

conclusions which are supported by convincing data and those which are soapbox oratory. The author would have us believe that rape is a conspiracy of all men using their vast institutional and authoritarian power structures to keep all women subjugated and subordinated. That this polemic is not supported by the evidence presented does not negate the documentary and creative value of the book.

MICHAEL K. SPODAK, M.D.  
Baltimore, Maryland

**THE DEADLY INNOCENCE: PORTRAITS OF CHILDREN WHO KILL.** By Muriel Gardiner. Basic Books Inc. Pp. 190. 1976. \$8.95.

This is a book about children, their families and the society in which they live. What makes these children different from others living and brought up amid multi-generational social, economic, and psychobiological problems is that they have somehow crossed that invisible line that separates most, if not truly all of us who harbor fantasies of murder, from those who actually carry it out.

Muriel Gardiner tells us the stories of ten children. They are not, as Stephen Spender says in the introduction, just case studies. In an easy-to-read narrative style the author quickly puts the reader into the child's life. Subsequently, he finds himself growing up alongside the child, his family and the society around them. Through the author's obvious deep compassion for people and lack of need to blame or assign cause, the reader will find himself in tune with the child's and family's emotions and feelings of love, hate, rejection and frustration, as well as the social pressures enveloping all of them. As these mini-dramas unfold, one senses the ever-increasing inner psychological and emotional pressures created in each of the individuals and with it the terrible sense that the options for solving the dilemmas are narrowing. Then, the irrevocable moment occurs — murder is committed. The lingering tragedy implied so vividly by their earlier lives has fully flowered.

Dr. Gardiner makes no claim that she can explain why these children have committed murder. She fully understands the intricate admixture of biology, psychodynamics, social forces and even chance in the lives of people. She faithfully reports all of the facts available. While she herself is a psychoanalyst, Dr. Gardiner resists the temptation of equating psychoanalytic interpretation with causality or etiology. It is almost as if she were saying to the reader, "Let me tell you a story of some children I have known. Help me to understand how and why these lives came to this point."

This book will make splendid reading even for those mental health, social science and legal-correctional professionals who might feel they have heard all this before. Dr. Gardiner's stories will jolt the reader to a level of "hearing" that perhaps he had never before attained. I can easily see a wider readership than that mentioned above. So engaging and humanistically written, this book would make excellent reading for high school and college students in whose hands will lie some of the future solutions to violence, social deprivation, pervasive psychological handicaps and criminal justice inequities.

ALAN M. LEVY, M.D.  
Chief, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
Beth Israel Medical Center

**ADOLESCENT SUICIDE.** By Jerry Jacobs. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Pp. 160. 1971. \$9.95.

The literature on suicide has become so vast that important contributions are in danger of being lost, at least temporarily, in the deluge. This is especially true if the contribution is not strikingly counter-intuitive, is unsuccessfully articulated, or is