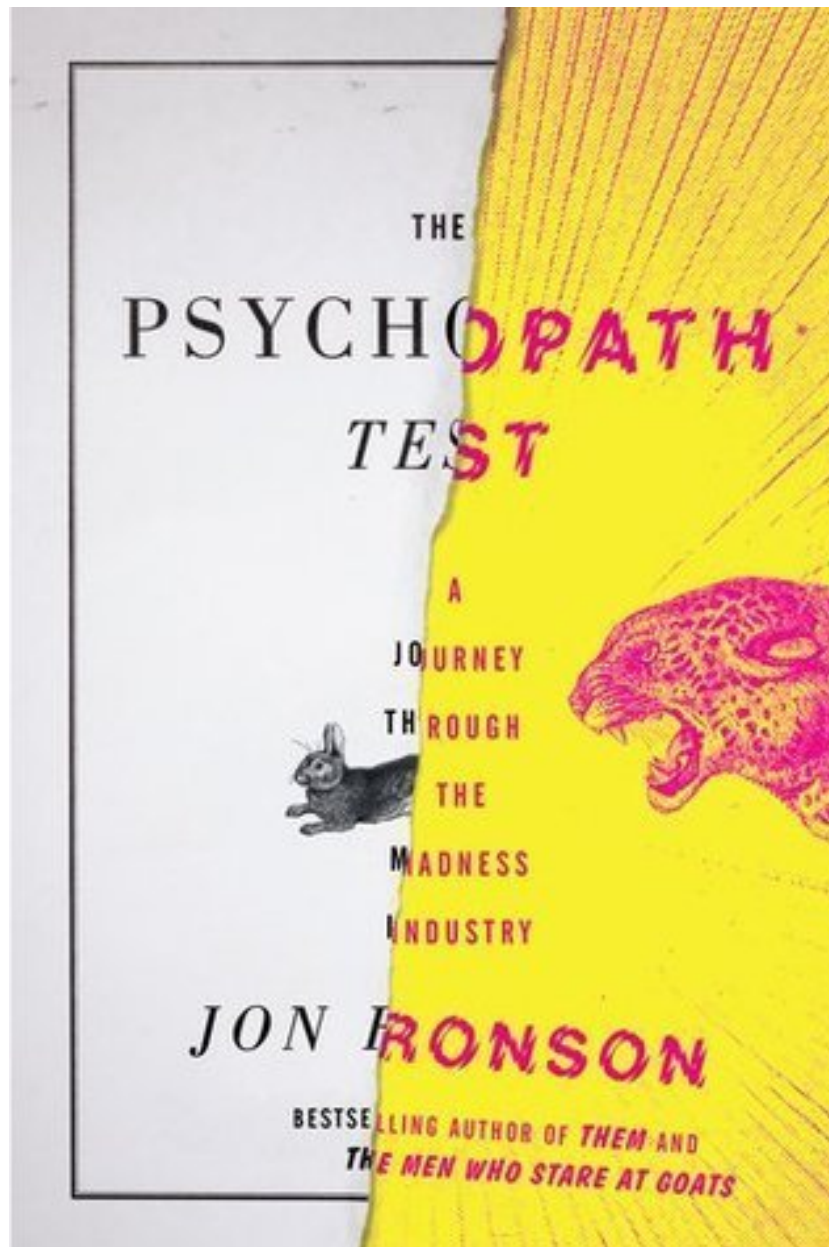


# The Psychopath Test: A Journey Through the Madness Industry Book PDF Download



**By:  
Jon Ronson**

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## What people Say:

### Simeon

A video recently went viral of a Texas judge savagely beating his disabled teenage daughter with a belt.

A video recently went viral of a Texas judge savagely beating his disabled teenage daughter with a belt.

Perhaps the most heartrending moment of the video is near the beginning, when in a tiny voice the girl cries out: "Dad..." an instant before he starts to hit her.

What do you get when you hollow a human of conscience? If there were no empathy, no guilt, no shame, no anxiety, no compunction... if impulse control simply meant

if ego were all that mattered, a desire to dominate others, the shameless manipulation: quintessence of a creature with the mind of a man but the soul of an insect, no trappings of honor or personal responsibility (let alone personality). Well, you get things like human trafficking, plutocratic oligarchies, and Donald Trump.

Perhaps it occurs to you that even wife-beaters must love their wives, or why keep them around otherwise? Sociopaths don't always fake emotion or attachment. Family members are possessions, tears of loss for an important object their deepest sentiment. They do not love. They possess.

Children, for instance, are an irritation, products of the loins that may occasionally cause trouble, but which ultimately serve a purpose, useful in keeping up social appearances (if that fails, children can always be disowned). Sociopaths experience sorrow and cry for lost possessions in exactly the same way they would on finding their favorite automobile crushed by a tree in the driveway.

Without empathy, the ego becomes all-consuming. A sociopath is solipsistic to a degree that even Ayn Rand might find appalling (though she would herself score rather high on Robert Hare's PCL-R test).

Factor 1: Personality, "Aggressive narcissism"

The creepy superficiality that politicians ooze like body fluid is item one.

### Lynn Weber

If you're interested in this topic, I'd recommend starting with Martha Stout's *The Sociopath Next Door* rather than this book. The problem with this one is that it's more "Follow me as I delve into this crazy world and have surreal experiences" than it is a study of sociopathy. And that ultimately makes it less gripping. I remember clearly the first section of Stout's book, as it took the reader on a tour of one man's mind as he faced a simple but telling moment of moral decision-making. It wa

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Nonetheless, it's a genial read and certainly a good book.

## Courtney Lindwall

I read this in about a 4 hour span, from 12 am - 4 am. It freaked me out and I slept with the lights on. But on with the review.

So I've read things about psychopaths previously. How their brains are actually wired differently and they are unable to feel empathy, etcetc. Psychopathy is incurable. Psychopathy, in its violent and sexual strands, is outright fucking terrifying.

But Ronson's book talks more about the frequent misdiagnosis of psychopathy. And the misdiagnosis of many other "mental il

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But Ronson's book talks more about the frequent misdiagnosis of psychopathy. And the misdiagnosis of many other "mental illnesses" that may in fact just be trying to label and profit off of various human eccentricities. I thought it was interesting. Especially the inmate Tony who scammed his way into the Mental Hospital hoping for nicer amenities and found himself unable to convince the doctors of his sanity for another 20 years (13 years after his prison sentence was originally intended to be over).

That's some real life

stuff. When the majority decides that the only thing needed to stamp a lifelong label of "psychopath" is a score over 30 on a 20 point behavioral checklist, an incredible danger arises. Misuse and misguided priorities in diagnosis can ruin lives, create madness instead of protect against it.

As relatively new fields, I think psychotherapy and the psychiatric world at large are bound to make huge changes in their approach as they learn more and more about the human brain and its relation to behavior. A lot of the disorders seem, to me, very subjective in their conditions. (e.g. one of the characteristics for psychopathy is an 'inflated sense of self worth'....uhm? that's pretty subjective and would probably include the vast majority of my professors) The human brain itself is just such an incredible unknown that I think there needs to be a certain level of trepidation in creating absolutes. For Tony, the "absolute" definition of psychopathic tendencies lost him the best 20 years of his life surrounded by rapists and serial killers in a maximum security Hospital.

Of course, at the same time, there are definitely strands of human beings who objectively act differently and need to be addressed by society. They respond differently. They do not have the same emotional capacity as the other 99% of the human race. There is some definitive consistency in the way their minds work. There need to be tactics for identification, for prevention against their possible havoc.

## Ariel

My first read of the year and it isn't what I was hoping for 3 I decided to jump on this because of my crazy love for Jon Ronson's newest book,

, but I realize now that I underestimated just how much the subject matter of that book contributed to my enjoyment of it. The Psychopath Test has Ronson's humour, similar style, empathetic point of view, and personal life injected into the story, but this research felt meandering. I thought it'd be clearer, earlier in the n

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Overall this has cemented that I like Ronson's writing and his journalistic storytelling methods, but that this topic, and the scattered structure, wasn't for me. (This is more like a 2.5 stars for me.)

## **Bill Kerwin**

A breezy, entertaining journey through the public effects of madness, with particular attention to the impact of the psychopath on society.

Ronson is an excellent writer with a fine sense of humor who knows how to tell a good story in plain language. That he is able to do this while making subtle observations about our society shows what a really good writer he is.