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Inheritance as a Factor in Criminality

Edith R. Spaulding

William Healy

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INHERITANCE AS A FACTOR IN CRIMINALITY.

A STUDY OF A THOUSAND CASES OF YOUNG REPEATED OFFENDERS.¹

EDITH R. SPAULDING² AND WILLIAM HEALY.³

Inheritance as a factor in criminality may be considered under two heads: (a) the direct inheritance of criminalistic traits in otherwise normal individuals; (b) the indirect inheritance of criminalistic tendencies through such heritable factors as epilepsy, insanity, feeble-mindedness, etc. The first should include only those cases in which the traits themselves are primarily criminalistic, while the second comprises those in which certain inherited qualities of body or mind, not anti-social in themselves, produce criminals when ill proportioned to other characteristics in the same individual, or ill adjusted to environment. Thus a feeble-minded individual may show no delinquent tendencies if sufficiently protected, but placed on his own resources in society, he soon finds his way to the police court.

In the thousand cases which have been reviewed, we have carefully sought for evidence of direct inheritance of criminalistic traits, as such. However, in no one case of the thousand have we been able to discover evidence of anti-social tendencies in succeeding generations without also finding underlying trouble of a physical or mental nature, or such striking environmental faults or mal-adjustments as often develop delinquency in the absence of defective inheritance. In order to prove the existence of the first class, we feel it absolutely essential to rule out other well-known causative factors in each case.⁴

Family charts alone, without detailed environmental and developmental history, are not sufficient proof of inherited criminalism, no matter how many criminal histories they may contain. Studying the history of criminalistic tendencies, which themselves may arise through any of a large number of possible biologic, mental or social factors, is

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²Resident Physician, Reformatory for Women, South Framingham, Mass.

³Director, Juvenile Psychopathic Institute, Chicago, Ill.

⁴This work was undertaken at the Juvenile Psychopathic Institute, Chicago, where intensive case studies have been made, centering about the problem of causative factors. The main point in the technic of our study of inheritance was the development of a card system presenting causal factors evaluated side by side with the facts of heredity. The general system of working up case studies in the Institute has been presented in Bulletin XII, April, 1913, of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology.

altogether different from studying the heritage of a Hapsburg lip, or the heredity of feeble-mindedness—the latter a comparatively simple phenomenon, arising from merely a few general biological causes. If the inheritance of criminalistic impulses, *per se*, is a factor in criminality, during the detailed study of a thousand cases, there should come to light definite findings in proof of the fact. However, as a result of this study, we are convinced that the direct inheritance of criminalistic traits as such, is still to be proved. Among the thousand cases there is hardly an instance in which factors other than any allegeable criminal instinct cannot be clearly perceived. In even those very few cases, where, after some survey of the facts, there is relatively strong suggestion of direct inheritance, a little further view shows greatly diminishing probability of this being true.

That the belief in inheritance of criminal characteristics is still a prevalent one, is perhaps best shown by the fact that eight states have already adopted measures providing for sterilization of confirmed criminals as well as of defective individuals such as the feeble-minded, the insane and the epileptic. This places confirmed criminals in the same class with known inheritable types.

Of the indirect inheritance of criminalistic tendencies there is much evidence. Besides the more important indirect causes, such as epilepsy, feeble-mindedness, and the psychoses, all of which may be inherited, there are also found many other inherited tendencies, both mental and physical, which, also non-criminalistic in themselves, are in certain environments important in the development of delinquency and crime.

In the discussion of criminal causations, heredity has usually been placed in the balance with environment, each gaining in weight as the other lessens; and the question is still asked whether environment or heredity plays the more important part, the two being treated as if they were isolated units. This method of approach is wrong. Often one forms the other in such a way that it is impossible to say where one leaves off and the other begins. Parents who are mentally defective, alcoholic or syphilitic, form atrociously defective environmental and developmental conditions for their offspring. As Davenport⁵ says, "so long as we regard heredity and environment as opposed, so long will we experience endless contradictions in interpreting any trait, behavior, or disease."

The most important point to be borne in mind in the study is

⁵Heredity in Relation to Eugenics, p. 252, p. 265—C. B. Davenport, 1911.

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that every case needs individual interpretation; inheritance or environment prevails in proportion to the degree of the weakness or strength of individual factors in each case. For instance, with inherited imbecility, no environment could make a good citizen. On the other hand, if a normal individual were brought up in dives of vice from infancy, with no moral enlightenment, he too, would be a poor type of citizen. Even if one does not believe in determinism, the only scientific way to study the individual is to believe that there is a cause for each of his acts, whether or not it may be discovered. As Davenport so well expresses it, "though a man prides himself on the freedom of his will, his very action is determined by his protoplasmic makeup, plus the modification it has received through experience, plus the relative vigor and quality of the stimulus he receives."

One thousand histories have been studied in the search for facts which were evidence of the inheritance of criminal characteristics. Many times the history was not complete enough to present all the data necessary for the cautious type of induction on which we have insisted. All such cases have been discarded. The following statistics were made from 668 cases in which the detailed histories afforded sufficient knowledge of both family antecedents and causative factors. All cases showing mental deficiency and epilepsy in the offender, 245 cases; since they show such well-recognized foundations for criminalism, have been at once separated from the others (*vide infra*). The remainder consists of 271 cases in which there was no known criminality in the antecedents, and 152 cases in which there was such moral defect in a preceding generation. While instructive comparisons involve the three groups, interest naturally centers about the series of 152 non-defective offenders with criminalistic forebears.

Analysis of each case was undertaken fairly and squarely, with a view to establishing the predominating causative factor existing *in the individual or in his environment*, that was itself immediately responsible for the delinquency. When factors other than criminalistic inheritance were clearly to be discerned, the latter was, of course, to be ruled out. The predominating factors for the purposes of tabulation are divided into 9 classes, and, for comparison, the 271 cases are charted in Group I (Chart I), the 271 cases without criminalistic forebears, and in Group II (Chart II), the 152 cases with ancestral offenders.

The explanation of this classification of causes is as follows:

Class I. This includes cases in which there is heredity of nervous instability, if the nervous instability appears to be the *principal cause* of the delinquency. Here, too, are placed those cases in which there is

insanity, epilepsy or feeble-mindedness in other members of the family, and in which the individuals studied, while not showing definite symptoms of insanity, epilepsy or mental deficiency, still give clear evidence of a neuropathic inheritance. Included also are cases showing inheritance of migraine, extreme nervousness, etc. As Davenport and Weeks⁶ state, these conditions behave as though due to the simplex condition of the protoplasmic factors, which modify complete nervous development. Persons having these characteristics "usually carry some wholly defective germ-cells. Such persons may be called tainted." In some cases there are psychic manifestations, too indefinite to be classed among cases of epilepsy, yet wholly dependent upon heredity, judging from other cases of epilepsy found in the same family.

We have included in this class, also, cases of extreme alcoholism in the parents, if there was a neuropathic condition in the offspring, believing it likely that there was a nervous weakness on which the habit was grafted. According to Neff,⁷ of Foxborough, "Inebriety is an expression of nervous weakness. Founded on this weakness is a habit which we call drunkenness. The antecedent weakness is either acquired or an inborn defect. The nature of this nervous weakness is as yet not accurately defined; it appears to be closely allied to degeneracy and the functional minor nervous disorders." Also, to quote from Thomson,⁸ "The intemperate habits of the parent may be the expression of an inherited psychopathic disposition, and it is this which is transmitted to the offspring."

Class II. Cases in which developmental factors predominate. This includes syphilitic infections, poor ante-natal conditions, injuries at birth and during later development, infectious diseases leaving serious mental or physical sequelae, etc.

Class III. Cases in which environmental factors appear to predominate as a cause. This includes conditions of the home and neighborhood, companions and associates, etc. As the home is dependent largely upon the mentality and physical condition of the parents, we feel that this condition cannot be separated wholly from the inheritance factor, although the influence is wholly indirect.

Class IV. Cases in which there is an element of heredity, combined with a bad or unsuitable environment. By this "heredity" is meant only factors such as we have classified in Class I, having a defin-

⁶Inheritance of Epilepsy, p. 29. C. B. Davenport and David F. Weeks, M. D.

⁷The Treatment of Inebriety. Irwin H. Neff, M. D., Foxborough, Mass.

⁸Heredity, p. 220. Arthur Thomson, M. A., London, England.

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ite physical or mental basis, and never purely criminalistic instincts. Here also are included some cases of great mental and physical energy or initiative without neuropathic taint, which in the environment in which they are placed cannot find sufficient outlet in desirable ways. As a result, perfectly normal instincts are transformed into criminalistic ones.

Class V. A bad inheritance plus poor developmental factors. Heredity here, also, refers to conditions similar to those found in Class I.

Class VI. Cases where bad environmental and developmental conditions are both influential.

Class VII. Cases in which the difficulty is due chiefly to innate tendencies in the individual, not traceable to inheritance, such as instability of purpose, extreme social suggestibility, ungovernable temper, premature physical development, excessive physical development, etc. These conditions may be the result of the original germ-plasm, but cannot be traced in previous generations.

Class VIII. Cases which exhibit at least three causative factors of importance. Some of these cases have contained heredity factors, but the conditions were all so interwoven that it was impossible to decide whether heredity, development or environment had the most influence. In some instances the predominating cause has been a mental conflict, but as that in itself seems to be made up of several elements, we have classified such cases in other classes according to the strongest element, whether it was innate physical characteristics or a neuropathic personality. Class VIII also includes several cases of mental conflict which seemed unclassified under other headings.

Class IX (a subdivision of Group II only, Chart II) includes 15 cases which, after assigning the others to the above classes, remained suggestive of criminalistic inheritance. One of these cases, in which defective environment can practically be ruled out, will be discussed in detail later (see Chart XII). It suggests more than any other case the inheritance of criminal characteristics. Another case was of great interest for the same reason. The boy, however, suddenly waked up in the midst of his atrocious environment, broke up his gang, reformed the worst member of it, and thereby upset our evidence that he had inherited any criminalistic tendencies. This made us skeptical about ready acceptance of "proof" in the future. The other cases have been placed in this group because of their suggestiveness, which can be readily explained away, rather than because they offer any proof of direct inheritance of criminal tendencies. Some are of interest because they

show certain inheritable characteristics as causative factors of crime, besides the well known ones of mental deficiency, epilepsy, etc. Among these few cases we find the following types and factors:

(a) Individuals who display violent temper. This may be partly a racial characteristic, or it may have underlying it a neuropathic constitution, which is not evidenced in any other way. It may be observed in succeeding generations, and may be the cause of repeated delinquencies and crimes in each one. The factors of training and association may, of course, play a part in the development of the offender's character.

(b) The non-resisting type, which takes the easiest way in all things, and, readily influenced for either good or evil, has no dominating energy or interest in any direction. The characteristic occurs in members of succeeding generations. It, likely enough, has its foundations in peculiarities of bodily structure or function.

(c) Among definite physical characteristics inherited, we have first, the hypersexual type, in which the sexual characteristics may be exaggerated even from infancy, and where there is permanent inequality between the physical instincts and the inhibitions. We believe that these instincts may not be criminalistic in themselves, but on account of the lack of balance between the two forces, the hypersexualism may beget a criminal career. Sexual inversions may also be the result of insufficient normal outlet. Although the final results here again, may be considered criminal, the underlying conditions are in themselves non-criminal, and normal in their setting in the individual makeup. As Havelock Ellis⁹ says in discussing perverted tendencies, "Pathology is but physiology working under new conditions. The stream of nature still flows into the bent channel of sexual inversion, and still runs according to law."

(d) The factor of very early puberty, another and entirely different condition from the above, places on the individual who has not yet gained mature inhibitions, too great stress, which is often upsetting to his moral equilibrium. Though the mentality may be even above normal, the force and prematureness of adolescence is far more than the individual is able to cope with. This developmental anomaly may be found in successive generations.

There are two other factors which are sometimes family traits and which are factors of genius as well as of crime.

(e) The first of these is energy in superabundance. Placed in a

⁹Studies in the Psychology of Sex—Sexual Inversion, p. 216. Havelock Ellis.

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suitable environment with healthy interests and sufficient outlet in constructive ways, an individual with this characteristic will probably become a valuable member of the community. On the other hand, with no healthy interests, an atmosphere of repression, and avenues of an undesirable kind continually offering an outlet, he may become thoroughly criminalistic.

(f) The second of the two factors is lack of inhibitions. While this characteristic has been considered one of the elements of genius, it is also very prominent in some of our worst recidivists. There is a spirit of abandon, an absence of fear, which makes them invite adventure. It may be seen in the boy who enters the window in a strange house to see if he can get in and out again without being heard by the family in the next room. It is apparent in a reformatory playground, when one woman steps forward without a second's hesitation to kill the snake which has caused all the others to scream, and later skins the snake, and stuffing it with leaves, decorates a girl's neck with it. Some of our worst recidivists who, although white, consort with negroes and with the lowest types of our foreign population, and consume drugs and alcohol in amazing quantities—some of these women present lack of inhibitions as their most noticeable characteristics. In cases such as we have in mind the mentality, judged by tests, has been normal except for slight irregularities, which are probably due to lack of concentration.

The diagnosis of mental conditions for the purpose of these two tabulations is necessarily made in the most general fashion. Only cases with ability above subnormal are included. The range is from the genius class to the group of those who are dull, apparently from physical causes. The aberrational group includes cases ranging from fully developed psychoses to the minor psychotic conditions. More explicitly stated, the groups are composed of:

- (a) Those above the ordinary in ability.
- (b) Those of about ordinary ability for the general social level from which most offenders come.
- (c) Those of poor native ability.
- (d) Those who are mentally dull, apparently from physical causes, including bad habits of various sorts.
- (e) The various aberrational types.

GROUP I.—CLASSIFICATION OF SOME CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN 271 CASES OF DELINQUENCY IN WHICH THERE WAS NO KNOWN CRIMINALITY IN THE ANTECEDENTS—NO CASES OF MENTAL DEFECTS OR OF EPILEPSY ARE INCLUDED.

	Ability very good.		Ability good or fair.		Ability poor.		Dull from physical cause.		Aber-rational.		Totals. Total.	
	A		A		A		A		A			
Predominating causative factors.												
I. Psychopathic or neuropathic by inheritance	2	1	32	13	1	0	0	0	17	2	52	68
II. Faulty development	0	0	7	4	0	0	4	2	5	1	16	23
III. Faulty environment	2	2	69	13	4	1	2	1	0	0	77	94
IV. Defective heredity with faulty environment	1	0	9	4	4	2	2	1	0	1	16	24
V. Defective heredity with faulty development	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
VI. Faulty environment with faulty development	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	7
VII. Peculiar innate characteristics	1	0	19	3	0	0	0	0	15	1	35	43
VIII. Complex of factors unresolved	0	0	5	4	1	0	0	0	2	0	8	12
Totals	8	3	143	44	10	4	10	4	39	6	210	271

Columns marked A include cases in which at least one parent was alcoholic—about 22 per cent. of the 271 cases.

CHART I.

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GROUP II.—CLASSIFICATION OF SOME CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN 152 CASES OF DELINQUENCY IN WHICH THERE WAS KNOWN TO BE CRIMINALITY IN THE ANTECEDENTS. NO CASES OF MENTAL DEFECTS OR OF EPILEPSY ARE INCLUDED.

	Ability very good.		Ability good or fair.		Ability poor.		Dull from physical cause.		Aber-rational.		Totals. Total.	
	A		A		A		A		A			
I. Predominating causative factors.	0	1	10	12	0	2	0	0	10	7	20	42
II. Psychopathic or neuropathic by inheritance	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
III. Faulty development	1	0	23	31	1	4	0	0	0	1	25	61
IV. Faulty environment	1	0	3	5	2	2	0	1	0	0	6	14
V. Defective heredity with faulty environment	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
VI. Faulty environment with faulty development	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
VII. Peculiar innate characteristics	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
VIII. Complex of factors unresolved	0	0	2	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	9
IX. By elimination of above causes, suggestive of criminalistic inheritance	1	2	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	15
Totals	3	3	46	62	3	10	1	2	13	9	66	152

Columns marked A include cases in which at least one parent was alcoholic—about 56 per cent. of the 152 cases.

CHART II.

SPAULDING AND HEALY

Concerning the 245 cases first set off, the following may be said: it should be distinctly understood that these figures offer no fair criterion of the percentage of mental defectives and epileptics, among offenders in general. Since family histories on these cases were generally more obtainable, the great majority of both groups in the total 1,000 are represented here. Then this series of 1,000 cases represents an undue number of defectives and epileptics because these peculiarly difficult problem cases were brought in greater proportion for study. It should also be stated that some 56 cases, on which mental diagnosis at the time was not certain, and 55 cases of mental subnormality (a class which includes specialized defectives and those who show defect above the moron grade) are included in the 245 cases.

In the 245 cases of mental defect and epilepsy there were criminalistic antecedents in 70 cases (28.5 per cent), while in the 423 cases showing normal mentality there were 152 cases (35.9 per cent) with such known to have criminalistic antecedents. The higher percentage of criminalistic forebears in the cases with normal mentality is interesting.

SUMMARY OF TOTAL FIGURES.

The following chart largely explains itself. To go into finer detail, for instance, of the relation of the type of defect in the forebears to the type of defect in the offender, would involve great labor for safe discrimination of the facts. On the other hand, many general findings are matters of safe knowledge and may well be stated here. The large number of psychopathic and neuropathic offenders with defective heredity as shown on the chart is striking. Other aberrational cases are classified in other columns, according to their causations.

SPAULDING AND HEALY

When viewing either the following or the preceding tables, the reader should remember that the causative factors tabulated are simply those bearing on the subject of this paper, namely, the inheritance of criminalistic tendencies. As a matter of fact, practically every case has several causative factors which can be readily determined, and in the charts we purposely ignore, for simplification, much of the causative background. The complicated nature of causation in every case has to be reckoned with by any one who would urge the acceptance of any theory of causation of criminality, hereditary or otherwise. As an example of complex causation we may show one of our causative factor cards, one in which heredity is involved.

<u>Physical conditions.</u>	Headaches plus.	Boy 16 years, 6 mos.
<u>Nervous type.</u>	Very bad teeth. Very poorly developed and nourished.	Mentality rather dull, perhaps from physical causes.
<u>Mentality.</u>	Unstable, irritable, moody.	
<u>Adolescence.</u>	Very delayed puberty.	
<u>Developmental.</u>	Two severe injuries. Several sicknesses.	
<u>Heredity.</u>	Father alcoholic, brute, wife beater. Mother probably mildly insane. Sister delinquent and peculiar.	
<u>Home conditions.</u>	As above. Mother works out.	
<u>Delinquencies:</u>	<u>Bad neighborhood and</u>	
<u>Not working,</u>	<u>Bad companions.</u>	
<u>stealing, and</u>	<u>Bad sex habits plus.</u>	
<u>obscurity.</u>		

ALCOHOLISM.

Moderate drinking, even daily, is not reckoned by us at all as alcoholism. We have only counted those cases in which there is a history of at least occasional intoxication on the part of one or both parents. In the case of correlation of criminalism with alcoholism in the same family it is not asserted that in every instance it was the same person who was alcoholic and criminalistic.

The results of our findings are as follows: among the 245 mental defectives and epileptics, alcoholism in the antecedent was known to exist in 93 cases (38 per cent); among the remaining 423 cases there were 147 cases (34 per cent) in which it was known to exist. The difference in these percentages is not so marked as in the groups with criminal and with non-criminal antecedents.

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Among the cases of epilepsy and mental defect, alcoholism in the forebears existed in 57 per cent of the cases with criminalistic antecedents; and in but 30 per cent with non-criminalistic antecedents.

Also among the cases without epilepsy or mental defect, alcoholism was a factor in 56 per cent with criminalistic antecedents and in but 22 per cent with non-criminalistic antecedents. Thus alcoholism seems to correlate to a high degree with criminality. We leave the question open, however, as to whether this proves any great amount of crime to be fundamentally the result of alcoholism, or whether the underlying causative factors of both are not the same.

INTERPRETATION OF FAMILY CHARTS.

The following family charts show criminality in successive generations. For the worker in eugenics they are inadequate as total studies, but they serve well to illustrate a few of the types already discussed, and to emphasize the fact that family charts alone without detailed developmental and environmental history are no proof of the inheritance of criminality, no matter how many criminals they show.

KEY TO SYMBOLS.

- A = Alcoholic.
- C = Criminalistic.
- D = Died.
- E = Epilepsy.
- I = Insane.

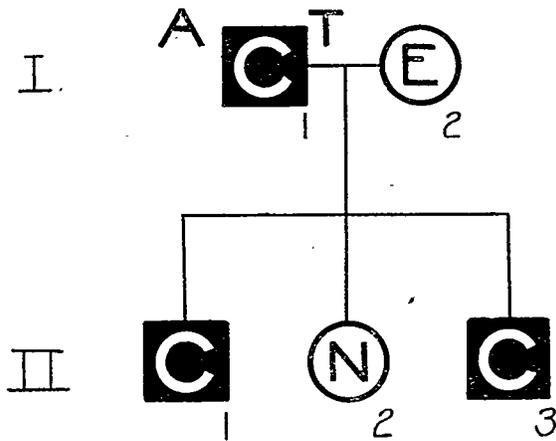


CHART IV

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- N = Normal.
- S = Syphilis.
- Sx = Sex offender.
- T = Tuberculosis.
- W = Wanderer.
- = Male.
- = Female.

Chart IV shows bad environment with epilepsy and alcoholism in the parents and other criminalism in the family, as factor.

II (3) (boy) had been arrested many times and sent twice to a reform school for larceny, etc.; previously to another institution for truancy, etc. He was the only one studied. Physically and mentally he is fairly normal, a bright nervous type.

The father, who was tubercular and alcoholic, had been arrested for taking money for things which his son (II 1) stole. He died during a debauch about a week after leaving prison. The mother, an epileptic who has attacks about once a week, knows no other way to reform II 3 than by beating. His older brother also beats him.

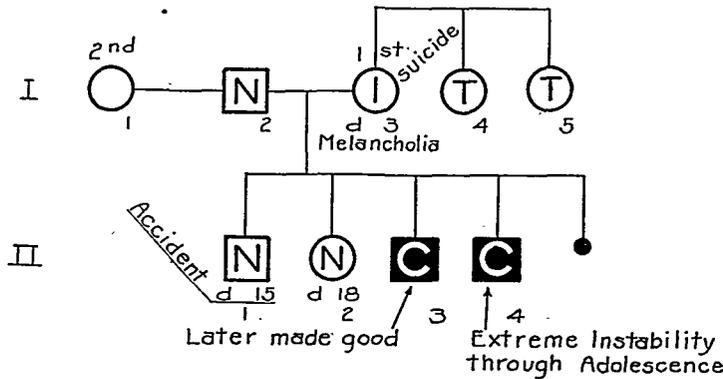


CHART V

Chart V shows adolescent instability resulting probably from inheritance. The mother was insane and committed suicide in a period of depression.

Both boys, II, 3 and 4, after a long period of stealing, forging checks and other delinquencies, turned out well as they became men, the most prominent causative factor being probably their extreme instability during adolescence. They had an exceptionally good home and were physically well endowed. The first and third of the children who grew up were exceedingly bright. Such a case shows the indirect influence of inheritance in criminalism.

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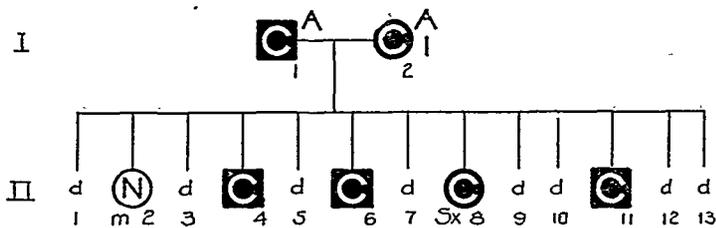


CHART VI

Chart VI represents extremely bad home environment.

In this family all but one member had court records. The mother, an alcoholic paranoiac, is reported to have been in prison about 75 times. A very little alcohol is said to "make her crazy." She quarrels with her landlord, is suspicious of her neighbors, and in her tantrums "smashes everything." The father has served several terms, once for robbery, and has sometimes also paid a fine. The family very frequently moved, and the family circle has often been broken up by arrests and sentences. The children have suffered much from poverty.

II, 4 (son), 22 years old, had been arrested 6 times.

II, 7 (son), 20 years old, had been arrested 7 times.

II, 8 (girl), 18 years old, had been arrested 5 times.

II, 11 (boy), 14 years old, had been arrested 11 times.

All were sent several times to industrial schools or reformatories.

With such an environment we do not consider this chart any proof of the existence of criminal inheritance. As far as can be ascertained, all children seem to have normal mentality.

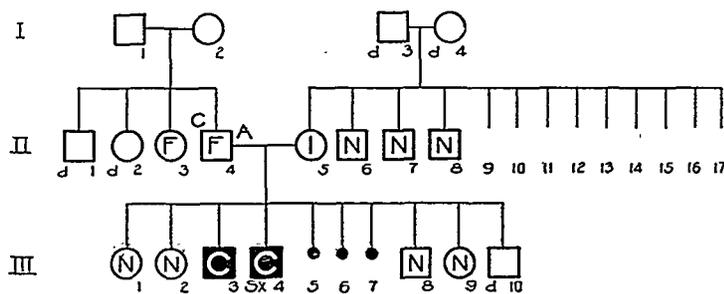


CHART VII

Chart VII represents a fearful home environment in which insanity, feeble-mindedness, alcoholism and criminality figured. However, even with the bad heredity expected from these factors, the four chil-

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dren who were taken from the home and brought up elsewhere have turned out well, while the two who were left in the home became criminalistic.

The father is said to have come from a well-to-do family and is said to have gone to school until 20 years old, but could not learn to read or write. He has been arrested many times for non-support and for fighting. The mother is in a hospital for the insane. She is said to have been peculiar, and has attempted suicide. The two boys have been living with the father in a rooming house. They have been very poor and mostly uncontrolled, the father working often at night.

III 4 (boy), one of the two who lived with his father, is a case either of mental defect or of psychosis. He is melancholy at times. His general physical condition is very poor. His delinquencies are much truancy, stealing, running away, sex offenses.

III 3, the older boy, who lives at home, has twice been sent to reform institutions on account of stealing. He is mentally much brighter.

This case demonstrates the relation between environment and heredity and the influence which one may have on the other.

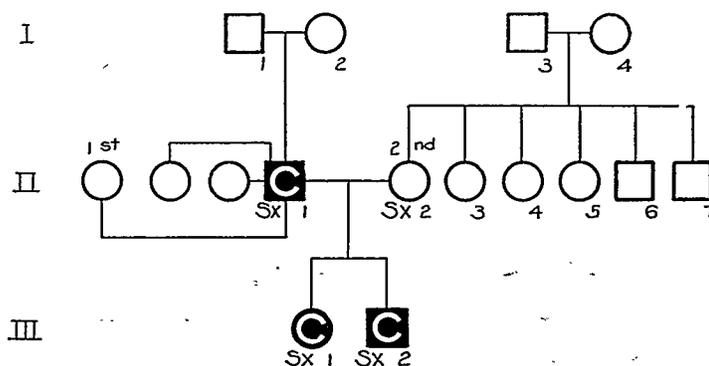


CHART VIII

Chart VIII represents a family in which sexual characteristics are precocious and dominating. The father served two prison terms, both for bigamy. He was an able man and well thought of by employers. Throughout his life the sex instincts predominated to the detriment of whatever work he attempted. The son and daughter showed very precocious sexual development. Such strong physical characteristics might easily dominate a nature even with normal mentality and good training. Placed as these children were, with poor home control, the precocious

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physical development was doubtless the most prominent factor in upsetting their equilibrium and causing their delinquencies.

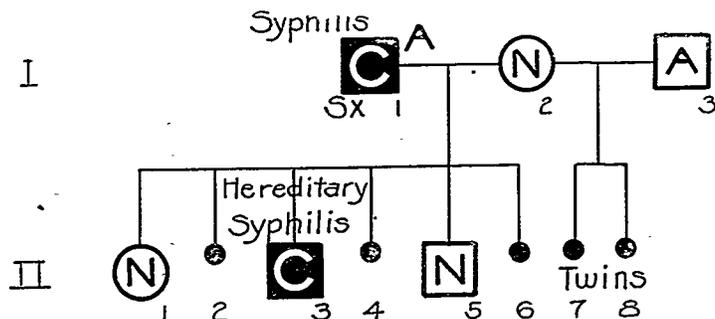


CHART IX

Chart IX shows syphilis in successive generations. The father (I, 1) was syphilitic, alcoholic and immoral; and brutal to his wife, who obtained a divorce.

The mother (I, 2) married again a man who was alcoholic and abusive, from whom she hoped to separate. She had two normal children, 4 miscarriages (probably due to syphilis), and one child with congenital syphilis.

This boy (II, 3) had various manifestations of the disease, his eyes being so badly affected at one time that he could see nothing. His delinquencies were at first truancy; later, stealing money at home, running away and again stealing. He was mentally normal.

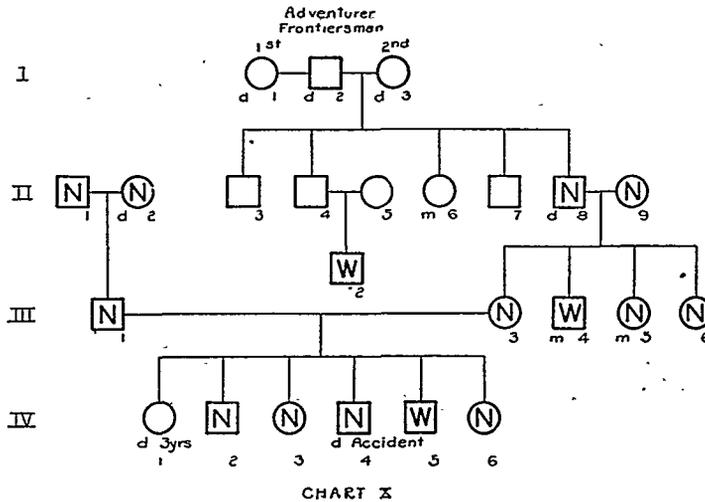
While the home conditions in this case part of the time were wretched, the boy had various opportunities for cultivating good interests. The congenital syphilis undoubtedly played an important part, since the boy was much of a sufferer from the secondary results. He felt his own impotence and wanted to be sent away.

Chart X has been interpreted as showing inheritance of criminality as a family trait, but with all the facts considered, it really is anything but a proof of heredity.

The great-grandfather (I, 2), a western pioneer, was extreme in his love of outdoor life. Two of his grandsons were rovers—one (III, 2) joined the navy; the second (III, 4) left home at 14 to seek a life of adventure. He, however, later settled down to a good life.

The boy (IV, 5) who is supposed to have inherited criminalistic instincts, was a bright boy of 14 years, fond of athletics and brought up in New York City. He had been associated with two older boys

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who had introduced him to sex affairs and had considerable influence over him. He would leave home at any time to go to them and would stay away for a day or two. He was a truant, a runaway, had stolen much, and had been used by others in sexual perversions. The parents knew nothing of his true relations with the boys. This had caused him much worry and anxiety, but had been kept from them. In the study of the case the trouble was revealed and as a result of a single interview the whole situation was corrected and the parents, who were competent to intelligently handle the situation, had no further trouble with the boy.

This case may represent several things—bad companions, perhaps some innate characteristics, much worry over his conduct, and a definite mental conflict. However, it shows no evidence of the existence of “hereditary criminal instincts.” The case is a good example of the danger of interpreting causation of human behavior from the bare symbols of a heredity chart.

Chart XI. This represents one mentally defective offender with a brother retarded in school and also an offender. There was an atrocious home environment, the excessive alcoholism and worthlessness of the parents very likely having mental defect as an underlying cause. In the light of much absence from school, poor physical conditions and the excessive use of tea and coffee, school retardation cannot be safely interpreted.

The father, a Jack-of-all-trades, stays away sometimes for months,

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and goes often on prolonged sprees. The mother, also excessive alcoholic, is illiterate and ignorant. They have both served sentences.

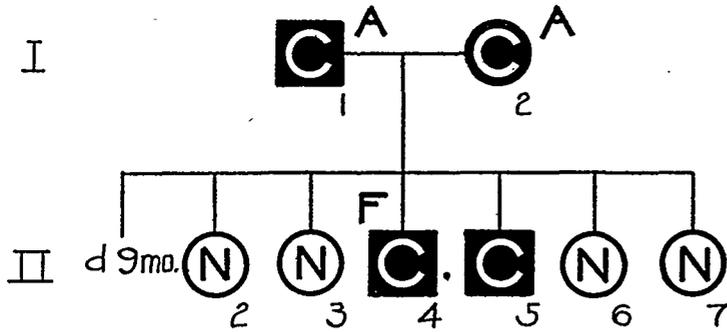


CHART XI

Father and mother and five children for a period of two months are said to have occupied one room and one bed.

II, 4 (boy), at 14 years had only reached the second grade—a mental defective. His delinquencies consisted of much truancy and larceny. He had been arrested many times.

II, 5 (boy), brighter than his brother, still reached only the fourth grade at 13 years. There was much truancy also in this case and later larceny. He was arrested several times.

II, 6 (girl), who had been placed in an orphan asylum, had reached only the second grade at ten years.

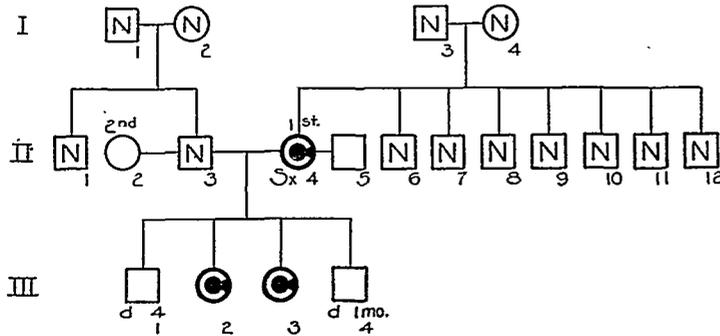


CHART XII

Chart XII represents perhaps the most interesting case found because the factor of environment may be largely ruled out.

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The father, II, 3, an Eastern man, married in California while on a business trip, a girl about whom he knew little, as she objected to his meeting her parents. When two of their children (III 2 and 3) were two and four years old, respectively, the father found that his wife was untrue to him and that she stole. They separated and the children were cared for by the father's family in a distant city until the youngest was 9 years old. At that time they ran away, the older one returning, the younger remaining away two days. After that they repeatedly ran away. The younger stayed out nights, and has been away for days, sleeping in porches and entrances. She was shot at while entering a flat at three o'clock in the morning. She and her sister have stolen repeatedly and in extraordinary ways. They have stolen milk from their neighbors' bottles and poured it out. They stole gloves from the delivery boy of a large department store and then threw them in the alley. Having invited guests to the house, they went through the pockets of their wraps and then started an alarm of having seen a thief in the house. The younger made dates with boys and became infatuated with a man, writing letters and notes trying to prove that he was in love with her. In the middle of her adolescent period the older girl settled down and became quite stable.

The interesting part of this history is that the father found, on looking up his wife's early history, that she had been obliged to leave her native town on account of her behavior. For this reason she did not wish her husband to know her family. This suggests the inheritance of criminal characteristics because unfavorable environmental conditions can be ruled out. The children had no recollection of their mother and knew little of her bad reputation.

Still, if we study this case further, we find that the mother was notably hysterical and excitable. We also find suggestive characteristics in the children. The younger, III, 2, who was the one seen and studied, lied without reason, and it was also characteristic of her stealing that it was needless. She was a dreamer, and was nervous and hysterical. She progressed in school largely by force. She was untidy and dirty in her personal appearance (a significant point in an adolescent girl). Her father always had to make her bathe and keep her linen clean. After passing through the early years of adolescence, she, too, was growing morally stable.

Altogether there is suggested a nervous basis of some kind, showing itself very definitely during adolescence in the daughters, for both the mother's and the girls' delinquencies—possibly of an hysterical nature. This seems so obvious that without such careful study as might elim-

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inate this factor, it would seem unjust to hold the chart up as proof of the existence of criminal inheritance.

SUMMARY.

In studying the selected 668 cases for evidence of criminalistic inheritance *per se*, it is necessary to exclude all cases with causative physical or mental defect, or causative environmental conditions. Until such conditions are eliminated no proof can be had of the direct inheritance of criminalism.

Careful enumeration of the direct causative factor in each case leads us to see that if we rule out all cases where the offender suffered from mental or physical defect or disease, and all cases where faulty development and faulty environment or mental aberration was a sufficient cause in itself for the criminalistic tendency, we have left only 15 cases which in the least suggest inheritance of criminalistic traits. Or take the study from the standpoint of indirect causations in heredity and we have the percentages given in the last vertical column on Chart III. This again leads, by elimination, to regarding only the 15 cases as even suggesting criminalistic inheritance. Individual study of these 15 cases enforces the opinion that here, too, various physical or mental factors are the real inheritance, and that criminalism may be implanted on these characteristics in succeeding generations. The case most suggestive of all is analyzed in connection with the last family chart.

All told, the indirect influence of heredity on criminalism in our cases appears to be that in 35 per cent there is predominantly a transmission of mental or physical defect, and that in 9 per cent such inheritance is partly responsible. This makes a total of 44 per cent in which bad heredity is indirectly responsible for crime.

CONCLUSIONS.

Returning to our original classification of the direct and indirect inheritance of criminalistic tendencies, we repeat that in the study of 1,000 cases we can find no proof of the existence of hereditary criminalistic traits, as such. Of course, we cannot absolutely deny such inheritance, but judging by our studies, we feel that careful observation elsewhere will bring forward evidence rather against such a theory than in favor of it.

On the other hand, through studies of the eugenists, and advances in medical and psychologic knowledge, crime will be found indirectly related to heredity in ways most important for society to recognize.

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The underlying foundations of criminalism are the evils to combat. As existing apart from definite and discoverable mental, physical or environmental causations of criminalistic behavior, we may regard the idea of bare criminalistic traits, especially in their hereditary aspects, as an unsubstantiated metaphysical hypothesis.