1. Define Forensic Psychology and discuss the functions of a forensic psychologist.

Ans: Forensic psychology is the interaction of the practice or study of psychology and the law. Psychologists interested in this line of applied work may be found working in prisons, jails, rehabilitation centers, police departments, law firms, schools, government agencies, or in private practice, to name a few. They may work directly with attorneys, defendants, offenders, victims, pupils, families, or with patients within the state's corrections or rehabilitation centers. Other psychologists interested in forensic psychology focus on the study of psychology and the law. They may work in colleges, universities, government agencies, or in other settings interested in researching and examining the interaction of human behavior, criminology, and the legal system. Psychologists working in forensic psychology often come from a wide variety of education, training, and work experiences. All hold a doctoral degree in a field of psychology. Some graduate training programs now offer specializations in the field. Some of these psychologists also have education or training in the law or even hold a Juris Doctor - the degree earned by attorneys. Most working in applied settings such as a private practice or prison also hold a license to practice granted from their state's board of psychology following the successful completion of an approved doctoral degree, pre and post doctoral training years, and passing scores on a series of board examinations. The exception to this is that some government agencies are considered exempt settings, which allows unlicensed psychologists to practice with supervision for a period of time.

2. Describe the individual theories of crime.

Ans: There are many different theories of crime. It has been proposed that crime is determined by biological factors whereas others are more convinced that environmental factors are more influential to those who commit crimes.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss two of the most major theories of criminology: classical and biological. It will then analyze each of the theories and their main assumptions and comparing and contrasting their approaches to crime. Classical Criminology originated from Enlightenment ideals at the end of the eighteenth century. The main inspiration of Classicism is that all criminals are subject to free will and that they make a rational choice to engage in criminal behaviour. The influence of the Classical school is apparent in legal doctrine due to the emphasis of the requirement of conscious intent, for example, the notion of mens rea (or "the guilty mind"). The classical concept of human nature is easily described by Jeremy Bentham: "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure." People seek to achieve pleasure and avoid pain and so they weigh up the benefits and costs of doing an act, including committing a crime. Since people commit crime when the benefits outweigh the costs, it follows that crime can be prevented by making sure that the cost, i.e. the punishment, outweighs the benefit. Therefore, the best way to reduce crime is through deterrence. It is also thought that all individuals are equal and so the law should apply equally to everyone.

Taking a more physical approach to criminology, biological theories put forward the idea that criminal activity is genetic and is the result of some defect that can be measured. Criminal acts have been linked with roles taken by heritable characteristics, the biochemical functioning of the brain and nervous system and the impact of things such as nutrition. Furthermore, it has been suggested that "biological harms" like exposure to toxic substances or head injuries can be other contributions to an individual's predisposition of a criminal lifestyle. The centre of all these theories is that abnormalities which are inherited or acquired throughout life, predispose individuals to criminal behaviour. It is also based on the belief that criminals are physiologically different from non-criminals. Biological theories are positivistic as they attribute criminal behaviour to internal factors that are beyond an individual’s control. The idea of positivism assumes that criminal behaviour is caused, but that these causes may be manageable, possibly by rehabilitation. Biological theorists also tend to have the view that punishment for crime should be less or more harsh depending on the individual defendant. The major change from the Classical theories to the biological theories is the emphasis on reformation rather than punishment.

Furthermore, the methods used by biological criminologists, including that of measuring body parts, represented a remarkable change from the philosophical approach presented by classical criminologists.

There are several differences and similarities between the classical and biological theories of criminology. The biological theories of crime support the idea that an individual commits a crime due to biological or genetic defects. It was also thought that they had criminal tendencies because of certain abnormalities that an individual had and not because the offender rationally chose to commit the crime.

In contrast, the classical theory has the belief that every individual has their own right and ‘free will’ in the way in which they behave, so they commit a crime because they choose to do so, not because it is in their biological make-up.

Furthermore, the Classical theory ignores the possibility of irrationality and unconscious drives as motivational factors – it places entire responsibility on the criminal.

Biological positivism differs in the sense that it places the responsibility on forces beyond control of the criminal and hence, suggests that the criminal is born, not made.

Neo-classicism also brings forward the premise of the modern ‘just desserts’ principle, meaning that even if it does not achieve complete deterrence, society needs to see that criminals are punished in the way that they deserve.

In conclusion, there are several similarities and differences between the classical and the biological theories of crime. They were similar in some ways; both encouraged the idea of less harsh punishments and both have developed and improved over a period of time. But, they were different in other ways; biological theories focused on the individual criminal whereas classical theories focused on the actual crime. Plus, the former encouraged the idea of rehabilitation and the reformation of criminals while the latter believed in deterrence to try to reduce crime.