

tial for properly diagnosing juveniles based on data that include past assessments and diagnoses.

The limited but growing body of research on veracity, developmental maturity, and risk is summarized. One concern about the text is that readers are not reminded that best practices are informed by the strength of the evidence and reproducibility of the studies. Implementation of best practices requires an appreciation of the environment in which the interventions will occur as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each youth. A discussion of these dynamics would have been welcome, especially when summarizing research about the relationship between prenatal development and conduct disorder.

Preparation for the juvenile justice mental health evaluation requires appropriate training and supervision. Salekin says that clinical child psychologists and developmental psychologists may cross-train in forensic psychology to develop necessary skills. He incorrectly states that residents in child and adolescent psychiatry must complete state-mandated training in an “American Medical Association or American Orthopsychiatry Association-approved psychiatry program” (p 92).

The author provides a succinct discussion of report content and the importance of limiting the report to forensically relevant information. He restricts the brief discussion of mental disorders to externalizing disorders and does not examine how other mental disorders, such as psychotic spectrum disorders, trauma and related stress disorders, and depression and anxiety disorders, if not properly identified and treated, may lead an evaluator to misdiagnose a youth and to make poorly informed recommendations about clinical and other interventions to the court. Also, there is no discussion of dangerousness, culpability, or suicide risk assessment. I look forward to seeing these topics addressed in a future edition of the book.

This book may meet the needs of mental health professionals seeking an introduction to juvenile court history and structure, but it is not a comprehensive resource for forensic assessment of mental disorders or for the types of assessments that tend to be performed by forensic child psychiatrists. I would not hesitate to recommend parts of the book to trainees in juvenile justice mental health.

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Serial Killers: The Psychosocial Development of Humanity’s Worst Offenders

By William M. Harmening. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 2014. 280 pp, Paperback, \$39.95.

Theodore “Ted” Bundy has been described as intelligent, handsome, and charming. He used these traits to interact with and gain the trust of his prospective victims. He was a master manipulator and created situations within which his attacks could occur, such as feigning injury by wearing a sling or fake cast. Once in a conducive place, such as his car, he would brutally assault his victim. Ultimately, he raped and murdered numerous women, confessing to 30 murders at the time of his execution. The true number remains unconfirmed to this day.

Mr. Bundy is one of six high-profile serial killers discussed in detail in William Harmening’s book, *Serial Killers: The Psychosocial Development of Humanity’s Worst Offenders*. The other killers are David Berkowitz, Charles Manson, Eric Rudolph, Edmund Kemper, and the Zodiac Killer, whose identity remains a mystery. Harmening has a background in law enforcement and psychology and teaches forensic psychology and criminology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He has authored several books, including one dedicated to his theory of criminal behavior: the criminal triad.¹

In *Serial Killers*, Harmening advances his criminal-triad theory in the first several chapters. The theory focuses on key psychosocial developmental processes that occur between infancy and adolescence. The three components of the triad are attachment in early childhood, moral development as a child, and formation of identity in adolescence. The author advances that, when successful, these processes in combination create an integrated internal deterrence mechanism. When the processes are not successful, the child develops a propensity for deviant behavior.

The author selected interesting and notorious serial killers, such as Mr. Bundy, and provides summaries of their crimes and personal backgrounds. These summaries are one of the strengths of the book. For an introductory text on serial killers, it is useful to have several detailed case examples to engage the reader and highlight commonalities and differences among the cases.

Another strength of the book is Harmening's use of the case examples to "construct a psychosocial profile of [each killer]" and attempt to "pinpoint the various developmental factors that contributed to their eventual criminality" (p v). After discussing each killer's criminal and childhood backgrounds, the author describes the cases in light of his theory. Mr. Bundy's case is illustrative. According to Harmening, Mr. Bundy never knew the identity of his father, lacked the morality that would deter his behavior, and sought to fulfill sexual desires absent internal controls that may deter socially inappropriate behaviors. By reviewing several case examples, the reader is able to gain a better understanding of the triad theory and apply the principles to the facts of the killers' cases.

Although the author identifies psychologists and psychiatrists as among his target audience, the book is probably better suited to those without significant mental health training. The background information about attachment and development is cursory for someone with advanced mental health training. The information may serve as a solid introduction to students or professionals who have not been exposed to these principles.

In addition, mental health professionals may find frustrating some of Harmening's references to mental health terms and diagnoses. By way of illustration, in the Introduction, the author attempts to relieve readers of common misconceptions about serial killers, including that they are psychopaths. In defining psychopath, however, he states that, "by definition, [they] suffer a disconnect from reality . . ." suggestive of psychosis (p 6). He goes on to say that most serial killers "have been found through psychological evaluations of competency to be completely sane and fully connected to reality" (p 6). The author confuses key terms: psychosis, psychopathy, competency, and insanity. In fact, psychosis and psychopathy are not interchangeable terms, and insanity is not assessed through competency evaluations.

Later in the Introduction, Harmening states that he selected case examples where mental illness was

not at issue. He adds that "very few [serial killers] meet even the mental health industry's diagnostic criteria for mental illness" (p 8). In this section, he seems to conflate mental illness with psychosis and insanity. In later chapters, however, he defines in detail various personality disorders (e.g., histrionic and borderline) and states that persons with these disorders may engage in criminal conduct. In the chapter dedicated to David Berkowitz, the Son of Sam killer, Harmening reports that Mr. Berkowitz had a history of recurrent depression and displayed more disruptive behavior when severely depressed after the death of his mother; however, his depression is not discussed further as part of Harmening's formulation for Berkowitz's later crimes or in relation to the triad theory. These inconsistencies in addressing mental illness may be a frustrating distraction for readers in the mental health fields.

The final chapter covers intervention strategies to direct a potential killer away from engaging in criminal acts. It is an effective conclusion to the text, as it reviews intervention points in relation to the author's triad theory. After the chapters on the makings of a serial killer, this chapter is a welcome discussion of the possibility of directing children toward more adaptive behaviors.

Overall, *Serial Killers: The Psychosocial Development of Humanity's Worst Offenders* is an interesting book best suited as an introductory text for an undergraduate course or for other professionals without advanced mental health training. For the forensic psychiatrist, the book may serve as a useful resource for multiple case examples of serial killers within one text.

Reference

1. Harmening, W. *The Criminal Triad: Psychosocial Development of the Criminal Personality Type*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 2010

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