Reviews and Criticisms

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc

Part of the Criminal Law Commons, Criminology Commons, and the Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons

Recommended Citation

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology by an authorized editor of Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons.
REVIEWS AND CRITICISMS.

As is well known, legal theory has classified the observed forms of criminal procedure into two main types, which have been termed the accusatory and the inquisitorial types. The peculiar characteristics of the accusatory type are that the initiation of a criminal proceeding is left to the individual citizen and there can be no such proceeding without a prosecutor who assumes responsibility for the prosecution; that the trial has very largely the same form as that of a civil action, viz.; that of a contest between two parties and that the judge is essentially the umpire or decider of this contest. In the inquisitorial type, on the other hand, the detection and prosecution of the criminal is not left to private initiative but it is the duty of the judge, as representative of the sovereign, to conduct a secret inquiry to discover the criminal and then to establish his guilt, in the earlier forms of the type by securing his confession by torture if necessary and in the later forms by the so-called "legal proofs," that is certain kinds and qualities of evidence from which conviction necessarily followed. Neither of these types exists in its purity anywhere at the present day as they have been more or less assimilated to each other, each having borrowed certain elements from the other, so that all existing systems of procedure are, as related to this classification, mixed types. In general the accusatory type is characteristic of the English system of procedure and the inquisitorial of continental systems. The English system while retaining the initiative by a private prosecutor has adopted the expedient of having a public official charged with the conduct of the prosecution. The continental systems in general, while retaining the preliminary examination by a judge which is not public have adopted public trials to determine the question of guilt and the trial judges are distinct from the examining ones.

The present article is a consideration of the true function of the examining judge or magistrate. While those conversant with the English and American system of criminal procedure are not likely to admit that the continental systems are more scientific or better adapted to social needs, they manifestly have certain advantages over our own. Dr. Groeger's article is an interesting discussion of what is perhaps the most effective feature of the systems modeled on the inquisitorial type, the examining magistrate and is suggestive in many ways to those interested in criminal procedure.

Edward Lindsey.

Warren, Pa.
Because of the varied and changing aspects of the behavior of hystericals, it is no easy task to indicate briefly their characteristics. Nevertheless, Birnbaum bravely attempts to present some of their more significant mental features.

His experience has led him to conclude that when dealing with a case of false sex-accusation one can be quite certain, in a large number of cases, that the subject is suffering from hysteria. Analyzing closely the psychic manifestations of this disorder, the author concludes that what is most striking is the hysterical's marked affectivity. He is readily concordant, extremely irritable and superabundantly expressive. To these is added an imagination which is vivid, abnormally impressionable and active, and continually projecting its effects into consciousness. Abnormal suggestibility and auto-suggestibility are additional characteristics which make such natures susceptible to the ready acceptance of another person's or one's own suggestions. Egocentricity, or the overdeveloped tendency to keep oneself constantly in the foreground is also very noticeable. And, finally, in some more serious cases, there seems to exist a strong impulse to lie, to intrigue and to calumniate, together with a predominant pathological change in the moral sphere.

Birnbaum proceeds to demonstrate how the varied acts of those suffering from hysteria are explicable on the basis of these particular characteristics.

False sex accusations are founded, in the first place, on incorrect ideas. The whole thought-plexus is precipitated by a preponderance of emotional factors. Instead of understanding, criticism, calm reflection, and consideration being of assistance in behavior, all sorts of emotional influences—affects, moods and tempers, attractions and repulsions, wishes, hopes and fears—are the important determining factors with the hysterical. All the intellectual processes undergo extensive changes and falsifications, with the result that his attitude toward the world and his fellows becomes strongly colored. Under these falsifying influences, memory, the keystone of testimony, suffers most, and in some cases so severely as to depart entirely from the realm of reality. The lability of memory material, with its omissions and supplementations, adds another kink to the already distorted mental data.

The products of these emotional, falsifying influences often make themselves evident when erotic impulses are active. An affected imagination will falsify perceptions and memories, experiences of the present and of the past; it will manufacture phantasies entirely foreign to truth and reality, especially where eroticism is more or less dominant. Often the least bit of love-adventure will offer the hysterical sufficient material to yield a story of sex assault replete with most minute detail. Yet, although the author mentions the importance of the erotic element in the mosaic of hysteria, especially
in young women, he cautions the reader that the same element may be found as well in normal individuals, imbeciles, hebephrenics, etc.

Birnbaum divides false sex-accusers into two groups: (a) Habituals, and (b) Occasionals. The first group is still further divisible into two types: (1) the conscious, deliberate falsifiers, whose main characteristics, aside from those already mentioned, are unsocial impulses, tendencies to lie and to deceive, to intrigue and to defame. They have marked pathological defects in the sphere of morality, a rather predominant interest in the sexual, and in them the "ruling passion" is sometimes observed to be revenge and jealousy. The second type is a more pathological one, because the subject's actions are unconsciously impelled. Aside from weakened intellectual power, the hysterical of this type is rather abnormally suggestible and auto-suggestible—as a result of which he transforms the conceivable into reality, the thought into accomplished fact, the merely desired or feared occurrence into one of positive certainty. These subjective conversions finally lead to insane fantasies, and the subjects suffering more severely allege having experienced all sorts of sex relations, mentioning particular individuals, places and details. The stimulus here need be only the smallest amount of gentlemanly attention for the hysterical to complicate and multiply it into an unusual story of intense affection full of sexual experiences. What next but to imagine oneself mistreated, neglected, despised and disillusioned? The natural sequence is court action.

There is an intermediate type between (1) and (2) possessing partial attributes of both.

Among those in group (b), the occasionals, of course the same fundamental characteristics of the hysterical are observable. One notes the existence of a pathological affectivity, imagination, suggestibility, auto-suggestibility, etc., and the activity of these are very similar to those in group (a). The effect of pathological day-dreaming is particularly marked with these cases. Dreamed experiences are readily transformed into realities. Menstruation is also a causative factor in the appearance of sexual dream states. Cases submerged in "Dämmerzustände" (twilight states) offer fertile soil for the sowing of all sorts of false notions due to disturbances of the processes of consciousness. This is true also of pathological alcoholic conditions, of hypnotic "twilight" states, of the clouded consciousness in those suffering from narcosis, etc. An important form of prison psychosis manifests itself in the false sex-accusation of the police representative, or the prosecutor. The prisoner's ability to discriminate memories of real experiences from mere dreams and wishes is quite poor. Here the examiner must be certain not confuse this type of individual with that of the simulator, nor with that group of inmates who, in a spirit of revenge, are ever ready consciously to lend themselves to the concoction of any story which may relieve their supposed enemy, not only of power and prestige, but also of livelihood and even life.

So much for the descriptive aspect. Birnbaum next considers the question of the development of the subjective conditions leading finally to false sex-accusation. He observes that in some cases the
development is very sudden (twilight states, deliria, etc.); in others, quite gradual (pathological auto-suggestibility, "uncensored" imagery), and that an "incubation" period (utilizing Cramer's apt term) may ensue between the time of stimulation and later expression.

He mentions as the principal predisposing factors leading to this disorder the female character and pubertal changes. As secondary causes, he enumerates menstruation, pregnancy, all possible physical and mental impairments due to severe alcoholism, overstrain, weakness as a result of ill health, emotional irritation, etc.

Regarding the social significance of this condition, he quotes Brouardel's statement (1907) that 60-80 per cent of these accusations are without foundation and that the activities of a large portion of those affected are seriously harmful to any number of innocent people.

The task of criminal psychology is here an important and difficult one. First of all, subjectively, an intense study must be made into the exact nature of the patient's condition and into those pathological hysterical factors which date back in the history of the case. Then, objectively, the story as told by the subject must be carefully analyzed from the point of view of accuracy and plausibility. For substantiatory data a physical examination may be found necessary. Birnbaum honestly emphasizes the great difficulties to be encountered in obtaining the truth while attempting to make an accurate diagnosis, even though the examination be most thorough. He advises a cautious skepticism toward sex-accusations in general—at least, as far as children and young people are concerned. He insists upon treatment which is individual, and concludes with remarks concerning the criminal responsibility of the hysterical, the determination of which should depend upon the seriousness of the subject's mental changes.

In the course of the article, Birnbaum describes twelve cases, most of them quoted from other authors.

S (1)MUEL C KOHNS, Director Psychopathic Dept. Chicago House of Correction.


This article may be regarded as a sane one, both theoretically and practically, among the many contributions on the much mooted question of free-will and determinism.

Lobedank sounds the keynote to his whole discussion in the first paragraph by presenting the following picture to the reader: "Behind iron bars a young man with coarse features is resting on a hard bed. He is the son of a criminal and an alcoholic prostitute. He grew up in bad environment and had many previous convictions. This time he has been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for highway robbery and serious assault." Were his actions the result
of a free-will or were they the natural mechanical consequences of certain rigid laws of cause and effect? He immediately draws swords with Kohler on the definition of the purpose of punishment. Kohler states that "To suffer punishment is a man's expiation for having acted in a certain manner when he could and should have acted otherwise. Atonement occurs through the channel of pain and suffering, for suffering removes one's guilt." Lobedank takes exception to this explanation, first, because of the free-will element contained therein, and secondly, he denies that "suffering removes guilt," maintaining that an individual's thought, volition and action are determined by the mechanism of the brain and the conditions of the environment.

The whole work then resolves itself into a discussion of free-will and determinism in relation to the problem of punishment. The very attractive title proves disappointing:

* The first portion of the article is devoted to purely theoretical considerations, the rest being given over to more practical applications of the author's mechanistic ideas. There is a chapter on "Volition and Thought," another on "Objections to Determinism," another on "Responsibility and Punishment," another on "Irresponsibility," and one on "Mental Deficiency." The last three are by far the most pregnant with valuable suggestions and important conclusions.

1. Introduction: Lobedank here emphasizes the fact that our mental life is not an interaction of the separate entities of mind and matter. The conception of a psychophysical parallelism is also untenable since one must postulate the existence of two distinct factors, the purely physical and the purely psychic. Spiritualists cancel entirely the physical aspects of human behavior, while Ostwald reduces all phases of mental activity to a modification of initial energy. Nor is psychic activity purely a function of matter. These views are impossible. Mental activity as these men attempt to explain it is purely a figment of the imagination unsubstantiated by the actual facts. To Lobedank mind and matter are indissolubly related every act of mentation, the whole state of being representing "conscious-content" (consciousness and its content).

2. On Volition and Thought: All we have to prove is whether in a given instant a person can act thus or so. For this purpose an analysis of mental phenomena is necessary beginning with sensations and proceeding through ideas, judgment and reasoning. We find then that fundamentally there are two factors really, the stimulator and the stimulated, or in other words, the excitation and the nervous system.

To comprehend the nature and activity of sensations, perceptions and ideas in an individual we must study the nature and activity of his association processes. The larger the number of associative connections between sense and association areas, the more will all his activity tend to become purposeful and deliberate. Whereas in the newly born child action immediately follows stimulation, in older people numerous ideas enter the path between exci-
ation and expression. Will results from this interference of the natural arc by alien ideas.

Thought and volition are determined by the given conditions. How a person thought, willed and acted at a given moment indicates only the character of the “Weltabschnitt” at the time.

As normally constituted my ideas will be so associated as to result in correct moral action when the proper ethical idea predominates. Moral freedom does not mean that I can willfully perform the right or wrong, but only that I am not prevented from acting right. And because of the existence of this condition I am expected to act morally. Alcohol or other toxic liquors may so affect association complexes as to increase the relative power or potency of egoistic ideas. Under such circumstances of course, an act of “free-will” is out of the question, even when the effects of the alcohol are but slight.

That all the impulses of man are to be regarded as mechanistic, free of consciousness is absurd.

According to Kern the brain is primarily a coordinating, associating organ. To this viewpoint, Lobedank takes exception. Thought he would classify as a mental function—one which is more potential than active. Its potentiality lies in its associative possibilities. To Kern thought is not a process but merely a phenomenon. With this Lobedank does not agree. To him pure thought is an abstraction. He disagrees that the thought function can be free in its behavior. He also takes exception to Kern’s interaction tendency and wonders why he has so very little, if anything, to say regarding the influence and force of the emotions other than merely mentioning them as the natural accompaniments of certain ideational complexes.

3. Objections to Determinism: Quite a number maintain that determinism views man as a being without reason. But since reason is no special elevated capacity in itself, a “holy of holies,” a coloring forced upon it by the metaphysicians, but is merely another form of the process of association, the descent from its exalted pedestal is no great loss. Some state that determinism makes a mere machine of man. That is untrue. The analogy is fallacious. Human beings are not degraded or reduced to automata.

“I think, therefore I am.” That is true enough. But “ I know that I think, I know that I make decisions, therefore I am a free agent” is not strictly logical. “Inner experience” can be very treacherous here. My ego is not something apart and separate but merely a portion of the whole organization. As a whole is determined so also is my ego.

There are no “higher powers” directing the will.

According to Kohler the will is a selective faculty, selecting the one and rejecting the other. But it is not the will, rather the acts of judgment, reasoning, discrimination, recall, mixed with affectively tinged constellations which serve as the motives for action. The will as such is merely the final fiat to action possessing no element of judgment or discrimination.
The will or the power to will is only one portion of all mental activity.

4. Responsibility and Punishment: He makes one of the most important statements in his whole pamphlet when he indicates that it is just as false to speak of a free will as of a predetermined will. The reviewer would go further and complete the thought by emphasizing that we are neither absolutely free agents nor are we absolutely helpless puppets, blind tools in the hands of natural laws. There is a happy medium, however. A careful examination will show that almost all of our actions are partly determined and partly free.

"He is responsible whose adaptability to the conditions of his environment is not disturbed by disease" (p. 53). But one cannot draw a clear line of demarcation, using this statement as a criterion, between those who deserve punishment and those who require therapeutic treatment.

Punishment acts as an inhibitor of future egoistic, anti-social activity. But with the feeble-minded it is useless since it cannot raise their intelligence level. Some fear of uncomfortable consequences following a wrong deed can be instilled in those morally defective only. (He takes a different view of the matter however, with regard to the feeble-minded, in his chapter on mental defectives.)

Some of his conclusions relating to the moral concepts of the feeble-minded are not quite in harmony with our experiences here. Our experimental findings, soon to be published, seem to indicate that a fairly large proportion of morons know right from wrong, but rarely, if ever, is this knowledge based on any reasonable amount of individual thought. It seems largely a matter of imitation and reproduction.

5. Irresponsibility: This chapter is pregnant with practical suggestions, limited space however, prohibits any full exposition of all of them.

In the future our criminal procedure will very probably take this form: (a) An exact determination of the anti-social act; (b) an examination to learn whether there exists any disturbance of the individual's social adaptability; (c) Is this disturbance temporary or permanent? (d) What are the causes which produced it? Wherein is it rooted? (e) How important a factor is heredity in this case? (f) What can a study of his whole social milieu contribute to the proper treatment of the individual?

Merely to regard all crime the result of disease or not, is hardly sufficient. Types and grades must be differentiated for the purpose of a healthy, normal prognosis.

He maintains that anti-social behavior should be studied anthropo-biologically. "The judge of the future must not only be a jurist, interpreting the law according to formula, but he must be a man whose education has been basically psychological and biological" (p. 57).

For the clinically normal criminal, punishment is the best method of correction. Murderers who are normal and healthy from
the clinical point of view, should be punished with death. (A most discordant and disappointing note in what seems a rather sane article. This savage, nerve-shattering method of saving (?) the offender is suggested because “capital punishment is the surest and cheapest means of protecting society from such persons” (p. 58). And yet in the very next paragraph he maintains that the best method of preventing crime is to combat its causes. Well then,—if we must kill, if we must give free play to our vengeance, let us murder the causes, not the individual.)

He suggests “social sanitaria” for those laboring under some temporary form of social illness.

Morality is a natural development of community life. It is the outgrowth of society’s natural reaction to violations of its codes. And it is due to this factor that the fear of immoral action has become instilled. “Without fear of that to which morality is opposed, there is no morality” (p. 59). (Many authorities would take very serious exception to this tremendously broad statement. Is it always a matter of fear of punishment which makes one hesitate before committing an offence? Is it not sometimes a deep feeling of social obligation, or some form of fellow-sympathy, which transcends anything on the fear level?)

A healthy normal individual and a paralytic for example, ought not to be judged from the same viewpoints. True the acts of both are determined, but there is a difference. In the former case impulses are present midst others of social benefit, whereas in the latter, through nervous disease, the activity of moral ideas is severely hampered.

He discusses the value and some of the short-comings of paragraph 13 of a proposed German Criminal Code: “An action is free from punishment when the actor, at the time the offence was committed suffered from some disturbance of consciousness or from the disordered functioning of his mental processes, on account of which he lacked the ability to understand the gravity of his offense, or if he did possess this insight, a lack of ability to act accordingly.” In dealing with a case then, only two facts would have to be determined; first, ability to understand his act; secondly, ability to act properly.

In this whole discussion he drives his idea of punishment slightly too far. In fact he clearly reveals the unconscious influence of the “lex talionis” in the development of his thoughts regarding punitive methods.

6. Mental Defectives: There is no such thing as a reduced free will. We are not warranted, under all circumstances, to place mental deficiency on the same basis as reduced responsibility. Just because a person’s intelligence is lower does not necessarily mean that punishment will have less of an effect on strengthening his inhibitions. The feeble-minded are capable of profiting by punishment. They should be punished. The insane, the mentally diseased should not.

He indicates that not only ought we reduce the severity of punishment in the more serious offences of the irresponsible, but
this should be supplemented by such treatment as would keep the individual from a further repetition of the act when stimulated as before.

Murderers should be executed because a stay in a "social-sanitarium" would not act as a sufficient deterrent.

True, our actions are determined, nevertheless that does not make us all irresponsible. He emphasizes that the maintaining of such belief inevitably forces one into "reductio ad absurdum."

The author's lack of a proper insight into the mental capacities and the mental activities of the feeble-minded is quite evident throughout this chapter.

He seems slightly opposed to institutionalizing.

He advocates obtaining legal recognition of a middle group, the borderline cases, those who fall between the responsible and the irresponsible, and advises the establishment of "safe-keeping" institutions for the habitual, unimprovable criminals.

7. Conclusion: In closing he makes a strong plea for judges broadly educated in criminal-biology. Time is wasted on speculative psychology, but such subjects in general science as anatomy, physiology, psychology, psychiatry, etc., will help the future jurists considerably in understanding how human beings "live and suffer."

SAMUEL C., KOES.

Psychopathic Department, Chicago House of Correction.


This volume, by a well-known professor of Sociology, promises to be of great usefulness and worth to students and teachers. Here we find in one section six chapters, aggregating almost 150 pages, devoted to the subject of social evolution. It is in the evolution of institutions, as well as of organisms, from simple beginnings that we arrive at an understanding of the present status of the institution and of the methods of dealing with it.

Again, the subject of social control comprises six chapters, aggregating 110 pages. It is in this section that we find the problems of crime discussed. The whole subject is treated from the point of view of the best available scientific data relating to the nature of criminals and with reference also to the most reliable data relating to punishment and education for both the adaptation and re-adaptation of individuals to the social order.

Criminal behavior is, in part, the result of a feeble-mindedness or a lighter form of subnormality, or again it is an expression of those unfortunate habits or dispositions that have been created in our youth in consequence of their repeated reaction to unfavorable circumstances. Hence the method of treatment of delinquents becomes clear after a diagnosis has once been made. It is a matter of complete and permanent segregation; or, in those cases in which a predisposition has been acquired, the problem of treatment is one of re-education.

The author strikes a high note when he writes on The Training of Criminal Lawyers. Their education should be such as to give them
REVIEWS AND CRITICISMS

791

a broad social outlook and such as to equip them with the habit of observing the peculiarities of individuals in relation to their behavior. Such a lawyer should, to this end, be trained in Sociology, Psychology and Education, otherwise he is likely to make the fatal mistake of attempting to fit all into the same mold.

Northwestern University.

ROBERT H. GAULT.


This is an extremely attractive little book that presents in popular form some of the broader ideas of the physician and of the medico-psychologist of today toward the motives of human conduct, the rational basis of religion, the psycho-analytical movement, educational problems, and instincts and ideals. The main sources of motives Dr. Putnam finds in those dispositions or habits which remain in the background of our psycho-physical organization as a result of the multiple experiences of our daily life and also in the instincts or natural dispositions with which we are born. In other words, our fundamental motives are not the particular thoughts, ideas, images, emotions, feelings, etc., that seem to be immediately connected with particular forms of behavior as in a causal series, but in a disposition or a system of dispositions, natural or acquired, or both natural and acquired, which, wholly or in part, explain the appearance of particular thoughts, emotions, ideas, etc. This is a particularly helpful viewpoint for the criminologists. Behavior, normal or anti-social, is largely determined by a natural predisposition or by an acquired predisposition, or by both.

Northwestern University.

ROBERT H. GAULT.


This little book presents in a popular and very attractive form for the general reader many problems that are of fundamental interest to those who are dealing in a practical way with juvenile delinquents. Recognizing the fact that many of our juvenile court cases are feeble-minded or in a less degree subnormal, this book should contribute greatly to an intelligent understanding of individual cases.

The book comprises ten chapters, the titles of which are as follows: Measuring Rods for Children; Varieties of Backward Children; Typical Retardation Due to Physical Defects; Minds in Straight Jackets; Bad and Backward; Retardation Due to Environment; The Backward Child in the Home; Clinical Diagnosis of Backward Children; The Teacher's Diagnosis; The Teacher and Equipment for a Special Class.

Northwestern University.

ROBERT H. GAULT.
OFFICIAL INDEX TO STATE LEGISLATION: A cumulative, numerical and subject index and a complete record of all bills introduced in State legislatures. New York Law Reporting Co., 1915.

This work is compiled and published for the co-operating state libraries and legislative departments, under the direction of the joint committee on National Legislative Information Service of the National Association of State Libraries and the American Association of Law Libraries; By George S. Godard, State Librarian of Connecticut, Chairman; F. O. Poole, Librarian, Association of the Bar of the City of New York, Secretary; Charles F. D. Belden, State Librarian of Massachusetts; Herbert O. Brigham, State Librarian of Rhode Island; John A. Lapp, Director of Indiana Bureau of Legislative Information; A. J. Small, Law and Legislative Department, Iowa State Library.

The publishers announce that they will furnish promptly and at reasonable rates copies of bills, resolutions, amendments, committee reports, or any legislative record in any state legislature or in Congress, and that they are prepared to give special attention to orders for copies of all bills on any selected subject or subjects.

Reports of action are taken on a single bill or on all bills on any subject or subjects (including reports by committees' hearings, changes in position on the calendar, passage on first, second or third reading, final passage by either house, and final action by the Executive) and can be sent by mail or telegram in advance of the publication of the weekly issue of the Index.

The present volume consists of two parts. In Part I is the subject index. The arrangement is (a) by subjects alphabetically, (b) under each subject by states alphabetically, (c) under each state, the senate first and then the assembly or house, and then (d) under each house the bills first and then the resolutions numerically by introduction numbers.

The classification tentatively adopted by the Committee covers all legislation of general or public interest, is based upon a study of all classifications now in use, and has been designed to meet the practical requirements of daily use by legislators, legislative reference libraries, and lawyers. Private and local bills are not classified. Changes in the classification will be made whenever improvement can be made.

In Part II is the general index. The arrangement is (a) by states alphabetically, (b) under each state the senate first and then the assembly or house; (c) under each house the bills first and then the resolutions numerically by introduction numbers.

The entry for each bill and resolution gives first the bill number; second, the date of introduction, third, the name of the member introducing the bill, fourth, the subject, fifth, the effect of the proposed legislation or the short title of the bill, and sixth, the position or status of the bill on the date shown at the head of the column.

In 1916, until June 1st, the Index will be cumulated and published weekly and each new issue will contain everything that previous issues have contained, with changes in position of bills and new bills introduced subsequent to the previous issue. Weekly supplements will be issued from June 1st until the publication of the complete
annual number about August 1st, in which will be shown the status of bills when the legislatures adjourned. After the issue of the complete annual number, weekly cumulative supplements will be issued when any legislature is in regular or special session.

If identical bills are introduced in both branches, whenever possible, the corresponding number in the other branch will be given in parentheses, thus: (A-224). When amended bills are reprinted, the last print number will be given in parentheses in the position column thus: (S P-1722.)

References to the sections, articles, chapters, etc., of existing statutes amended or repealed will be given whenever possible following the effect of the bill, thus: (Am. Section 14, Art. 3 Ch. 147 R. S. 1907.)

Northwestern University.  

ROBERT H. GAULT.