undisputed that prolonged exposure to low doses of radiation causes mutation. Increasing ambient radiation levels affect human mutation rates; indeed, since 1945 and the advent of the nuclear weapon, some sources report a 50-fold increase in background radiation. It is difficult to quantify the resultant mutagenesis, because it can not be isolated and clearly distinguished from other causes of mutation.

To conclude, while many industrial pollutants are capable of causing genetic damage that is hereditary, the risks have not yet been shown to be significant. This may change in the near future, for atmospheric pollution is increasing and is already thought to be affecting cancer rates in the Northern Hemisphere. Recent data shows that about 20% of all spontaneous abortions bear chromosomal aberrations, but more epidemiological screening and recording of birth defects are needed if a comprehensive evaluation of risks from environmental mutagens is to be made.

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BOOK REVIEW

Born to Crime: The Genetic Causes of Criminal Behavior by Lawrence Taylor (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984). Pp. x, 179. $27.95.

It is unusual when anyone writes a book of this sort. It is noteworthy when the author is himself a criminal defense lawyer and a former Professor of Law at a Catholic university.

Lawrence Taylor commences by providing U.S. Department of Justice figures for the period 1972-1981 which show that violent crimes increased nearly 75% in that period, and cites a Gallup Poll which found that crime was viewed as the most serious problem facing America. He goes on to discuss prevalent misconceptions about the causes of crime, "rehabilitation," and so on, which contribute to the problem.

The prevailing view is that crime results from a bad environment, and that poverty, unemployment, and discrimination are the actual causes of crime. Taylor points out that the crime rate was actually much lower in previous years when poverty, unemployment, and discrimination were far greater.

The vast majority of crimes are committed by recidivists. The probability of rearrest for a felony is about 85-90%, and even higher for the most serious felonies. Many people assume that when the crime rate rises the number of individuals committing crimes has increased. Taylor suggests an alternative explanation--that the number of criminals stays fairly constant, but that the "hard-core" career criminals commit greater numbers of criminal acts--which obviously does not reflect well on our criminal justice system.

The author discusses twin and adoption studies to illustrate the many facets of human behavior influenced by heredity. Then he turns to research on a number of biological factors related to criminal behavior, such as