



# The Anatomy of Violence: The Biological Roots of Crime

By Adrian Raine

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Passionate, courageous, and at times controversial, *The Anatomy of Violence* is a ground-breaking work that will challenge your core human values and perspectives on violence.

Why do some kids from good environments become mass murderers? Is there actually such a thing as a natural born killer? And, if so, what can we do to identify and treat those born with a predisposition to criminal behavior? For more than three decades Adrian Raine has sought answers to these questions through his pioneering research on the biological basis for violence. In this book, he presents the growing body of evidence that shows how genetics and environmental influences can conspire to create a criminal brain, and how something as seemingly innocent as a low resting heart rate can give rise to a violent personality. Bristling with ingenious experiments, surprising data, and shocking case studies, this is also a clear-eyed inquiry into the thorny ethical issues this science raises about prevention and punishment.

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## The Anatomy of Violence: The Biological Roots of Crime By Adrian Raine Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #182995 in Books
- Brand: Vintage Books
- Published on: 2014-02-11
- Released on: 2014-02-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .98" w x 5.20" l, 1.01 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 496 pages

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### Editorial Review

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Once reviled because of its ties to eugenics, the idea that criminal impulses are rooted in biology has been reinvigorated by the Human Genome Project. Criminologist Raine applauds a growing cross-disciplinary approach and the growth of neurocriminology that looks at the biological and social factors behind criminal behavior, but his focus is firmly on the biological. Raine explores famous criminal cases, from Ted Bundy to the Unabomber to more obscure figures, and offers compelling research, including brain scans of psychopaths, schizophrenics, and others, to demonstrate the hard science behind some criminal and antisocial behavior from domestic violence to murder. Raine also analyzes research on adoption and twins to study the different impacts of nature versus nurture, as well as environmental factors that affect brain development, including nutrition, smoking, and drug abuse. Finally, Raine explores the practical implications of neurocriminology on the legal system, public health issues, and the future treatment of criminal and antisocial behavior. Although the topic will certainly continue to provoke controversy, Raine offers a highly accessible look at the latest research on the biology behind criminal behavior. --Vanessa Bush

Review

### Praise for Adrian Raine's *The Anatomy of Violence*

**A *New Scientist* Best Book of 2013**

**Winner of The Athenaeum of Philadelphia's Annual Literary Award**

“Provocative. . . . [Raine] makes a good case that certain genetic, neurological, and physiological factors do predict violent behavior. . . . He argues, convincingly, that . . . benign and relatively cheap interventions could have huge social benefits.”

—*New York Times Book Review*

“Well-written and engaging. . . . Mr. Raine reminds us of all the interesting things we do know about genes, brains and the environment that can tilt someone toward anti-social behavior. . . . A good read. What makes it something more is Mr. Raine's contention that violence is a public-health issue and that this forces upon society some uncomfortable ideas about possible interventions.”

—*The Wall Street Journal*

“Lively, engaging. . . . A convincing case that violent criminals are biologically different from the rest of us. . . . [Raine] has the research at his fingertips—not surprising, since he carried out much of it—and makes a compelling case that society needs to grapple with the biological underpinnings of violent crime just as vigorously as the social causes, if not more so.”

—*New Scientist*

“Anyone who truly seeks an answer to questions about nature vs. nurture should read Raine's book. *The Anatomy of Violence* includes many interesting studies, with provocative findings. He also raises important philosophical questions about what we could, and perhaps *should*, do with what we're learning.”

—*Psychology Today*

“Readable, and at times controversial. . . . [*The Anatomy of Violence*] is worth reading by anyone who has an interest in violence and criminal behavior, not because it provides definitive answers, but for its value in

setting the stage for ongoing thought and discussion.”

—*Washington Independent Review of Books*

“Are ‘criminal tendencies’ hard-wired or acquired? . . . Psychologist Adrian Raine argues the biological case, marshalling swathes of findings and case studies of murderers and rapists. . . . Provocative and bristling with data.”

—*Nature*

“Groundbreaking. . . . Never before has a ‘map of the criminal mind’ been written about so convincingly. . . . Raine offers us the most compelling look to date at the connection between human genetics and human acts of violence. . . . *The Anatomy of Violence* will convince even the most skeptical that there is a genetic or biological cause for the violence exhibited by psychopaths across all cultures. . . . *The Anatomy of Violence* is an astonishingly accessible account of all the major elements—environmental, social, biochemical, psychological, and neurological—related to crime and human violence, leading us to the conclusion that yes, some people are natural born killers.”

—*New York Journal of Books*

“An extremely informative, thoughtful and illuminating book . . . a tour de force.”

—David P Farrington, *Psychological Medicine*

“Fascinating. . . . The message that ought to be taken from this book is that criminality should be seen as a public health problem. Excellent child nutrition, strict controls on the use of heavy metals, classes in parenting and extra learning support for children and parents from difficult backgrounds. . . . Raine’s book represents a compelling argument that they are not optional extras, boom-time luxuries, but measures that have the potential to save countless billions, and countless lives.”

—*The New Statesman*

“A passionately argued, well-written, and fascinating take on the biology of violence and its legal and ethical implications.”

—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“Compelling research. . . . Although the topic will certainly continue to provoke controversy, Raine offers a highly accessible look at the latest research on the biology behind criminal behavior.”

—*Booklist*

“An exhaustive, unvarnished survey of what is known about the neurobiological correlates of physical violence. It is deeply informative and it makes for disquieting reading. It wisely refrains from claiming a single cause for the problem or advocating a single solution. It is an indispensable reference.”

—Antonio Damasio, author of *Descartes’ Error* and *Self Comes to Mind*

“Important. . . . A thorough yet sparkling, erudite but beautifully written account. . . . Raine discusses complex scientific and ethical issues and illustrates them by drawing on a series of famous, sometimes unsettling case studies, thereby making scientific knowledge more accessible to a wide audience. What emerges is a rich picture of the complexities of human violence. The book is gripping from start to finish.”

—Stephanie van Goozen, Professor of Psychology, Cardiff University

“[*The Anatomy of Violence*] is not only for students of this topic, but for any inquiring mind. It is just simply captivating, both emotionally and intellectually.”

—Diana Fishbein, Ph.D., Senior Fellow and Scientist, Transdisciplinary Science and Translational

Prevention Program, RTI International

“Indispensable. . . . A highly readable, often gripping account of how our biology affects our violence. The book’s great success is that it makes *how* we learned about crime and the brain as exciting as *what* we have learned. If we take this book seriously, criminology can move much closer to solving some of the biggest mysteries we face.”

—Lawrence W. Sherman, Wolfson Professor of Criminology, Director, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge

“At once highly educational and surprisingly entertaining. . . . An easy, highly enjoyable, and richly rewarding read. The significant social, biological, and legal aspects of violent behavior make it a virtual minefield of sensitive and controversial issues.”

—Joe P. Newman, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison

“A great read. . . . This is a book that will make you reflect on how you personally and society more generally views and responds to antisocial behavior. Is it time to think of violence as a disease, where rehabilitation takes precedence over punishment, and where prevention may be the only real cure? Read the book, and then you be the judge.”

—Mark S. Frankel, Ph.D., Director, Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

“Courageous, brilliant, and provocative. . . . Based on the latest scientific evidence Raine poses the fundamental question, Where does society draw the line between the effects of nature and nurture on brain function?”

—Larry W. Swanson, Ph.D., University Professor and Appleman Professor of Biological Sciences, Neurology, and Psychology, University of Southern California

“With *The Anatomy of Violence*, Raine brings the full force of his pioneering research, clear-eyed analysis, and sound policy prescriptions to our violence problem in America. Get ready for a tour de force in science, and one hell of a gripping read!”

—Brandon C. Welsh, professor of criminology, Northeastern University, author of *Saving Children from a Life of Crime*

"Anytime I need to know *anything* about the biology of crime, I go straight away to Adrian Raine. . . . Indispensable reading for students, researchers, practitioners, and policy makers."

—Terrie Moffitt, professor, Duke University and King's College London

## About the Author

Adrian Raine is the Richard Perry University Professor of Criminology, Psychiatry, and Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, and a leading authority on the biology of violence. After leaving secondary school to become an airline accountant, he abandoned his financial career and spent four years as a prison psychologist to understand why some individuals become violent psychopaths while others do not.

## Users Review

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**Kenneth Roberts:**

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