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School Violence in Context: Culture, Neighborhood, Family, School and Gender. Rami Benbenishty and Ron Avu Astor. Reviewed by Susan Stone.

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operate farms and to simply live were now much more expensive than they had been.

This rich work sheds light on a number of additional elements useful in understanding farming in modern America. One of the most significant is the increase in the size of farms. The author shows that from 1959 to 1997, the average farm size in Oklahoma grew from 503 acres to 698 acres. More technology, a larger scale of operations, and a more industrial approach to farming were all significant factors in changing the lives of farm families.

The book also discusses the American Agricultural Movement, an important grassroots effort to sustain family-oriented farming and its values. In its relatively few pages, it is loaded with interesting, and, for most readers, new information about a phenomenon that has had a great effect on and will continue to impact the whole United States, especially its rural areas.

Leon Ginsberg
University of South Carolina

Rami Benbenishty and Ron Avi Astor, *School Violence in Context: Culture, Neighborhood, Family, School and Gender*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. \$39.95 hardcover.

Rates of bullying, victimization, and critical incidents of violence in schools represent an important contemporary educational policy concern. Given the proliferation of programmatic and policy efforts in recent decades (ranging from conflict resolution programs in local schools to federal zero tolerance policy), there are striking gaps in the quality of the existent knowledge base. Benbenishty and Astor carefully document the lack of theoretical development in this area. In particular, they highlight the surprising lack of attention to school contextual variables. While prior research on school violence general focuses on the student as the critical unit of attention, Benbenishty and Astor essential apply a "school-effects" framework to their study of school violence.

Three general topical areas organize this twelve chapter book. The first chapters outline the theoretical framework and

methods. Although Benbenishty and Astor place central focus on the school as a critical unit of attention, they also place the multiple and multi-level correlates of school violence identified by prior research within a general ecological framework. In addition to schools, these include characteristics of students (gender, age, and physical attributes), families (poverty and parenting practices), and larger community and socio-cultural contextual factors. Benbenishty and Astor present data from a set of studies of school violence in Israel. While the overall study included both a regional longitudinal as well as three wave, cross-sectional national study, most data presented in the book center on data generated from the second wave of the national study. The qualities of sample selection and school response rates (95%) are quite impressive. Key data sources included surveys of principals, teachers, and students, school demographic characteristics available from the Israeli ministry of education as well as census and school neighborhood crime rates.

The second topical area includes an empirical description of various forms of victimization that occur on school grounds (classified into domains of physical, threats, and verbal-social). Empirical descriptions take three forms: overall frequencies of the three types of victimization and rank ordering as well as exploration of the factor structure underlying all incidences victimization without reference to type. Benbenishty and Astor examine relationships between types and rank orders of victimization and individual child characteristics including gender, ethnicity, and grade level. In addition, they compare Israeli results to a sample of students generated in California. In general, different forms of victimizations correlate differentially with age, gender and ethnicity. Common sets of correlates emerge in both the Israel and California samples. Rank orders of victimization items, however, showed little variation across gender, age, cultural or national context and appear to best be characterized by overall severity and frequency such as severe and rare versus less severe and common. Because they appear to have distinct empirical underpinnings, separate chapters focus on sexual harassment, use of weapons, and victimization of students by school staff.

The third topical area includes chapters focusing on (1) the relationship between school organizational and climate factors, victimization and various indicators of students' subjective sense of safety at school, (2) variation in victimization across schools, and (3) results of multi-level models examining the relative contributions of student, school, family and community characteristics to various forms of victimization. Results presented in these chapters demonstrate three main findings. First, school contextual attributes contribute to subjective student experience of the safety of their schools. Second, school factors account for larger proportions of variation in victimization than do student factors. Third, there are different patterns of school contextual effects on both forms and severity of victimization.

Benbenishty and Astor make an extremely important and specific contribution to the school violence literature by demonstrating the importance and complexity of school contextual effects. Perhaps the larger contributions of this book, however, are more general. First, their careful theoretical work provides a means of unifying prior empirical work on school violence through their (1) development of an empirically and conceptually meaningful typology of school based victimization and (2) organization of the multiple and multi-level correlates of victimization within a general ecological framework. Second, Benbenishty and Astor provide a blueprint of how to operationalize and execute a complex, ecologically-derived program of research. Their data and analyses allowed for full descriptions of the heterogeneity of victimization experiences within persons, while at the same time capturing the broader influence of within and between school contextual processes.

Susan Stone

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Jennifer Mittelstadt. *From Welfare to Workfare: The Unintended Consequences of Liberal Reform, 1945-1965*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. \$49.95 hardback, \$19.95 paperback.

Jennifer Mittelstadt's engaging book details a rela-