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Critically analyze the biological theories of Criminality.

Introduction :

Biological theories were first presented by Cesare Lombroso in 1880s. He by his observations, physical features of people and historical factors of some ethnicities concluded that there is link between biological characteristics or genetics and criminality. He presented physical features of a criminal and used the term atavistic man for criminals. Later his theories were supported by theorists like William Sheldons who further described how <sup>level of</sup> obesity hinders or encourage a person when doing deviant acts. Theories of Lombroso ~~etc~~ opened door to the studies of biology and genetic characteristics.

of criminals. However many theorists rejected Lombroso's ideas saying that Environment also have the impact in shaping the behaviour of a person.

Physical characteristics of criminal man:

According to Lombroso a person with flat or upturned nose is most likely to be a criminal. He described criminal having big jaws and long hands. He even said that mongolian people are likely to be criminals.

William Sheldon's theory on how physical fitness plays role in criminality.

William Sheldon categorized into three categories.

1- **Endomorph**: He is fat and a chubby person. ~~less active~~ and very less likely to commit violent crimes. Although he can commit unnoticeable or small deviant acts.

2. **Mesomorph**: He is described as tall, physically fit, having aesthetic body. He is most likely to commit violent crimes.

3. **Ectomorph**: He is described as very thin and skinny. There are very less chances that he will commit according to Sheldon.

**Criticism :**

Lombroso's and Sheldon's theories are based upon observation. Both lack scientific evidences and proper sampling.

procedures to support their theories. Furthermore, Composso's theories also give a sense of racism. It targets some underprivileged ethnicities which is a very dangerous thing. However, it can be said that these theories opened doors for research in field of genetics.

### Genetic Theories

These theories were presented by theorists like Mednick and Hinchlifegton who were inspired by Cesare Lombroso.

Genetic theories are divided into three theories.

(i) Twin theory (ii) XY Chromosome theory (iii) Adoption theory.

(i) Twin theory: It says that ~~twin~~ monozygotic twin who share 100% of

genetics do similar type of criminal acts than the ~~disyogic~~ twins who share 50% of genetics.

(ii) XYY Chromosome (<sup>supermale</sup><sub>theory</sub>):

According to genetic theorist a person having XYY chromosome is considered a supermale as he is more likely to commit violent crimes.

(iii) Adoption theory: This theory suggests that if a person's ~~his~~ biological parents are criminals and he is doing deviant acts when living his adoptive parents. Then genetics are playing role in it.

Criticism:

All of these theories are ignoring the idea of environment factors, schooling,

social circle of a person. ~~at~~  
Person person can be different from his or her twin if given different environment.  
The Behaviour of teachers at school, the ~~Behaviour~~ of parent at home shape personality of an individual.  
Adoptive parents can also be criminals just like biological ones. It can make person commit deviant acts.

### Neurophysiological theories:

These theories were supported by theorists like Lee Ellis.

According to these theories shape of a person's brain or head can tell ~~if~~ whether he is criminal or not.

It says that person having large frontal lobe is more likely to be a criminal.

Furthermore these theories also suggest that person having high testosterone level and low serotonin level is more likely to commit violent crimes.

### Criticism:

Person's neurophysiological characteristics get shaped by its personal experiences, traumas, depressions and some societal factors. Furthermore the presence of biochemical substance also get changed from environment to environment. These things don't make conclude that a person is either a criminal or not.

### Conclusion:

Biological theories initiated by Lombroso and

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support of theorists like Sheldon and Lee Ellis can link with some events. But they can not fully justify that biological factors shape person's behaviour. These theories can open door to study of genetic but can't make someone criminal. Biological theories are based on observations of Lombroso and other theorists. However they lack environmental factors which play main role in shaping character of a person. A person can behave differently from his ancestors if he is given different environment from them.