

more knowledge to guide practice: knowledge about the long-term impact of open adoption, how best to "match" adoptive parents to children, and genetic and environmental contributors to adjustment. This collection will be of most interest to adoption researchers and policy makers, but should also be quite helpful to adoption practitioners and even adoptive families.

Marianne Berry
University of Texas at Arlington

Children at Risk: An Evaluation of Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect

By Robert T. Ammerman and Michel Hersen (editors).

New York: Plenum Press, 1990. xviii. 314 pp. \$49.50 (hardcover).

Keeping up to date with the rapid developments in child maltreatment research provides a major challenge for practitioners, policy makers, students, and researchers. With *Children at Risk*, Ammerman and Hersen provide a scholarly yet accessible synthesis of much of this research. While many previously published maltreatment research texts read more like a disparate collection of journal articles, *Children at Risk* is carefully organized and very well integrated. A notable feat, given that the editors have drawn together many of the most prominent researchers in this field.

The key to the success of this book is its commitment to an overarching perspective. The demise of main effect models of child maltreatment (e.g. the psychiatric model, or the sociological model), has lead child maltreatment researchers to expand their perspectives by viewing maltreatment in terms of multiple risk and protective factors at the levels of the child, parents, family, the neighbourhood, and society. The importance of taking such a multicomponent perspective is reflected in the organization of the book, and in the content of most chapters. Unfortunately, some of the contributors do not always cast their nets far enough to escape the bounds of the of the old psychiatric model.

The book is organized in three main sections: I. General Issues, II. Risk factors Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect, and III. Prevention and Treatment. An introductory chapter by the editors provides an informative history of the development of child maltreatment research, and a concluding chapter by Garbarino maps out future directions. The General Issues section covers some of the key contextual issues that must

be considered in order to understand current developments in this field. The chapter on the epidemiology of child maltreatment by Starr, Dubowitz and Bush, includes an exceptionally well thought out review of incidence and prevalence data. Likewise, Otto and Melton offer extensive coverage of the often neglected areas of legislation and case law. Indeed, it is all too often forgotten that research and practice in this field has always been conducted within the bounds of existing legislation. In contrast to the thoroughness of most chapters, Herrenkol's discussion of research issues is superficial and unoriginal. Youngblade and Belsky's chapter on the social and emotional consequences of child maltreatment extensively covers the impact of physical abuse and neglect on children's attachments, social skills, and self concept, but provide very little information on the sequelae of child sexual abuse, nor do they examine some of the more serious adolescent problems associated with child maltreatment, such as running away, substance abuse, and suicide.

The heart of the book in the second section on risk factors. True to their commitment to a multicomponent model, this section "includes evaluations of the three primary contributing factors to the etiology of maltreatment: sociological and ecological variables, parental characteristics, and child characteristics." (p. x). The chapters by Factor and Wolfe on parental factors, and by Ammerman on child factors are both based on the extensive reviews that both sets of authors have previously published. However, instead of simply reviewing this material, the authors are careful to integrate their material into the overall framework provided by the book. Vondra's chapter on sociological and ecological factors is clear and scholarly, but focuses primarily on marital and family factors that should have been include in the parental factors chapter. Despite the constant emphasis in this book on multicomponent models, in practice little consideration is given to environmental factors. In fact, in an earlier article on the multiple determinants of parenting, Belsky and Vondra (1989) argue that while poverty and isolation are risk factors for maltreatment, their interpretation of the evidence is that many maltreating parents are poor and isolated in large part because of their damaged personalities. A contribution from Garbarino in this section, rather than in the concluding chapter, may have helped to ensure that environmental factors were given their proper weight.

The final section covers prevention and treatment programs. This section is the weakest of the three, an unfortunate reflection of the status of outcome research in this field. The organization of the section follows the multicomponent format of the book: Prevention Programs, Treating the Abused Child, and Treating the Abuser. Newman and Lutzker provide a historical overview of the role of prevention as a concept in child maltreatment research and practice, but their coverage of current issues and

research developments is very limited. Beyond describing their own treatment program and a couple of other similar behavioural interventions, the authors fail to consider many of the innovative prevention programs that are being developed. Most noteworthy is the complete absence of any reference to the landmark health visitor study conducted by Olds (Olds, Hendersen, & Chamberlin, 1986). In contrast, Mannarino and Cohen's chapter on treating children is an exceptionally comprehensive review of research and practice in this area. Kelly's short chapter on abusers is primarily limited to behavioral parent training programs for child physical abusers; other treatment approaches are not discussed, nor are interventions for sexual abusers or child neglectors examined.

Despite the limitations identified in some of the chapters, overall the book is one of the most comprehensive and well integrated sources of information available to readers interested in becoming familiar with current findings from psycho-medically driven child maltreatment research. If Ammerman and Hersen could team up with some colleagues with a sociological perspective, we will be a step closer to the ideal child maltreatment text. Until then, *Children at Risk* remains in the strongly recommended reading category.

Nico Trocme
University of Toronto

Belsky, J. & Vondra, J. (1989). Lessons from child abuse: The determinants of parenting. In D.Cicchetti & V.Carlson (Eds.) *Child maltreatment: Theory & research on the causes and consequences of child abuse and neglect*, Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press.

Olds, D.L., Henderson, C.R., Chamberlin, R., & Tatelbaum, R. (1986). Preventing child abuse and neglect: A randomized trial of nurse home visitation. *Pediatrics*, 78, 65-78.