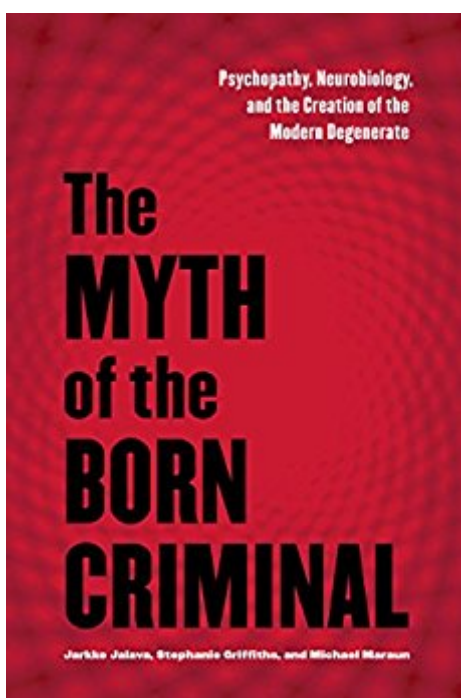


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The Myth Of The Born Criminal: Psychopathy, Neurobiology, And The Creation Of The Modern Degenerate



Synopsis

By some estimates, there are as many as twelve million psychopaths in the United States alone. Cold-blooded, remorseless, and strangely charismatic, they commit at least half of all serious and violent crimes. Supposedly, most serial killers are psychopaths, as, surprisingly, are large numbers of corporate executives. They seem to be an inescapable, and fascinating, threat in our midst. But is psychopathy a brain disorder, as many scientists now claim? Or is it just a reflection of modern society's deepest fears? *The Myth of the Born Criminal* offers the first comprehensive critique of the concept of psychopathy from the eighteenth-century origins of the born-criminal theory to the latest neuroimaging, behavioural genetics, and statistical studies. Jarkko Jalava, Stephanie Griffiths, and Michael Maraun use their expertise in neuropsychology, psychometrics, and criminology to dispel the myth that psychopathy is a biologically-based condition. Deconstructing the emotive language with which both research scientists and reporters describe the psychopaths among us, they explain how the idea of psychopathy offers a comforting neurobiological solution to the mystery of evil. A stunning merger of rigorous science and clear-sighted cultural analysis, *The Myth of the Born Criminal* is for anyone who wonders just what truth or fiction lurks behind the study of psychopathy.

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Customer Reviews

Very good stuff in these pages. However the debate on this topic is far from over. Let it be known however that these three authors did an exceptional job in refuting Marta Stout and ME Thomas' books. As to Robert Hare...I couldn't say. But let's just say that if there are sociopaths then they only constitute 1 percent of the population at most and they certainly do not write books like the supposed self-confessed sociopath ME Thomas. This book is great though and hopefully many people will read it.

A terrible disappointment. There's plenty of bad books about psychopathy out there, but the author's credentials and another review convinced me (a forensic psychologist) this book would have some good critical analysis. Not at all. There's actually almost no critical analysis of the science of psychopathy research, but plenty of "here's the history a ways someone misused the psychopathy word" as if that proved anything. What little critical argument there is is entirely unpersuasive. E. G.: Apparently the author thinks that psychopathy could not count as a "real" disorder unless it is a single biological phenomenon with no subcomponents and impervious to cultural context. No mental disorder, and certainly no personality construct, lives up to that standard, and personality researchers couldn't care less. I am sorry to have wasted my money on this book.

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