Hemphill, J. F. & Hare, R. D. (2004). Some misconceptions about the Hare PCL-R and risk

   assessment: A reply to Gendreau, Goggin, and Smith. *Criminal Justice and Behavior,*

   31(2), 203-243.

Gendreau, Goggin, and Smith (2002) aimed to challenge and contradict the statement that the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R) is "unparalleled as a measure for making risk assessments" as concluded by Salekin, Rogers, and Sewell (1996). They also stated that the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) surpasses the PCL-R in predicting general and violent recidivism (Gendreau et al., 2002). Hemphill and Hare (2004) use this article to address and clarify issues with Gendreau et al. (2002) statements and conclusions regarding the PCL-R and risk assessments. It is to be noted that Gendreau et al. (2002) critique is only one of many that have recently tried to minimize the role of psychopathy and the PCL-R where it is argued that specialized actuarial instruments predict recidivism as well or better than the PCL-R and are much less time consuming (Hemphill & Hare, 2004).

   First, the PCL-R and LSI were conducted for very different purposes and the clinical construct they describe. Because of this, comparisons of predictive validity are not always helpful in evaluating general validity and utility of the PCL-R. The PCL-R "provides a reliable and valid assessment of an important clinical contrast-psychopathy (Hare, 2003, p. 15)". The LSI-R on the other hand "samples many of the major and minor risk factors in order to provide a comprehensive risk/needs assessment (Andrews & Bonta, 1995b, p. 1)." Thus, if psychopathy is relevant to a risk in a certain context then the PCL-R will most likely emerge as significant risk factor. The PCL-R does not compete with different risk assessment tools but provides specific information that may help to better understand the offenders or patients. Gendreau et al. (2002)

took a very narrow view when examining the validity of the PCL-R and LSI-R. The PCL-R is useful in assessing risk with a broad range of antisocial behaviors, criminal behaviors, and behaviors associated with psychiatric concerns (Hemphill & Hare, 2004). When critiquing the PCL-R, Gendreau et al. (2002) failed to focus on the theoretic rationale for the relevance of psychopathy to the different aspects of the criminal justice setting.

Second, there are multiple clinical issues that are raised in the discussion between the PCL-R and the LSI. One of these issues is the idea that psychopathy has a negative connotation according to Gendreau et al. (2002). With there are many diagnoses that may have negative connotations, like psychosis and paraphilia, they are still used because they provide specific information about a particular disorder or construct. Also, Gendreau et al. (2002) indicated that the PCL-R is not a user friendly risk instrument. They indicate this is because it requires a large portion of administrative time and only by individuals with graduate degrees. With this may be the case, it is very common for psychological tests to be administered by individuals with advanced training with assessment tools (Hemphill & Hare, 2004). In addition, Gendreau et al. (2002) feel that the PCL-R factor 2, criminal history, is the only important aspect of this tool. Hemphill and Hare (2004) state that the PCL-R does not just measure antisocial behaviors, but both factors contribute to violent recidivism prediction and when removing the criminal history factors, the PCL-R still is associated with recidivism. Similarly, Gendreau et al. (2002) stated that the PCL-R factor 1 is not important. The factor 1 scores do actually contribute important information to the assessment of risk for recidivism. Factor 2 may play a larger role than factor 1 in general recidivism risk assessments, but this is not the only variable of interest to the criminal justice system (Hemphill & Hare, 2004). Also, Gendreau et al. (2002) indicated that the PCL-R and the LSI-R are strongly correlated. It does appear that the LSI-R overlaps with portions of the

social deviance aspect of psychopathy, but does not have any relationship to the interpersonal and affective features. Thus, these two tools are not interchangeable (Hemphill & Hare, 2004). Lastly, Gendreau et al. (2002) indicated that the PCL-R lacks generalizability. In response, Hemphill and Hare (2004) state that the PCL-R has been used successfully with a broad range of populations, many different contexts, and in a variety of countries.

Third, incorrect and misleading statements made by Gendreau et al. (2002) need clarification. The first statement that they made which needs clarification is that the LSI-R "notably surpasses the PCL-R in predicting violent recidivism" (p. 397). This pattern was not found in their results from their sample. Also, they their Table 1 was a subset of studies in their Table 2 so there is no unique information found in Table 1. Lastly, Gendreau et al. (2002 stated that "Hare himself has suggested that only a tiny fraction of psychopaths are violent offenders" (p. 423). The truth is that it is unknown the percentage of psychopaths who will violently offend in the community. What is known is that many psychopaths in prison have a history of violence (Hemphill & Hare, 2004).

Fourth, the research methodology and analyses used by Gendreau et al. (2002) need to be examined and critiqued. In their research, Gendreau et al. (2002) followed successive steps when they conducted their meta-analytic reviews but included unpublished data sets, excluded key PCL-R studies, included a concurrent validity study, inconsistently selected effect sizes, and had problems with phi coefficients. Some methodological improvements to their study could be expanding their potential pool of studies, formally examine the scientific inquiry and include only studies that met a basic set of criteria, expand the literature reviews, do not mix together results based on different statistical numbers, and apply a set of standard percentile cut scores to PCL-R and LSI-R measures so ratios would be directly comparable (Hemphill & Hare, 2004).

Fifth, within sample comparisons replicated indexes of recidivism are crucial in order to make assertive statements regarding predictive validities among different measures. While they made very bold statements, Gendreau et al.'s study (2002) provides very little relevant information in regards to the predictive validity of the PCL-R and the LSI-R. If the LSI-R had been included as a predictor variable it would have yielded a very low effect size. Within sample comparisons are crucial to arrive at bold predictive validity efficiency conclusions among various instruments (Hemphill & Hare, 2004).

Lastly, magnitudes of predictive validity for the LSI-R and PCL-R are very similar. Gendreau et al.'s (2002) findings indicated that the LSI-R and PCL-R were correlated very similarly in regards to general and violent recidivism coded from criminal records. Any differences that favor one instrument over another are often inconsistent and/or small in magnitude.

Overall, it seems like the PCL-R and LSI-R were constructed for very different purposes and it is thus inappropriate to directly compare the magnitude if their predictive validity. The LSI-R is a good purpose-built instrument and is justified as a predictive tool in the criminal justice system. The PCL-R still maintains the most reliable and valid instrument to measure the construct of psychopathy (Hemphill & Hare, 2004).