Development and Psychopathology, **15** (2003), 497–499
Copyright © 2003 Cambridge University Press
Printed in the United States of America
DOI: 10.1017.S0954579403000269

Conceptual, methodological, and statistical issues in developmental psychopathology: A Special Issue in honor of Paul E. Meehl

DANTE CICCHETTI[a] AND STEPHEN P. HINSHAW[b]
[a]*Mt. Hope Family Center, University of Rochester; and* [b]*University of California, Berkeley*

With the passing of Paul E. Meehl, Regents Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, on February 14, 2003, the world lost one of the most influential clinical psychologists of the 20th century. The breadth of his interests, the preciseness and clarity of his thinking, the elegance of his writing, and his ability to integrate scientific and clinical matters of import were hallmarks of his illustrious career (see, e.g., Meehl, 1954, 1973, 1991). Yet, it is the very magnitude of his professional pursuits that defy categorization or even placement within a single field of inquiry. Whether they pertain to philosophical matters, measurement and psychodiagnostic issues, or elucidating psychopathological processes, Paul Meehl's contributions were seminal and established a base on which scholars could build their own theoretical and research perspectives. Although Paul certainly did not consider himself to be a developmental psychopathologist, his influence can be seen in the theoretical and methodological streams that have nurtured the emergence and growth of the field. Thus, it seems a fitting tribute to Paul that this Special Issue, "Conceptual, Methodological, and Statistical Issues in Developmental Psychopathology," be dedicated in his honor.

Given its vast scope, it is impossible to adequately cover all of Paul's work that can be seen as influencing theoretical, methodological, and statistical endeavors in the field of developmental psychopathology; however, we want to highlight some of his scholarly pursuits that we think have been particularly influential. These include his landmark work on the clinical versus statistical prediction controversy (Dawes, Faust, & Meehl, 1989; Grove & Meehl, 1996; Meehl, 1954, 1957); his seminal papers on psychodiagnosis (Meehl, 1973); his utilization of statistical techniques to uncover latent internal states such as schizotypal personality organization (Meehl, 1979); and his development of taxometric methods to detect a latent genotype of persons at risk for schizophrenia utilizing highly fallible indicators (Golden & Meehl, 1979), to address problems of comorbidity (Meehl, 2001), and, more generally, to distinguish between discrete types and continua (Meehl, 1992, 1999; Meehl & Yonce, 1994, 1996; Waller & Meehl, 1998). In addition, Meehl's contributions to psychometric theory are must reading for any serious student in the field of developmental psychopathology (see, e.g., Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Meehl, 1959; Meehl & Rosen, 1955). Likewise, Paul's classic philosophy of science papers on theory

Work on this Special Issue was supported, in part, by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health (MH45027 and MH54643) and the Spunk Fund, Inc., to Dante Cicchetti and by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health (U01 MH50461 and R01 MH 45064) to Stephen P. Hinshaw.

Address correspondence and reprint requests to: Dante Cicchetti, PhD, Shirley Cox Kearns Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry, and Pediatrics, and Director, Mt. Hope Family Center, University of Rochester, 187 Edinburgh Street, Rochester, NY 14608, or Stephen P. Hinshaw, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Tolman Hall #1650, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720-1650.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579403000269 Published online by Cambridge University Press

testing in psychology versus physics (Meehl, 1967) and on the slow progress of scientific psychology (Meehl, 1978) were invoked by Richters (1997) in his article that pointed out the need for improved fidelity between the elegant theories put forth by developmental psychopathologists and the designs, methods, and statistics utilized to test these theories (see Granic & Hollenstein, 2003).

Finally, in his American Psychological Association Presidential address, Meehl (1962) proposed a model of the etiology of schizophrenia that has influenced a number of the seminal high-risk research programs. In Meehl's theory, genetics played a prominent role, a position that was not popular with viewpoints of the day. However, Meehl postulated that not all persons with the gene for schizophrenia (he advocated a dominant gene monogenic model of the disorder) would ultimately develop the disorder. Rather, potentiators could increase the probability of developing schizophrenia, whereas buffers could decrease the probability of its occurrence. Thus, Meehl's model was one of the first diathesis–stress models of mental disorder; moreover, consistent with a developmental psychopathology viewpoint, Meehl conceived the trajectory from schizotaxia (an inherited neural integrative defect) to schizophrenia as a complex journey, one that could be achieved via multiple pathways (Meehl, 1989b, 1990). Although Meehl's model of schizophrenia figured prominently in reinvigorating interest in genetic factors in psychopathology, he also eloquently noted that the presence of genetic factors did not mean that the disorder was immutable or that psychological interventions could not be useful (Meehl, 1972, 1975). Indeed, Meehl explicitly stated that therapeutic nihilism was not warranted when confronted with patients whose disorder had a clear genetic contribution.

Finally, Paul was a superb mentor throughout his career. Paul E. Meehl's own words speak the most eloquently on this matter. In his autobiography, Meehl (1989a) stated that an

> . . . influence harder to trace, but perhaps more important in the long run than anything I have published, are the Ph.D. candidates I have turned out over the years . . . One gratification . . . is to realize that at least hundreds, sometimes thousands, of persons one has never met have been shaped, helped, and inspired by the lectures, articles, and textbooks of one's students. (p. 380)

There can be no doubt that Paul Meehl has exerted a monumental impact on the field and that his work will continue to have a major influence on future generations of scholars.

References

Cronbach, L. J., & Meehl, P. E. (1955). Construct validity in psychological tests. *Psychological Bulletin, 52,* 281–302.

Dawes, R. M., Faust, D., & Meehl, P. E. (1989). Clinical versus actuarial judgement. *Science, 243,* 1669–1674.

Golden, R., & Meehl, P. E. (1979). Detection of the schizoid taxon with MMPI indicators. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 88,* 217–233.

Granic, I., & Hollenstein, T. (2003). Dynamic systems methods for models of developmental psychopathology. *Development and Psychopathology, 15,* 641–669.

Grove, W. M., & Meehl, P. E. (1996). Comparative efficiency of informal (subjective, impressionistic) and formal (mechanical, algorithmic) prediction procedures: The clinical-statistical controversy. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 2,* 293–323.

Meehl, P. E. (1954). *Clinical versus statistical prediction: A theoretical analysis and a review of the evidence*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Meehl, P. E. (1957). When should we use our heads instead of the formula? *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 4,* 268–273.

Meehl, P. E. (1959). Some ruminations on the validation of clinical procedures. *Candian Journal of Psychology, 13,* 102–128.

Meehl, P. E. (1962). Schizotaxia, schizotypy, schizophrenia. *American Psychologist, 17,* 827–838.

Meehl, P. E. (1967). Theory-testing in psychology and physics: A methodological paradox. *Philosophy of Science, 34,* 103–115.

Meehl, P. E. (1972). Specific genetic etiology, psychodynamics, and therapeutic nihilism. *International Journal of Mental Health, 1,* 10–27.

Meehl, P. E. (1973). *Psychodiagnosis: Selected papers*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Meehl, P. E. (1978). Theoretical risks and tabular asterisks: Sir Karl, Sir Ronald, and the slow progress of soft psychology. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 46,* 806–834.

Meehl, P. E. (1979). A funny thing happened to us on the way to the latent entities. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 43,* 563–581.

Meehl, P. E. (1989a). Autobiography. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), *History of psychology in autobiography* (Vol. VIII, pp. 337–389). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579403000269 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Meehl, P. E. (1989b). Schizotaxia revisited. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 46,* 935–944.

Meehl, P. E. (1990). Toward an integrated theory of schizotaxia, schizotypy, and schizophrenia. *Journal of Personality Disorders, 4,* 1–99.

Meehl, P. E. (1991). *Selected philosophical and methodological papers*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Meehl, P. E. (1992). Factors and taxa, traits and types, differences of degree and differences in kind. *Journal of Personality, 60,* 117–174.

Meehl, P. E. (1999). Clarifications about taxometric method. *Journal of Applied and Preventive Psychology, 8,* 165–174.

Meehl, P. E. (2001). Comorbidity and taxometrics. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 8,* 507–519.

Meehl, P. E., & Rosen, A. (1955). Antecedent probability and the efficiency of psychometric signs, patterns, or cutting scores. *Psychological Bulletin, 52,* 194–216.

Meehl, P. E., & Yonce, L. J. (1994). Taxometric analysis: I. Detecting taxonicity with two quantitative indicators using means above and below a sliding cut (MAMBAC procedure). *Psychological Reports, 74,* 1059–1274.

Meehl, P. E., & Yonce, L. J. (1996). Taxometric analysis: II. Detecting taxonicity using covariance of two quantitative indicators in successive intervals of a third indicator (MAXCOV procedures). *Psychological Reports, 78,* 1091–1227.

Richters, J. E. (1997). The Hubble hypothesis and the developmentalist's dilemma. *Development and Psychopathology, 9,* 193–229.

Waller, N. J., & Meehl, P. E. (1998). *Multivariate taxometric procedures: Distinguishing types from continua*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579403000269 Published online by Cambridge University Press