Journal Article Questions

# Chapter 5: Early Positivism

Article 1: Urbaniok, F., Laubacher, A., Hardegger, J., Rossegger, A., Endrass, J., & Moskvitin, J. (2012). Neurobiological determinism: Human freedom of choice and criminal responsibility. International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 56(2), 174–190. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/48hKHig6DcP3rAGimYmP/full

Several authors have argued that criminal behavior is generally caused by neurobiological deficits. This assumption not only questions the concept of free will and a person’s responsibility for his or her own actions but also the principle of guilt in criminal law. When critically examining the current state of research, it becomes apparent that the results are not sufficient to support the existence of a universally valid neurobiological causality of criminal behavior. Moreover, the assumption of total neurobiological determination of human behavior and the impossibility of individual responsibility are characterized by both faulty empiricism and methodical misconceptions. The principle of relative determinism and the analysis of the offender’s behavior at the time of the offense thus remain the central and cogent approach to the assessment of criminal responsibility

Questions that apply to this article:

1. Identify the basic research question as stated by the authors.

2. What do the authors postulate as the cause of criminal behavior?

3. What do they believe past research has left out?

Article 2: Blanchard, R., Kolla, N., Cantor, J., Klassen, P., Dickey, R., Kuban, M., & Blak, T. (2007). IQ, handedness, and pedophilia in adult male patients stratified by referral source. Sex Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 19(3), 285–309. Retrieved from

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This study investigated whether the previously observed association of pedophilia with lower IQs is an artifact of heterogeneity in referral source. The subjects were 832 adult male patients referred to a specialty clinic for evaluation of their sexual behavior. The patients’ erotic preferences for prepubescent, pubescent, or adult partners were assessed with phallometric testing. Full scale IQ was estimated using six subtests from the WAIS-R. The results showed that the relations between pedophilia and lower IQ, lesser education, and increased rates of non-righthandedness were the same in homogeneous groups referred by lawyers or parole and probation officers as they were in a heterogeneous group referred by a miscellany of other sources. Those results, along with secondary analyses in the study, supported the conclusion that the relation between pedophilia and cognitive function is genuine and not artifactual. The findings were interpreted as evidence for the hypothesis that neurodevelopmental perturbations increase the risk of pedophilia in males.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. Who were the subjects of this study?

2. What were the authors trying to link IQ scores to?

3. What were the results of the study?