

BOOK REVIEWS

Family Sexual Abuse: Frontline Research and Evaluation. Michael Quinn Patton (Ed.). Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA., 1991. 246 pp. Hardcover, \$36.00; Softcover, \$17.95.

FAMILY SEXUAL ABUSE describes 11 research projects sponsored by the Minnesota Family Sexual Abuse Project (FSAP). FSAP provided modest funding for research undertaken by clinical programs that address sexual abuse. The individual studies will be briefly described.

Carolyn Levitt, Greg Owen, and Jeanette Truchsess present data on 119 children who received medical evaluations for sexual abuse at Children's Hospital in St. Paul. This study provides information about case characteristics at evaluation and follow-up findings on perceived effects of sexual abuse and satisfaction with services.

Sandra Hewitt and William Friedrich, two well-known researchers, address the diagnostic problem of very young children. One hundred eleven children under 5 were extensively evaluated using methods including standardized measures. A number of statistically significant differences were noted among children labeled probably abused, abuse uncertain, and nonabused. The researchers demonstrate that even children with minimal verbal ability showed the effects of sexual abuse and that these could be reliably measured.

Michael O'Brien, an expert on adolescent offenders, compared adolescents who sexually abused siblings, unrelated children, and nonchildren, noting the comparative severity of abuse by siblings offenders and the differences in etiology among the three groups.

Jane Gilgun reports on her research involving extended interviews with a rather heterogeneous but interesting sample of persons maltreated as children. She concluded that intergenerational transmission of abuse is avoided and victim resilience is fostered by the presence of significant appropriately functioning persons in victims' lives.

Irl Carter and Lawrence Parker provide the first piece of published research on incest among Native Americans. The authors hypothesize that the undermining of the Native American family and cultural values contributed to their vulnerability to incest. They also discuss Native American attitudes about reporting sexual abuse and services.

Deborah Woodworth described a follow-up study of members of 16 families who received multiple family therapy. Although persons involved generally reported positive results from treatment, the study's refusal rate was high, especially for victims and their siblings.

A study by Sara Wright examines the impact of offender removal as one aspect of treatment. Twenty-seven members of middle-class families reported financial hardships and detrimental effects on relationships at the beginning and 6-8 months into treatment. This study is disappointing because the author fails to adequately appreciate the larger context of sexual abuse.

James Maddock, Pamela Larson, and Catherine Lally report the results of an attempt to identify dynamics peculiar to incest, using multiple measures and comparing families beginning treatment, those who have completed treatment, and nonincest families. Many hypotheses about family dynamics are not supported by the findings, but there were differences in communication patterns and parent-child role confusion. Like Woodworth, these researchers report problems obtaining subjects for follow up.

A follow-up study of 110 offenders treated in a prison-based program is described by Greg Owen and Nancy Steele. Among the interesting findings are the fact that about half of offenders returned to living situations with children after incarceration, the perception of parole officers and offenders that family problems were not adequately resolved in treatment, the reported reconviction rate of 18%, and the positive evaluation by offenders of their group therapy.

Finally, Jane Matthews, Ruth Mathews, and Kathleen Speltz provide a typology of female offenders

based upon their work with 16 women. In addition, they conclude that supportive rather than confrontational treatment is more effective with female offenders.

This book represents an innovative and viable solution to the current paucity of research funding. Moreover, despite some methodological problems, based primarily on sample bias, it provides very interesting findings that can be the platform for subsequent research. It is an important addition to knowledge about family sexual abuse.

Kathleen Coulborn Faller

*University of Michigan
1015 E. Huron
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1689*

Child Abuse. Richard Layman. Omnigraphics, Detroit, MI, 1990, 122 pp. Price not stated.

THIS BOOK IS VOLUME 1 of a series called "Current Issues." The stated purpose of the series is to provide information necessary to discuss and pursue matters of public concern in the United States and throughout the world.

The information in the book is laid out after the classic formula: statement of the issue and definitions, statistics, characteristics, child protective services, the courts, and reporting. In addition there is a checklist of resource material, a director of organizations, and selected further readings.

The book is easy to read and the author provides the reader with a number of interesting interviews with professionals who work in child abuse treatment and prevention.

The book is not for professionals, but rather a resource book for high school and college students or laypersons without knowledge about child abuse. It meets this aim by providing clear, relevant information as well as a resource directory. Unfortunately, its benefit, particularly the resources material, is limited largely to the United States as it does not contain information about child abuse in other countries or cultures.

Joav Merrick

*Medical Director
Service for the Mentally Retarded
Ministry of Welfare
Jerusalem, Israel*

Without Consent: How to Overcome Childhood Sexual Abuse. Carol Jarvis-Kirkendall and Jeffery Kirkendall. Swan Press, Inc., Scottsdale, AZ, 1989. 203 pp. \$12.95.

THIS BOOK IS essentially directed toward victims even though the authors have dedicated it to professionals. It is constructed in eight chapters centered on messages that are clear, although sometimes quite elementary. By addressing the victims, the authors aim to help them to cope with their feelings evoked by the abuse of the therapy.

The therapeutic processes are extremely well outlined and can certainly help them to recover. The explanation of the therapeutic process and the clear definitions and statements that break down old myths about sexual abuse in the first and second chapters of the book are its main qualities.

Less convincing is the mingling of extra- and intrafamilial child sexual abuse, problems which can be quite different from each other and which may have different consequences for the children. The authors tend to oversimplify the dynamics of sexual abuse, especially for intrafamilial abuse, as there is no discussion of the nonoffending parents' role in the family. The claim that the sexual abuse is felt to be