group Type	Suburban only	
	Place growing up	Place living now
Group A (N=30)	12 (40.3%)	13 (43.3%)
Group B (N=30)	10 (33.3%)	15 (50.0%)
Total (N=60)	22 (36.7%)	28 (46.7%)

Table 4.5: Participants in rural settings

Group Type	Rural only	
	Place growing up	Place living now
Group A (N=30)	8 (23.3%)	7 (23.3%)
Group B (N=30)	11 (36.7%)	10 (33.3%)
Total (N=60)	19 (31.7%)	17 (28.3%)

Poverty Survey Results

The poverty survey showed that the average score for Group A participants is 13.7 with a median of 13.5. The average score for Group B participants is 3.8 with a median score of 3.0. In group A, 90% or more of participants reported that they received free lunches at school and could not engage in activities that were focused on their individual interests solely due to financial constraints. Group A participants responded at rates of 80% or more that they were on public assistance for their basic needs (87%), worked jobs as children to buy their own things or assist with family finances (83%), had caregivers that had inconsistent employment (80%), and used second-hand clothing (80%).

Group A participants responded at rates of 70% or more that they went to great lengths to hide their financial status from others (77%), opted out of important social events due to finances (77%), were in households where children responsible for the care of younger children (77%), and struggled to obtain needed transportation (73%). Group A also responded in high numbers that they frequently went without meals (70%) and did not have the supplies required for school (70%).

The highest “yes” response for Group B was to Question 13. Participants reported that 50% worked jobs to purchase their own items or contribute to the family finances. The next highest positive response rates were for wearing second-hand clothing

(40%) and being unable to participate in interest-based activities due to finances (33%).

Table 4.6: Comparison of Poverty Scale results for group A and B and Total for “Yes” Responses only

Questions	Group A (N=30)	Group B (N=30)	Total (N=60)
Q1. Did you ever think of you or your family as being homeless?	15 (50%)	0	15 (25%)
Q2. Did you or your family reside in public housing?	12 (40%)	3 (10%)	15 (25%)
Q3. Did you frequently go without meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)?	21 (70%)	0	21 (35%)
Q4. Was your family a regular recipient of charity services (Salvation Army, churches, food banks, etc.)?	20 (67%)	3 (10%)	23 (38%)
Q5. Was your family ever on any form of public assistance?	26 (87%)	5 (17%)	31 (52%)
Q6. Did you usually receive free lunches and meals at school?	27 (90%)	8 (27%)	35 (58%)
Q7. Did you live with multiple family members?	17 (57%)	9 (30%)	26 (43%)
Q8. Did you regularly miss seeing a doctor for check-ups	19 (63%)	4 (13%)	23

(health, vision, dental, psychological) or immunizations?			(38%)
Q9. Did you regularly go without medical care when you were sick or injured?	15 (50%)	4 (13%)	19 (32%)
Q10. Were your parents/caregivers unemployed or had trouble finding work?	24 (80%)	4 (13%)	28 (47%)
Q11. Did you regularly start the school year without all of your school supplies?	21 (70%)	5 (17%)	26 (43%)
Q12. Did you go through great lengths to hide your financial status from your peers?	23 (77%)	7 (23%)	30 (50%)
Q13. Did you work any jobs (mowing lawns, paper routes, babysitting, etc.) to purchase your own things (clothes, toys, etc.) or to help your parents/caregivers with groceries or bills?	25 (83%)	15 (50%)	40 (67%)
Q14. Did your parents/caregivers ever take any money from you and not pay it back, or use your identity (such as opening credit cards in your name)?	16 (53%)	5 (17%)	21 (70%)
Q15. Were you unable to participate in activities that were focused on your interests/talents solely because of financial reasons?	28 (93%)	10 (33%)	38 (63%)
Q16. Did you frequently wear second-hand or used clothing?	25 (83%)	12 (40%)	37 (62%)
Q17. Were you frequently responsible for the care of younger children in the family?	23 (77%)	9 (30%)	32 (53%)

Q18. Did you or members of your household/family engage in illegal activity in order to meet a need or fulfill a deficit? (i.e. claiming extra dependents on taxes, stealing cable/utilities, shoplifting, selling drugs/alcohol/food stamps, etc.)	8 (27%)	3 (10%)	11 (18%)
Q19. Did you or your family members regularly need to arrange transportation to go to certain places? (i.e. rides from friends, cabs, buses, etc.)	22 (73%)	5 (17%)	27 (45%)
Q20. Did you or your family members frequently opt out of attending social events (funerals, weddings, birthdays, etc.) due to financial constraints?	23 (77%)	3 (10%)	26 (43%)

NEO-FFI 3

Again, the NEO FFI 3 evaluates five non-pathological personality characteristics: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. On the NEO PI, there are six sub-scales for each of these personality traits, which describe the aspects of that characteristic being evaluated.

Neuroticism: *anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsivity, vulnerability*

Extraversion: *warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, positive emotions*

Openness: *fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, values*

Agreeableness: *trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, tender*

mindedness

*Conscientiousness: competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving,
self-discipline, deliberation*

Although the FFI version of the NEO does not break down the scores into those subscales, both versions have shown a high level of validity and reliability. The normative mean and standard deviation for the NEO FFI 3, for adults (combined gender) on the self-rated form are listed in the chart below (McCrae, Costa, 2010). The hypotheses for the study are as follows:

1. In the area of *Openness to Experiences*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
2. In the area of *Conscientiousness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
3. In the area of *Extraversion*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
4. In the area of *Agreeableness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.

5. In the area of *Neuroticism*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.

The null hypotheses state that there will be no statistically significant differences in the NEO scores of Group A and Group B.

Rating Scale Totals

Charts 4.7 through 4.11 display how the participants from Group A and Group B rated on the NEO FFI-3 in the areas of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The charts display how many participants scored in the range of very high, high, average, low, or very low.

Table 4.7: Neuroticism (N=60)

NEO-FFI Rating Scale	Group A	Group B
Very High	6 (20%)	3 (10%)
High	10 (33.3%)	11 (36.7%)
Average	9 (30%)	9 (30%)
Low	3 (10%)	7 (23.3%)
Very Low	2 (6.7%)	0

Table 4.8: Extraversion (N=60)

NEO-FFI Rating Scale	Group A	Group B
Very High	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)
High	4 (13.3%)	7 (23.3%)
Average	8 (26.7%)	8 (26.7%)
Low	10 (33.3%)	6 (20%)
Very Low	7 (23.3%)	2 (6.7%)

Table 4.9: Openness to new experience (N=60)

NEO-FFI Rating Scale	Group A	Group B
Very High	3 (10%)	0
High	5 (16.7%)	3 (10%)
Average	13(43.3%)	8 (26.7%)
Low	9 (30%)	7 (23.3%)
Very Low	0	9 (30%)

Table 4.10. Agreeableness (N=60)

NEO-FFI Rating Scale	Group A	Group B
Very High	1 (3.3%)	5 (16.7)
High	5 (16.7%)	7 (23.3%)
Average	10 (33.3%)	8 (26.7%)
Low	10 (33.3%)	9 (30%)
Very Low	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)

Table 4.11: Conscientiousness (N=60)

NEO-FFI Rating Scale	Group A	Group B
Very High	3 (10%)	5 (16.7%)
High	7 (23.3%)	11 (36.7%)
Average	12 (40%)	11 (36.7%)
Low	5 (16.7%)	2 (13.3%)
Very Low	3 (10%)	1 (3.3%)

Hypotheses Results

After all 60 participants completed the NEO FFI-3 assessment, the scores for Group A were compared to the scores of Group B using independent samples t-test. Cohen's d was used to analyze the effect size between Groups A and B. Cohen's d suggests that $d=0.2$ be considered a 'small' effect size, 0.5 represents a 'medium' effect size and 0.8 a 'large' effect size. This means that if two groups' means don't differ by 0.2 standard deviations or more, the difference is trivial, even if it is statistically significant.

The NEO results showed a statistical significance in the differences between Group A and B in the area of agreeableness. Agreeableness includes the characteristics of trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness. An independent-samples t -test was conducted to compare the agreeableness scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 41.97$, $SD = 9.93$) and Group B ($M = 49$, $SD = 10.86$; $t(-2.61) = 58$, $p = .011$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = 7.03, 95% CI : -12.41 to -1.65) was medium (Cohen's $d = .67$).

The NEO results did not support a statistical significance in the differences between Group A and B in the area of neuroticism. Neuroticism includes the characteristics of anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsivity,

vulnerability. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the neuroticism scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was not a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 59.10, SD = 11.82$) and Group B ($M = 57.07, SD = 10.61; t(.70) = 58, p = .48$, two-tailed).

The NEO results did not support a statistical significance in the differences between Group A and B in the area of extraversion. Extraversion includes the characteristics of warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the extraversion scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was not a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 46.93, SD = 14.52$) and Group B ($M = 47.67, SD = 10.87; t(-.22) = 58, p = .82$, two-tailed).

The NEO results did not support a statistical significance in the differences between Group A and B in the area of openness to new experiences. Openness to new experiences includes the characteristics of fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the openness to new experiences scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was not a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 53.40, SD = 10.26$) and Group B ($M = 56.77, SD = 9.97; t(-$

1.28) = 58, $p = .20$, two-tailed).

The NEO results did not support a statistical significance in the differences between Group A and B in the area of conscientiousness, however, there was near significance in this area. Conscientiousness includes the characteristics of competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation. An independent-samples t -test was conducted to compare the conscientiousness scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was not a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 46.63$, $SD = 13.64$) and Group B ($M = 49.86$, $SD = 12.57$; $t (-.94) = 57$, $p = .35$, two-tailed).

Additional Findings

While independent questions were not considered for hypothesis testing, it is worth mentioning that 12 out of the 60 individual NEO-FFI questions were different for Groups A and B in a significant way. These 12 questions were related to three out of the five big personality constructs: agreeableness (6 questions), open to new experiences (2 questions) and conscientiousness (4 questions). For the neuroticism and extroversion constructs, there were no questions that significantly differed between Groups A and B.

Agreeableness

Out of the 12 questions that comprise agreeableness on the NEO-FFI, six were statistically significant. These included questions 9, 29, 34, 49, 34, and 59. Due to the volume of individual questions that were significantly different, it is not surprising that the larger construct was significantly different. The independent samples t-test analysis for each questions is listed below.

Question 9 of the assessment states, “At times I bully or flatter people into doing what I want them to”. This questions is an indicator for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 9 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (did not grow up poor). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.19$) and Group B ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 1.18$; $t(3.03) = 58$, $p = .003$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .93, 95% *CI*: .318 to 1.54) was large (Cohen’s $d = .78$).

Question 29 states, “When I’ve been insulted, I just try to forgive and forget”. This question is indicated for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 29 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (did not grow up poor). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.14$) and Group B ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.16$; $t(2.34) = 58$, $p = .02$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference =

.70, 95% *CI*: .10 to 1.29) was medium (Cohen's $d = 0.60$).

Question 34 states, "I tend to assume the best about people". This question is indicated for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 34 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (did not grow up poor). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.22$) and Group B ($M = 3.87$, $SD = .81$; $t(-1.11) = 50.66$, $p = .27$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = $-.30$, 95% *CI*: $-.84$ to $.24$) was small (Cohen's $d = .28$).

Question 49 states, "I generally try to be thoughtful and considerate". This question is indicated for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 49 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .61$) and Group B ($M = 4.40$, $SD = .77$; $t(-2.03) = 55.29$, $p = .04$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = $-.36$, 95% *CI*: $-.72$ to $-.006$) was medium (Cohen's $d = .53$).

Question 54 states, "If I don't like people, I let them know it". This question is indicated for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 54 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores

for Group A ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.13$) and Group B ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .92$; $t(2.86) = 58$, $p = .005$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .76, 95% CI : .23 to 1.30) was large (Cohen's $d = .74$).

Question 59 states, "If necessary, I am willing to manipulate people to get what I want". This question is indicated for agreeableness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 59 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.03$) and Group B ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.25$; $t(2.02) = 58$, $p = .04$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .60, 95% CI : .007 to 1.19) was medium (Cohen's $d = .52$).

Openness to new experiences.

Out of 12 questions that comprise the conscientiousness construct, two were statistically significant. These included questions 18 and 33. The independent samples t-test analysis for each questions is listed below.

Question 18 of the assessment states, "I believe letting students hear controversial speakers can only confuse and mislead them". This question is an indicator for openness to new experiences. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 18 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for

Group A ($M = 2.37$, $SD = 1.12$) and Group B ($M = 1.80$, $SD = 0.84$; $t(2.19) = 53.7$, $p = .032$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .057, 95% *CI*: .05 to 1.08) was medium (Cohen's $d = .57$).

Question 33 states, "I seldom notice the moods or feelings that different environments produce". This question is indicated for openness to new experiences. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 33 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.12$) and Group B ($M = 2.07$, $SD = .78$; $t(2.31) = 50.35$, $p = .02$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .60, 95% *CI*: .07 to 1.12) was medium (Cohen's $d = .59$).

Conscientiousness.

Out of 12 questions that comprise the conscientiousness construct, four were statistically significant. Given that at least a third of the questions were significantly different, the construct of conscientiousness deserves ongoing analysis and understanding. These included questions 20, 30, 40, and 45. The independent samples t-test analysis for each questions is listed below.

Question 20 states, "I try to perform all the tasks assigned to me conscientiously". This question is an indicator for conscientiousness. An independent-samples t-test was

conducted to compare Question 20 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .844$) and Group B ($M = 4.10$, $SD = .712$; $t(-2.14) = 58$, $p = .036$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .43, 95% *CI*: -.837 to -.030) was medium (Cohen's $d = .55$).

Question 30 states, "I waste a lot of time before settling down to work". This question is indicated for conscientiousness. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare Question 30 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.12$) and Group B ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.13$; $t(-1.94) = 58$, $p = .05$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = -.56, 95% *CI*: -1.15 to .01) was in the small/medium range (Cohen's $d = -.49$).

Question 40 states, "When I make a commitment, I can always be counted on to follow through". This question is indicated for conscientiousness. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare Question 40 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .97$) and Group B ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .56$; $t(-3.24) = 58$, $p = .001$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the

difference in the means (mean difference = $-.66$, 95% *CI*: -1.07 to $-.25$) was large (Cohen's $d = .83$).

Question 45 states, "Sometimes I'm not as dependable or reliable as I should be". This question is an indicator for conscientiousness. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Question 45 scores for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) and Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty). There was a significant difference in scores for Group A ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.06$) and Group B ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 1.11$; $t(2.36) = 58$, $p = .02$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = $.66$, 95% *CI*: $.10$ to 1.23) was medium (Cohen's $d = .61$).

Conclusion

The study contained two sets of data in which participants engaged. The first assessment was the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey. The participants in the first survey were 73% female and 26% male. There were seven racial groups represented with an average age of 38 and an average household size of 3.5. Thirteen percent of the participants reported currently being upper-middle class, 45% reported being middle-class, 30% reported being lower-middle class, and 11% self-identified as being at or below poverty level. Education level was assessed for all participants and 5% had received Doctorate degrees, 20% had completed Master's' degrees, 26.7% completed

Bachelor's degrees, 13.3% completed Associate's degrees, 18.3% attended some college without completing a degree, 15% completed a high school diploma or GED, and 5% completed less than a high school diploma. The average score on the poverty assessment for Group A (childhood social experience of poverty) was 13.7 with a median of 13.5. The average score on the poverty assessment for Group B (no childhood social experience of poverty) was 3.8 with a median score of 3.0.

Before the NEO FFI-3 was administered, thirty participants were randomly selected for each group. The NEO FFI-3 is designed to assess five non-pathological characteristics of personality. These five traits are neuroticism, extraversion, openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The scores from participants in both groups were collected and compared. There was a statistically significant difference in the scores of the two groups in the area of agreeableness and approaching significance for conscientiousness. The other personality characteristics did not show statistically significant differences in the scores with these sample sets, however, 12 out of the 60 total questions on the NEO-FFI were significantly different and worth some discussion. In Chapter Five, the researcher will discuss an interpretation of the findings, the strengths and weaknesses of the study, the implications for psychoanalytic practice, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter Five

Discussions

This study was conducted in order to fill a gap in the psychoanalytic research and literature regarding the relationship between childhood poverty and personality development. In addition, this study sought to glean information on how this poverty influence presents in the therapeutic environment among adults. Since the migration of European analysts to North America in the 1930s and 1940s, psychoanalysts have moved away from working with non-affluent individuals. A natural consequence from this lack of exposure has been a misinterpretation of behaviors, values and personality characteristics seen not only in persons who are currently disadvantaged, but also in persons whose personality structure was developed while living in poverty as children.

The American poverty experience is more involved than solely a deficit of physical needs. The United States has a long history of having a social construction that can be both exclusionary of, and hostile toward, people who face socio-economic disadvantages. This study also discussed the emotional and psychological challenges experienced by the individual from the experience of being upwardly mobile. It is not only the impact of the deficit of needs that was examined, but also the impact to lifelong

personality structure from early-life experiences associated with poverty. The decision was made for this to be a quantitative study because the goal was to develop generalizable differences in personality structure for people who grew up in American poverty compared to people who did not.

Participants were recruited by means of the internet and social media. There were two assessments that were conducted within this research study. The first was the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey. The second assessment used was the NEO Five Factor Inventory-3. Based on the results of the poverty assessment, participants were placed into Group A (grew up in poverty) or Group B (did not grow up in poverty). Participants who agreed to take part in the second part of the study were randomly selected to receive a link to the NEO FFI-3 via email. After all the participants in Group A ($n=30$) and in Group B ($n=30$) completed the NEO FFI-3. The data was compared and analyzed.

Interpretation of Findings

Poverty Experience Survey

The two groups of participants were very similar with regard to their demographic characteristics. There were six to seven racial groups represented in each of the two groups (A and B) and the average age for Group A was 37.8 and for Group B the average

age was 39. The household sizes of the groups were also very similar (Group A: 3.6, Group B 3.3) and 58% of all participants reported currently being middle or upper-middle class. The similarities between the groups further highlight the vast differences in the scores on the poverty experience assessment.

One of the major differences in the data of the two groups is the lack of variety in experience for Group A. The poverty experience was strongly consistent, with 70-90% of participants answering “yes” to 14 of the 20 questions. The median score was 13.5 for Group A, where the median score was 3.0 for Group B. It was suspected at the onset of this study that there would be more participants in Group B that had more borderline scores, but the gap in poverty experiences is quite large. Group B had the highest “yes” responses to Questions 13, 15, and 16. Question 13 asked, “Did you work any jobs (mowing lawns, paper routes, babysitting, etc.) to purchase your own things (clothes, toys, etc.) or to help your parents/caregivers with groceries or bills?”, which had a “yes” response rate of 50%. Question 15 asked, “Did you frequently wear second-hand or used clothing?” which had a “yes” response rate of 40%. Question 16 asked, “Were you unable to participate in activities that were focused on your interests/talents solely because of financial reasons?” which had a “yes” response rate of 33%.

These three questions are items that could represent a lack of choice due to financial constraints or it could represent families who used these choices as opportunities to instill and promote a certain set of values in their children. Further

psychometric testing of the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey may show that these items do not necessarily fit the trait of poverty and should possibly be removed from the instrument. The variety of places where the “yes” answers occurred in Group B demonstrates the variety in the types of non-poverty, early-life experiences there are for individuals.

One-third of the participants in Group A attempted education after high school but were unable to complete that education. This is the case for only 3% of Group B, or one participant out of the thirty. It shows that while higher education is a value that is promoted throughout American culture, simply being presented with the opportunity to obtain higher education does not mean that the individual is equipped to be able to succeed or have access to the necessary resources to accomplish their goal. Eighty-six percent of participants in Group B completed a Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate degree. There were no participants who obtained an Associate’s degree from this group, compared to 26.7% of Group A who obtained an Associate’s degree. Further, there were no participants in Group A with a Doctorate degree. This information highlights the need for a holistic approach to combating poverty, instead of the selective approach that is largely utilized now. Education is largely seen as the gateway to upward mobility in American culture. However, while most people have an opportunity to pursue education in America, there is clearly a gap when it comes to the access needed to be successful in those endeavors for the group experiencing childhood poverty.

NEO FFI-3

There were five hypotheses that were examined for this study. These includes:

1. In the area of *Openness to Experiences*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
2. In the area of *Conscientiousness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
3. In the area of *Extraversion*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
4. In the area of *Agreeableness*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.
5. In the area of *Neuroticism*, there will be a statistically significant difference in the personality structure between individuals who had an early poverty experience and those who did not have an early poverty experience.

It is important to remember that the NEO does not assess for pathological characteristics. All of these characteristics contain aspects of personality that could easily be dismissed as being positive on the high end and negative when scored on the low end. However, since this assessment does not screen for dysfunctional extremes, all of the high and low results contain elements that can be helpful to the individual, but may have a variety of presentations and interpretations dependent upon the setting where the individual is located.

The null hypotheses state that there would be no statistically significant difference in the NEO scores of Group A compared to the NEO scores of Group B in each of the five areas. The results of the study showed that the null hypothesis could not be disproven, with the exception of the area of agreeableness. Forty percent of participants in Group B (no childhood poverty experience) scored very high or high in the area of agreeableness, while 46.6 % of participants in Group A (childhood poverty experience) scored low or very low in that area. The characteristic of agreeableness encompasses trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness. These are traits that aid an individual in being more pleasant socially.

On a pathological scale, low levels of agreeableness “would be associated with narcissistic, antisocial, and paranoid personality disorders; whereas high (levels of agreeableness) is associated with dependent personality disorder(s)” (Costa, Widiger, 2002). However, non-pathologically speaking, there are many advantages to having low

levels of these traits within a personality structure. Costa and McCrae stated, "...the readiness to fight for one's own interests is often advantageous, and agreeableness is not a virtue on the battlefield or in the courtroom. Skeptical and critical thinking contributes to accurate analysis in the sciences" (Costa, McCrae, 2010).

Persons who have high levels of the agreeableness traits are easier to get along with socially, more pleasant, compliant, amenable, and compassionate. Persons with low levels of agreeableness are more independent, are critical thinkers, ambitious, tenacious, tend to have a low opinion of human nature, and are highly competitive. Kernberg stated that people who presented with high levels of anxiety, social inhibitions, dissociative reactions, impulse control issues, and low frustration tolerances were not analyzable. He stated that these and other characteristics are ego-deficits resulting from sub-optimal environments. Many of these characteristics that make a client more difficult during the treatment process could be associated with having low levels of agreeableness (Pine, 1988; Kernberg, 1975). Pine agreed with Freud's shift from forced associations to open-ended listening, which allows clinical material to take shape in the therapeutic setting. Pine stated, "It is the natural tendency of mind to make sense of things...the treating clinician's mind will quite naturally 'find' ordering principles, 'red threads' weaving through the content, 'meanings'" (Pine, 1988). In this researcher's opinion, if psychotherapists are unaware of the client's associations, because of their SES background, they cannot accurately attach meaning and interpretation to the information

gathered in sessions.

People who have a childhood experience of American poverty may be more likely to have lower levels of agreeableness due to the circumstances of their childhoods. Both the harshness of the wider society toward their community and circumstances, and/or the behaviors of others who were also without their basic needs, may contribute toward the skepticism and lack of trust seen in this population. Having a chronic lack of resources requires an individual to be creative and utilize critical-thinking skills in order to meet their needs. Being competitive and independent are survival skills, or social adaptations necessary for survival in poverty environments. However, these traits can easily be seen as being defended, socially adverse, or paranoid without a framework that understands the environment in which these characteristics were developed. Hartmann stated that, “Not every adaptation to the environment, or every learning and maturation process, is a conflict” (Hartmann, 1958). This is an important concept when thinking about adaptation versus faulty ego defense mechanisms. When assessing whether or not a certain behavior or tendency is an adaptation or a faulty defense, questions must be asked about the environment in which those behaviors or tendencies were developed.

Hartmann told us that it is, “Our task to investigate how mental conflict and ‘peaceful’ internal development mutually facilitate and hamper each other” (Hartmann, 1958). This researcher believes that Hartmann would be supportive of the information this study provides and to an approach of working with clients that does not assume that

the responses they have are maladaptive before fully understanding the associations for the client. Although SES status has not been fully examined within the psychoanalytic community, it is easy to see that these experiences create a context for the individuals and how they understand their world going forward.

The differences in the area of conscientiousness had levels of near significance between Group A and Group B. The area of conscientiousness includes traits of competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation. Group B scored very high or high for 53.4% of participants and Group A scored very high or high for 33.3% of participants. Group A had 26.7% of participants who scored low or very low in this area and there were only 16.6% of Group B participants who scored low or very low in this area. In addition, the area of conscientiousness had several individual questions that were statistically significant, and because of this it is important to speculate on the meaning of how this construct differed between Groups A and B.

One-third of participants in Group A tested high or very high in the area of conscientiousness versus over one-half of the participants in Group B. These traits of being disciplined, focused, and achievement-striving may be more naturally occurring for those who have access to a clearer path to achievement. In Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, he discusses eight life stages of development. Trust versus mistrust, which occurs during the first year of life, requires predictable and reliable caregiving in order to develop the virtue of hope. During the ages of three to five years,

children become more assertive, developing a sense of initiative. However, those opportunities to create games or initiate activities are not available, the child is overly controlled or criticized, then the child's sense of initiative is not developed. They instead develop a sense of guilt, feeling like a burden and tend to remain as followers (McLeod, 2008). This is the stage where the virtue of purpose is developed. From ages 6 to 12, the stage of industry versus inferiority occurs where children need to develop skill sets in areas that are valued by the wider society in order to develop a sense of competence. The stage of identity versus role confusion occurs between the ages of 13 and 18. This is when a child learns the roles that s/he will occupy as an adult. Being successful at this stage allows the child to develop a sense of fidelity (Erikson, 1968).

It is easy to see the many places throughout development in poverty where these contributing factors to having high levels of conscientiousness could be disrupted for a family that is more focused on survival than the types of development that are valued by the wider society. For those more focused on survival, deeper levels of achievement may not be valued, prioritized, financially accessible, or physically accessible. Also, 93% of Group A participants reported that they were unable to engage in activities that centered around their interests or talents due to financial constraints. It is important to note that Erikson's psychosocial stages are discussing roles as defined by their value to the wider society where the individual is located. A lack of ambition for success as defined by the dominate culture, does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ambition for things not

valued by the dominate culture. These are differences that should not be assumed by the clinician in isolation, but rather should be discussed in treatment in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the client.

It is also possible that members of a disenfranchised sub-culture are less likely to be motivated to progress within the system that has been oppressive toward them due to feelings of pain, mistrust, and betrayal. Moving from one social class to another involves leaving behind social relationships as well. Leaving behind social supports to make new connections with groups of people who have disenfranchised yourself and your community is not necessarily a preferred decision to make (Payne, 1996).

The constructs of neuroticism, extroversion, and openness to new experiences did not show statistical level significance in the scores between Group A and Group B. In the area of openness to new experiences, Group A was around twenty percent higher than in Group B, but did not meet the standard for statistical significance. With these traits, there are benefits to having both high and low levels in the different environments, which could help explain why there was less variation between the groups in these three areas. However, this is an area that may need further exploration.

Revisiting Assumptions from Chapter 1

There is an accepted lack of empathy in American culture for impoverished

Americans. This lack of empathy is rooted in a moralistic judgment about the individual circumstances of the poor.

1. American society holds a generalized belief that hard work, dedication and personal ethics are a cure for poverty, if so chosen by the individual.
2. Impoverished Americans are marginalized on multiple levels throughout society and have a unique sub-culture that consists of its own shared history, vernacular, value system and social norms.
3. The majority of American society holds a middle-class American value system, which comes with its own history, vernacular and social norms.
4. Clinicians who are working with clients value obtaining accurate background information in order to understand their clients and assist them with moving forward toward their personal goals.
5. Personality characteristics are primarily framed prior to adulthood, based on the individual's personal experiences and overall worldview.

Summary of Interpretation of Findings

In summary, the findings showed us several things. The Childhood Poverty Experience Survey showed that there are large differences in the social and intrapersonal experiences of children who are in poverty from those of children who are not in poverty.

This was consistent throughout the 43 states where information was gathered. This study has also shown that these early-life experiences have a lifelong impact on the personality structure of the individual in the area of agreeableness, even after their financial situation has improved. Having low levels of the agreeableness personality trait can be easily misinterpreted as pathological defense structures, if the psychotherapist does not know to assess for socio-economic background when reviewing the client's history.

Chapter Six

Implications and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study set out to examine what, if any, were the impacts of growing up in American poverty on lifelong personality structure. This was an Internet-based, quantitative examination of commonalities and differences in personality traits between participants who have had childhood experiences indicative of American poverty and participants who have not had childhood experiences indicative of American poverty. The study began with the development and mass distribution of the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey. This 20-question survey was designed not to focus on the specifics of income or region, but on the social, emotional, and intellectual experiences of poverty. A score of 10 or higher indicated that the individual had a childhood experience that was indicative of American poverty and a score of 9 or less indicated that the individual did not have a childhood experience that was indicative of American poverty. Participants were categorized into two groups based on their scores. The Childhood Poverty Experience Survey showed that the variation in experiences between the two groups was much larger than expected, with Group A having a median score of 13.5 and

Group B having a median score of 3.0.

A review of the literature discussed three important elements for this study. The first was the history of American poverty, which took its structure from the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1601. These laws were developed in order to control the inconvenience that open poverty had on the middle and wealthy classes, not to elevate the distress of the poor. Systems were put into place that punished the poor for their plight, while making it nearly impossible for them to improve their situation. Advertisements and public campaigns were started in order to place blame and disdain on the impoverished for the burden that paying a poor tax placed on wealthy landowners. Middle-class citizens were placed in a position to either empathize with the poor or empathize with the landowners who were their bosses and landlords.

In modern America, people continue to debate new ways of finding tax relief for the wealthy in the hopes that their relief will bring more jobs and opportunity to the middle-class, all while continuing to eliminate health care programs, public assistance revenue streams, and drug-testing people in poverty to hold them to a moral code not discussed for the middle and upper class. The Elizabethan Poor Laws made economic misfortune a failure of morality and it is the same framework used today. It is one of the reasons that it becomes imperative to hide a low SES from others and it is where the emotional and psychological separations between the classes begin.

The second part of the literature review discussed the social and intrapersonal struggles of upward mobility. There has been very little attention shown to the internal experience of SES in psychoanalytic literature. The internal reality of how the individual processes their experiences of deprivation, the leaving of their culture and community, as well as the internal experience of merging with a community that is the source of your oppression, is important information needed in order for a psychotherapist to have. Being torn between two societies is a form of fragmentation and recognizing this provides the psychotherapist with the opportunity to assist the client with obtaining an integrated sense of self (Russell, 1996). As is currently acknowledged in other forms of being “othered” by a third-party, being “in” a group does not in and of itself make someone “of” that group. The more distance an individual has to place between themselves and their background, the more more cut-off they are forced to become from what makes them who they are (Russell, 1996). The ways that this impacts an individual internally and interpersonally is a much needed area for further research.

The third area discussed in the literature review is the history between poverty and psychoanalysis. Freud implored analysts in 1918 to make sure that psychoanalysis was free and available to all people (Danto, 2005). As a result, between 1920 and 1938 free clinics were established in ten cities and seven different countries. However, as analysts began to migrate out of Europe and into the United States, they abandoned Freud’s free service model and quickly became a very expensive, rigid, and exclusive

service that was unobtainable for the average citizen (Danto, 2005; Stevens, 1973). A natural side effect of working primarily with wealthy patients was a loss of connection with the issues, social norms, and outward presentations of persons who are not a member of that class structure. As the analytic community moved away from working with non-elite clientele, theories that shape understanding about behavior and pathology became skewed as well (Graybow, Eighmey, Fader, 2015). This study aims to demonstrate the folly of labeling pathology in isolation of the population being examined.

Chapter three discussed why the NEO FFI-3 would be used for this study and the benefits to using an internet survey format. The NEO FFI-3 was used because it examines the “big five” characteristics of personality from a non-pathological framework. These characteristics are neuroticism, extraversion, openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. It was important that this study was not another study that highlighted the disadvantages that people in poverty face. While those disadvantages are real, there are also both positive and benign aspects to having developed with those experiences. This study aimed to discuss those, since they are largely ignored in the literature.

The decision was made for this research to be conducted as an internet-based survey in order to reach as wide an audience as possible. Since the goal of the study was for the information to be generalizable, it was important that the participants were not restricted to being in any one location. This goal was accomplished and the participants

were very diverse in their demographic information. However, it is noted that using an internet survey restricted participants to persons with regular access to the internet and persons who are inclined to engage in online questionnaires.

Chapter four displayed the data collected from the study. The Childhood Poverty Experience Survey showed that there is a large difference between the social experience of children in poverty and the social experiences of those who are not. When the NEO FFI-3 was given to both groups, only the area of agreeableness showed to have a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The results showed that participants in Group A (childhood poverty experience) scored lower in the area of agreeableness than participants in Group B (no childhood poverty experience). The area of conscientiousness had near significance, again with Group A scoring slightly less in this area than Group B, but fell short statistically. The areas of neuroticism, extroversion, and openness to new experiences did not display a difference statistically. Twelve out of the 60 questions on the NEO FFI-3 showed a statistically significant difference for the two groups. Six of these questions were related to agreeableness, four to conscientiousness, and two were related to openness to new experiences.

Chapter five discusses how life and social experiences for members of Group A may make having lower levels of agreeableness necessary to survival and success. The literature reminds us that these traits are some of the same traits listed by Kernberg and Pine as being ego-deficits derived from sub-optimal environments, making persons who

display these characteristics without enough ego strength to tolerate the analytic process (Kernberg, 1975; Pine, 1988). Altman states that when clients display these characteristics, these are unconscious communications that serve to disrupt the treatment unless they are interpreted and used in service of the treatment. This study may be demonstrating that these characteristics are actually social adaptations suited to the environment of American poverty that the client developed in childhood. It becomes clear that assessing for the client's SES background is a necessary part of the treatment process (Russell, 2005). Much like how ethnic background, religious experiences, and trauma history play a role in the formation of the client's personality, world view, and associations; the client's experience with unmet basic needs, social exclusion, and personal advancement contribute to the framework of how individuals become who they are.

Implications for Practice

This information is important for clinical practice in order to assist therapists with taking a closer examination of the work done with clients in the therapeutic setting. Without assessing for the impact of previous socio-economic experiences, the personality traits associated with low levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness can easily be misinterpreted as the individual being defended, or worse, incapable of tolerating the

analytic process. Understanding the childhood experiences of clients and the associations formed from those experiences is a cornerstone of psychoanalytic work. This study opens up conversation that challenges previously held beliefs about clients who do not immediately ease into the analytic process.

From a sociological standpoint, this study introduces the interpersonal impact to childhood poverty and the ways that those impacts can influence social integration later in life. The current conversation revolves around increasing access to resources, but does not consider the need to address the social divide, diversity of values, or the pain and resentment that stem from oppressive or judgmental experiences between the two classes. True social integration requires more than increasing access to money, education, or networking opportunities. Acknowledgement of and emotional repair from these issues has to be addressed from very early on, as Dr. Payne discusses in her work with educators (Payne, 1996). More studies like this one will provide a catalyst for first steps in addressing the deeper social issues surrounding childhood poverty.

Much of the conversation surrounding American poverty is segmented into racial categorizations (Javier, 1992; Javier, 1995; Sanchez, 2011; Wilson, 1997). Confusing poverty issues with racial issues only serves to further alienate the general public from the wider spread issues. Stereotyping poverty as a minority, inner city issue assists the general public with compartmentalizing the issue as something that is not a concern that affects them or anyone they will ever know. This narrow definition allows the American

poor to become increasingly invisible, as middle-class citizens continue to assume that they are not interacting with impoverished people during their daily lives. This dynamic makes it easier to openly display judgement, hostility, and ignorance regarding the assumed lives of those in poverty, never knowing that they are furthering the divide of inclusion for those around them whose backgrounds they are unfamiliar with. This also furthers the emotional isolation of the person with the low SES background because after leaving their communities of origin for financial success, are reminded that they will never be “of” the middle-class.

From a public policy perspective, this study could aid with understanding that poverty is not solely a temporary, economic issue that is resolved once the immediate needs deficit has been addressed. Even the seemingly simple act of defining terms like “success”, “goals” or “improvement” become complicated when understanding American poverty as a unique sub-culture that has its own norms, values, history, and dialect. More studies such as this one could provide an opportunity to create more targeted public policy regarding what is needed to combat American poverty. The American poverty experience continues to be widely misunderstood and this is a contributing factor to it remaining a low priority politically and for the general public. The more information that can be obtained about how far reaching American poverty is, the more evident the need to address it will become.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are many opportunities for future research in this area. This study was conducted using a small sample of 60 participants. Repeating the study while using a larger sample may show increased statistically significant differences between Groups A and B differing results for the five personality traits listed in the NEO assessment. It may also be useful to conduct further research on this topic using the NEO PI-3, which is a more in-depth assessment. The NEO PI-3 is a 240-question assessment, versus the 60-question assessment of the FFI-3. The NEO PI measures subscales of neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to new experiences that the FFI-3 does not. Having more specific information could shed light on more variants of how experience and personality intersect with regard to American poverty and personality structure.

More verification research is needed on the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey. This is the first time this tool has been used on participants and it may be in need of further development. Verifying that the tool is able to measure what it is attempting to measure in a valid and reliable way is important to the findings of the follow-up assessment. To date, the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey has not yet been validated. There would be great benefit to this type of research, as well as research that is focused on other topics, once this assessment tool is standardized and further developed. This researcher was able to collect almost 500 surveys from potential participants. It would make sense to conduct a Rasch analysis on that data to help determine the overall validity of the instrument (Boone, 2016).

It is important that future psychoanalytic research is conducted regarding the emotional and psychological impacts of upward mobility within American culture. There is a large gap in the literature regarding how these issues impact identity formation, fragmentation, and integration. These are missed treatment opportunities for intrapersonal growth that could potentially be deeply healing for the client.

There could also be much benefit obtained from engaging in quantitative or qualitative research surrounding the progression and efficacy of psychotherapy treatment for clinicians who assess for socio-economic background experiences compared to those who do not. If information could be gathered surrounding the benefit to not only the client, but also to the treatment process by examining these experiences, we may be able to begin repealing the long established tradition of dismissing certain groups of people can be altered., or presentations of personality, from the process of psychotherapy or labeling what is seen as pathology.

Finally, there is much more to be learned about the reasons behind why certain patterns of personality structure are emerging regarding certain childhood experiences. Knowing more information about the lifelong implications of having high or low levels of these personality traits may continue to inform both the sociological literature and the psychoanalytic literature moving forward.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

One of the primary strengths of this study was the large number of participants who took part in it. The pool of 461 individuals who took the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey served to feed the pool of participants needed for the NEO FFI-3 assessment. The large amount of participants and potential participants allowed for anyone who dropped from the study to be quickly replaced, maintaining the total sample size of 30 for both Group A and Group B ($N=60$). This large sample also afforded the research the ability to continuously randomly select participants for both pools. This study had the ability to implement a high level of statistical analysis with the data collected using statistical computer software.

The participants in this study were extremely diverse and widespread, due to the study being an Internet-based research project. The first pool of 211 potential candidates self-identified as being members of nine different racial groups and living in 43 different states across the country. The ages ranged from 20 to 63 with an average age of 38. This places the researcher in a stronger position to generalize the study results.

There were several limitations to the study. One of those limitations is the lack of previously conducted research in this area. Without a larger body of work to draw information from, such a small study can be little more than the beginning of an inquiry into such a complex topic. Also, because the study did not examine other aspects of the participant's life experience, the information obtained is very general and does not account for other potential contributors to the personality development of the participants,

such as trauma, cognitive ability, or substance abuse.

Another limitation of the study is that it was an Internet-based study. The participants were not previously known to the researcher and the information that was shared can only be verified via self-report. This means the overall sample may have been biased in some way. Thus, there may have been something different about those who participated (greater motivation to participate in online research, computer and Internet access, etc.). This limits the ability to assess if the severity of the individual's poverty experience had an impact on their personality score, or if their perception/definition of their poverty experience is an accurate one. Since all of the information being asked in the poverty assessment stems from childhood memory, scores may have been skewed by the participant's lack of memory or access to the information being asked. Most tools that are based on this type of recall memory should be interpreted with caution. Also, as an Internet survey, the participants were limited to regular computer or internet users, as some people do not have open access to internet usage. Participants who were willing to take not one, but two online surveys are also potentially a group of people very different from those the researcher might have encountered face-to-face.

Also, the Childhood Poverty Experience Survey was used as the primary screening tool for this study. However, this tool is in need of further validation through known-group testing and other means in order to ensure that the tool is reliable and can be standardized across various types of American poverty experiences. Thus, this researcher

was only able to establish construct or face validity of the tool and the reliability of the tool itself is still unknown.

Research Reflections

The intent of this research was to explore if there was an impact to personality structure due to childhood poverty experiences. This is something that I have long suspected in my interactions with others both personally and professionally. As psychotherapists, we need to understand the internal associations of the client in order to analyze and interpret their experiences and progress in the treatment. It was exciting to see that in the area of agreeableness this study was able show that there are sustainable differences. However, I will walk away from this study with more questions than answers. This study has sparked many discussions throughout the process about the impact of societal identity on the individual and the wider community.

One of the first things that became clear with this study is that upward mobility is not as prevalent as I assumed it was. The data made it very clear that the experiences of children in poverty not only create a different reality at the time it is experienced, but it creates a lack of internal and external resources that are necessary for middle-class success. However, even when individuals are able to obtain financial success or stability, their worldview and experiences stay with them.

I look forward to further research attached to these subject matters. There is more

to be explored about the population and the therapeutic alliance that is being built during treatment. The study has highlighted for me the increased need for psychotherapists to work with diverse populations and contribute to the literature in other to aid others.

Working with quantitative data showed me the importance of organization and tracking of information. There were organization mistakes made at the beginning, but having multiple backups, both computerized and written, was helpful to the process. In the future I know it will be helpful for me to organize and categorize places for information before such large amounts of data start coming in.

Appendix

Childhood Poverty Experience Survey

Instructions: This is a brief screening questionnaire that assesses your poverty experience as a child. There are 20 questions in this questionnaire, please give 1 response for each question and answer all questions.

1. Did you ever think of you or your family as being homeless?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember

2. Did you or your family reside in public housing?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember

3. Did you frequently go without meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember

4. Was your family a regular recipient of charity services? (Salvation Army, churches, food banks, etc.)
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember

5. Was your family ever on any form of public assistance?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
6. As a child, did you usually receive free lunches and meals at school?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
7. As a child, did you live with multiple family members?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
8. Did you regularly miss seeing a doctor for check-ups (health, vision, dental, psychological) or immunizations?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
9. As a child, did you regularly do without medical care when you were sick or injured?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
10. As a child, can you remember if your parents were unemployed or had trouble finding work?
 Yes
 No
 I'm not sure/I can't remember
11. As a child, did you regularly start the school year without all of your school supplies?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

12. As a child, did you go through great lengths to hide your financial status from peers?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

13. As a child, did you work any jobs (mowing lawns, paper routes, babysitting, etc) to purchase your own things (clothes, toys, etc.) or to help your parents with groceries or bills?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

14. As a child, did your parents ever take any money from you and not pay it back, or use your identity (such as opening credit cards in your name)?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

15. Were you unable to participate in activities that were focused on your interests/talents solely because of financial reasons?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

16. As a child, did you frequently wear second-hand or used clothing?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

17. Were you frequently responsible for the care of younger children in the family?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

18. Did you or members of your household/family engage in illegal activity in order to meet a need or fulfil a deficit? (i.e. claiming extra dependents on taxes, stealing cable/utilities, selling drugs/alcohol/food stamps, etc.)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

19. Did you or your family members regularly need to arrange transportation to go to certain places?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

20. Did you or your family members frequently opt out of attending social events (funerals, weddings, birthdays, etc.) due to financial constraints?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure/I can't remember

Demographics

- 21. What is your gender?
- 22. What state did you grow up in?
- 23. What state are you currently living in?
- 24. What is your household size? _____
- 25. What is your race?
- 26. I am _____ years old.
- 27. What is your class identification?
 - At or below the poverty level
 - Middle-lower class
 - Middle class
 - Middle-upper class
 - Upper class

28. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Less than high school degree
 High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
 Some college but no degree
 Associate degree
 Bachelor degree
 Master degree
 Doctoral degree (e.g., JD, PhD, etc.)
 Other: _____

29. Next, I will be randomly selecting a group to complete an additional survey. This second survey would take approximately 20-30 minutes of your time. If you are selected, you would receive a small incentive. Would you be interested in completing this second survey?

- Yes
 No

If Yes – Thank you for your interest in completing a second survey. Please provide me with your preferred email address

If No – Thank you for completing the survey. Once I have completed my study I will send you the results of your survey and a summary of my dissertation results. Please provide me with your preferred email address if you would like to receive this information.

NEO FFI-3 Assessment

Name: _____ Age: ____ Sex: _____ Today's Date: _____

1. I am not a worrier.
2. I like to have a lot of people around me.
3. I enjoy concentrating on a fantasy or daydream and exploring all its possibilities, letting it grow and develop.
4. I try to be courteous to everyone I meet.
5. I keep my belongings neat and clean.
6. At times I have felt bitter and resentful.

7. I laugh easily.
8. I think it's interesting to learn and develop new hobbies.
9. At times I bully or flatter people into doing what I want them to.
10. I'm pretty good about pacing myself so as to get things done on time.
11. When I'm under a great deal of stress, sometimes I feel like I'm going to pieces.
12. I prefer jobs that let me work alone without being bothered by other people.
13. I am intrigued by the patterns I find in art and nature.
14. Some people think I'm selfish and egotistical.
15. I often come into situations without being fully prepared.
16. I rarely feel lonely or blue.
17. I really enjoy talking to people.
18. I believe letting students hear controversial speakers can only confuse and mislead them.
19. If someone starts a fight, I'm ready to fight back.
20. I try to perform all the tasks assigned to me conscientiously.
21. I often feel tense and jittery.
22. I like to be where the action is.
23. Poetry has little or no effect on me.
24. I'm better than most people, and I know it.
25. I have a clear set of goals and work toward them in an orderly fashion.
26. Sometimes I feel completely worthless.
27. I shy away from crowds of people.
28. I would have difficulty just letting my mind wander without control or guidance.
29. When I've been insulted, I just try to forgive and forget.
30. I waste a lot of time before settling down to work.
31. I rarely feel fearful or anxious.
32. I often feel as if I'm bursting with energy.
33. I seldom notice the moods or feelings that different environments produce.
34. I tend to assume the best about people.
35. I work hard to accomplish my goals.
36. I often get angry at the way people treat me.
37. I am a cheerful, high-spirited person.
38. I experience a wide range of emotions or feelings.
39. Some people think of me as cold and calculating.
40. When I make a commitment, I can always be counted on to follow through.
41. Too often, when things go wrong, I get discouraged and feel like giving up.
42. I don't get much pleasure from chatting with people.
43. Sometimes when I am reading poetry or looking at a work of art, I feel a chill

- or wave or excitement.
44. I have no sympathy for beggars.
 45. Sometimes I'm not as dependable or reliable as I should be.
 46. I am seldom sad or depressed.
 47. My life is fast-paced.
 48. I have little interest in speculating on the nature of the universe or the human condition.
 49. I generally try to be thoughtful and considerate.
 50. I am a productive person who always get the job done.
 51. I often feel helpless and want someone else to solve my problems.
 52. I am a very active person.
 53. I have a lot of intellectual curiosity.
 54. If I don't like people, I let them know it.
 55. I never seem to be able to get organized.
 56. At times, I have been so ashamed I just wanted to hide.
 57. I would rather go my own way than be a leader of others.
 58. I often enjoy playing with theories or abstract ideas.
 59. If necessary, I am willing to manipulate people to get what I want.
 60. I strive for excellence in everything I do.

Enter your responses here—remember to enter responses ACROSS the rows.

SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N= Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree

1 SD D N A SA	2 SD D N A SA	3 SD D N A SA	4 SD D N A SA	5 SD D N A SA
6 SD D N A SA	7 SD D N A SA	8 SD D N A SA	9 SD D N A SA	10 SD D N A SA
11 SD D N A SA	12 SD D N A SA	13 SD D N A SA	14 SD D N A SA	15 SD D N A SA
16 SD D N A SA	17 SD D N A SA	18 SD D N A SA	19 SD D N A SA	20 SD D N A SA
21 SD D N A SA	22 SD D N A SA	23 SD D N A SA	24 SD D N A SA	25 SD D N A SA
26 SD D N A SA	27 SD D N A SA	28 SD D N A SA	29 SD D N A SA	30 SD D N A SA
31 SD D N A SA	32 SD D N A SA	33 SD D N A SA	34 SD D N A SA	35 SD D N A SA
36 SD D N A SA	37 SD D N A SA	38 SD D N A SA	39 SD D N A SA	40 SD D N A SA
41 SD D N A SA	42 SD D N A SA	43 SD D N A SA	44 SD D N A SA	45 SD D N A SA

46 SD D N A SA	47 SD D N A SA	48 SD D N A SA	49 SD D N A SA	50 SD D N A SA
51 SD D N A SA	52 SD D N A SA	53 SD D N A SA	54 SD D N A SA	55 SD D N A SA
56 SD D N A SA	57 SD D N A SA	58 SD D N A SA	59 SD D N A SA	60 SD D N A SA

Now answer the three questions labeled A, B, and C below.

A. Have you responded to all of the statements? _____ Yes _____ No

B. Have you entered your responses across the rows? _____ Yes _____ No

C. Have you responded accurately and honestly? _____ Yes _____ No

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