



Constructing Crime: Perspective on Making News And Social Problems

By Gary W. Potter, Victor E. Kappeler



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This intriguing collection of articles explores the many actors, practices, and techniques involved in constructing the social reality of crime. The first section offers an overview of the issues associated with studying crime and the media. The next section explores the making of crime problems from gang rituals to less mature constructions of crime like road warriors. The final section looks at the effects of media constructions of crime. The frames through which crime is projected increase fear and shape perceptions of the amount of crime committed, the types of crime, who commits crimes, and what crimes are social problems. Sensational and violent crimes are featured prominently in the media, exaggerating the risks faced by the public and reinforcing stereotypes about who commits crime and why. While the media are instrumental in defining the terms through which we think about crime, informed audiences can decide how to interpret crime news by asking questions such as: Who supplied the information? Do they have a vested interest in how we react? Who benefits from the presentation? Who is harmed? The articles in this collection provide roadmaps to navigate through filtered information to an informed analysis.



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