

present prohibitive discrepancies from Canadian experience with one important exception. The authors indicate that a parent can choose to disclose the abuse to authorities, whereas in Canada provincial legislation requires that all sexual abuse of children be reported.

In conclusion, this is a text that can be useful to certain parents in combination with other material on the subject of sexual abuse. On its own it is not a complete resource and it does have a specific audience, but it also provides some helpful suggestions for dealing with the potentially overwhelming complexities of sexual abuse.

Vincent F. Sacco and Leslie W. Kennedy, *The Criminal Event*. Scarborough: Nelson, 1994, pp. 363 (softcover).

Reviewed by Helen D. Saravanamuttoo
Social Policy Consultant

I found this book well written and clear. The framework used allowed for the integration of many perspectives and demonstrated the continuity of the field with other social science approaches. The book presents many viewpoints and allows the reader to consider different implications of crime and how it affects people. I particularly liked its balanced approach.

This book organizes information around the "criminal event," and it moves the emphasis from either the offender or the victim to a perspective where both are taken into account. It includes a useful addition—the context in which a crime is committed.

Theories are presented in an interesting and productive way. The general theories that have been used in the field are explained early on in the text. As the book states, theories of crime were initially directed at understanding the motivations of offenders. Later, the authors discussed how social control is necessary to keep criminal behaviour in check. Yet others saw opportunities and particular lifestyles as sufficient explanation for criminal behaviour and victimization. By introducing the idea that criminal events are social events subject to the same rules of behaviour as other social events, the authors normalize criminal behaviour and place it within the wider context; they integrate the earlier perspectives and consider them as part of a whole field. This wider view is then used to discuss the "domains" or contexts of crime: the family, where leisure activities take place, and the workplace. For example, when violence in the family is discussed, the authors are not only able to include information about offenders and victims, but also the social climate that has made such violence invisible, through defining family life as private.

When a specific approach to the criminal event is discussed, the book then refers back to general theories and the research that both supports and fails to support this approach is considered. At one point, the authors even use an economic perspective, when they discuss "enterprise" crime (what has generally been called organized crime), and in doing so, they demystify the topic and open up a range of possible options to deal with the issue. By using this integrated approach, different theoretical approaches that are not necessarily mutually exclusive often become complementary to each other.

The integrated approach results in a useful and serious understanding of the subject. It allows the reader to consider alternative solutions and to look at the wider implications of various actions. It permits proactive, as well as reactionary responses, and points to the large gaps in knowledge that exist in the field of workplace crime.

The last chapter on responses to crime is particularly worthwhile. The outstanding issues are clearly articulated and three broad approaches are presented to crime reduction: opportunity reduction, social development and community policing. The role of programs such as Neighbourhood Watch in reducing opportunities for crime is part of the solution. Populations most at risk are discussed; for example, a small number of offenders are responsible for much of the violent crime, and they are mostly young, disadvantaged males. The final emphasis is on the shift of responsibility involved in community policing, which depends on the participation of the general public in defining and solving problems. At a time when the USA is discovering the fact that there are more black youth in prison than have graduated from high school, it is important to consider alternative approaches.

Ideas are presented in a straight-forward manner, and the minimum of jargon is used. Topics are organized in a logical manner, which helps readability, and builds on and broadens our knowledge of human behaviour and sociological issues. The book is suitable for a wide range of audiences, from students new to the field of criminology to more advanced readers who are already well versed in psychology and sociology; however, to appreciate it fully, some social science background is necessary.

Some of the graphs are difficult to follow and could well be improved for later editions. It is unforgivable that some easily obtainable data are very much out of date. I refer particularly to the unemployment rate. A book of this calibre, published in 1994, should have more recent unemployment rates than 1989 figures; since that date the trend has reversed and long term unemployment is recognized as a serious issue, particularly for youth. All the authors needed to do was look in any Monday issue of the *Globe and Mail* to get the most recent figures. I wonder whether other statistics that I am not familiar with could not have been similarly updated.

In this difficult time, when the economic situation of so many families has deteriorated badly, this book identifies issues and possible approaches that are important to the fabric of society as we know it. It provides well researched information for readers who wish to seriously discuss alternatives to the law and order approach that is gaining so much ground today.
