

FERDINAND
VON SCHIRACH



Verbrechen

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Ferdinand von Schirach hat es in seinem Beruf alltäglich mit Menschen zu tun, die Extremes getan oder erlebt haben. Das Ungeheuerliche ist bei ihm der Normalfall. Er vertritt Unschuldige, die mit dem Gesetz in Konflikt geraten, ebenso wie Schwerstkriminelle. Deren Geschichten erzählt er – lakonisch wie ein Raymond Carver und gerade deswegen mit unfassbarer Wucht.

Ein angesehener, freundlicher Herr, Doktor der Medizin, erschlägt nach 40 Ehejahren seine Frau mit einer Axt. Er zerlegt sie förmlich, bevor er schließlich die Polizei informiert. Sein Geständnis ist ebenso außergewöhnlich wie seine Strafe. Ein Mann raubt eine Bank aus, und so unglaublich das klingt: Er hat seine Gründe. Gegen jede Wahrscheinlichkeit wird er von der deutschen Justiz an Leib und Seele gerettet. Eine junge Frau tötet ihren Bruder. Aus Liebe. Lauter unglaubliche Geschichten, doch sie sind wahr.

Verbrechen Details

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From Reader Review Verbrechen for online ebook

Oliver Schnusenberg says

Although I am German, I have read the English version, so I will give my review in English.

I absolutely loved this collection. In recent years, I have become immersed and drawn in by a multitude of American authors and have only rarely read German authors. Although I have been in the U.S. for over 20 years, this book reminds me of some German characteristics I miss the most. von Schirach does an extraordinary job of injecting just the right amount of passion. I know no other culture that can be feeling without being feeling. It is as if there is a well-disguised passion that is explained through logic. Probably because I am German, this has always moved me more than all-out emotional extravaganzas. Germans in general and von Schirach in particular in this book compel readers to feel because it is logical.

The other aspect of this book and each story in it that I love is that it is bordering on existentialism. You can almost feel the despair the characters are going through. However, even if the antagonists themselves do not see it, there is always something that gives the reader hope that things are not quite as bad as they could be. There is the promise of something good and bigger than ourselves in each of these stories.

Alexandra says

Schirach ist eine wunderbare Sammlung überraschender Geschichten aus dem Gerichtsalltag eines Strafverteidigers gelungen, die mich auch teilweise dazu anregen, die Begriffe Recht und Schuld etwas zu überdenken und auf jeden Fall zur Erkenntnis zu kommen, dass juristische Fälle nicht immer in den Kategorien schwarz/weiss (schuldig/nicht schuldig) zu beurteilen sind, sondern die dahintersteckenden Motive eine entscheidende Rolle spielen. Mit manchen Tätern hat man fast Mitleid, obwohl die Verbrechen gräulich sind.

Der kurze prägnante sprachliche Stil des Autors, irgendwie eine Mischung aus journalistischer Schreibe und knappen Anwaltsresumes (aber kein Juristendeutsch) gefällt mir besonders gut. Kein Wunder, dass dieses Buch wie eine Überraschungsgranate auf den Spiegel-Bestsellerlisten eingeschlagen hat.

Irmak says

Kitabın içerisindeki olaylar ne kadar ilginçse kitabın dili de o kadar etkileyici. Okurken gerçekten zorlandım. Yaptı. Anlattı. Gitti. Geldi. Ya bu şekilde yazılmıyorsa ya da bu şekilde çevrilmiyorsa. Hangisi bilmiyorum ama bu beni inanılmaz etkiledi. Keşke güzel bir dille yazılmış olsa da kitaptan daha fazla zevk alsaydım. Çünkü dediğim gibi olayların bazıları gerçekten ilginçti.

George K. says

Το βιβλίο μου τρέβηξε τον ενδιαφέρον απ' την πρώτη στιγμή που κυκλοφόρησε στα ελληνικά (Ιούλιος 2014), αλλά η τιμή του μου είχε φανερό τ'ε κ'πως τσιμπήμ'νη για το μέγεθος του, οπ'τε το φήσα στην κρη για το μ'λλον. Μετ' το ξ'χασα... μ'χρι μ'ως που το βρ'κα πριν λ'γες μ'ρες με τρ'α-τ'σσερα ευρ' στο Μοναστηρ'κι, οπ'τε και χ'ρηκα.

Πρ'κειται για μια εξαιρετική καλογραμμή και ενδιαφέρουσα συλλογή ντεκα ιστορι'ν. Ο Σ'ραχ εκτ'ς απ' πετυχημ'νος συγγραφέας, εργ'ζεται στο Βερολ'νο ως δικηγ'ρος (κυρ'ως υπερ'σπισης). Αυτ'ς οι ιστορ'ες ε'ναι βγαλμ'νες απ' περιπτ'σεις που του τ'υχαν κατ' την δι'ρκεια της καρι'ρας του. Ε'ναι, ας πο'με, αυτ'ς που του τ'καναν για κ'ποιο λ'γο μεγαλ'τερη εντ'πωση σε σχ'ση με λ'λες. Αυτ'ς οι ιστορ'ες, που περι'χουν αληθιν' γεγον'τα αλλ' και τ'σως στοιχε'α φαντασ'ας βγαλμ'να απ' το μυαλ' του συγγραφέα, αναδεικν'ουν ν'να διαφορετικ' πρ'σωπο της γερμανικ'ς κοινων'ας, αλλ' και του δικαστικο' συστ'ματος της Γερμαν'ας. Συμμετ'χουν ν'θρωποι αθ'οι με δ'σκολη ζω', σεσημασμ'νοι εγκληματ'ες, ν'θρωποι με ψυχολογικ' προβλ'ματα, φυσιολογικο' ν'θρωποι που κ'νουν κ'τι κακ', και π'ει λ'γοντας. Υπ'ρχει μια γκ'μα. Φ'νοι, ληστε'ες, βιαιοπραγ'ες, απ'λα τ'χει ο μπαξ'ς.

Την διαφορ' την κ'νει ο τρ'πος που ο Σ'ραχ περιγρ'φει με κ'ποια λακωνικ'τητα τα π'ντα: Τις δι'φορες υποθ'σεις, τους ανθρ'πους, τα μ'ρη. Πραγματικ' η γραφ' του ε'ναι εξαιρετικ', ευκολοδι'βαστη, σε σημε'α ευχ'ριστη, σε λ'λλα πιο δυναμικ'. Τι να σας πω, μου ρεσε π'ρα πολ' το στιλ γραφ'ς του, ο τρ'πος που παρ'ουσαε τις δι'φορες υποθ'σεις και τους ανθρ'πους που συμμετε'χαν με τον ν'αν τ' τον λ'λο τρ'πο σ'αυτ'ς. Πολ' θα τ'θελα το βιβλ'ο να τ'ταν διπλ'σιο τ' και τριπλ'σιο σε μέγεθος, για μεγαλ'τερη απ'λαυση.

Κρ'μα που δεν τ'χουν μεταφραστε' λ'λλα βιβλ'α του, που απ'σο βλ'πω στο Goodreads πρ'πει να τ'χουν εξαιρετικ' ενδιαφέρον και να ε'ναι αν'λογησ ποι'τητας. Κ'ποια, β'βαια, τ'χουν μεταφραστε' στ'αγγλικ', οπ'τε κ'τι μπορε' να γ'νει κι τ'τσι.

Vishy says

I discovered 'Crime' by Ferdinand von Schirach ('Verbrechen' in German) recently through a wonderful review and couldn't resist getting the book. I got it last week and finished reading it yesterday. Here is what I think about it.

'Crime' is a collection of eleven true-life stories. They are told by an unnamed narrator (who I assumed was Ferdinand von Schirach) who makes an appearance in each of those stories. Each of the stories touches on a distinct or interesting point of law. In some stories the murderer is not the real villain. In some stories it is not apparent whether a crime has been committed. In some stories though we know who committed the supposed crime, we don't know the identity of that person – in the sense that the concerned person refuses to speak and reveal even his name. There are a few stories where the main character has a psychological issue. It is interesting to read how the law treats such people who have supposedly committed a crime.

The first thing that appealed to me about the book was the writer's name. I always thought that Ferdinand was a Spanish name. I didn't know that it could be German too. The second thing that I liked very much was the introduction by the author. After talking a bit about his uncle who was a judge, he talks about the book.

My favourite passage in the introduction went like this :

I tell the stories of people I've defended. They were murderers, drug dealers, bank robbers and prostitutes. They all had their stories, and they weren't so different from us. All our lives we dance on a thin layer of ice; it's very cold underneath, and death is quick. The ice won't bear the weight of some people and they fall through. That's the moment that interests me. If we're lucky it never happens to us and we keep dancing. If we're lucky.

Beautiful, isn't it?

The third thing that I liked about the book was how von Schirach presents some of the subtleties and processes of the law and shows how things are not as black-and-white as they seem from outside. For example in 'Fähnner', he says this about oaths :

The most recent reform of the code of criminal procedure has dismissed the oath as an obligatory component of any sworn testimony in a criminal case. We ceased believing in it a long time ago. When a witness lies, he lies – no judge seriously thinks an oath would make him do otherwise, and oaths appear to leave our contemporaries indifferent.

In another place in the same story, von Schirach talks about punishment :

With regard to the practicalities of the case, there was nothing to defend. It was, rather, a problem of judicial philosophy : what is the meaning of punishment? Why do we punish? I used my summation to try to establish this. There is a whole host of theories. Punishment should be a deterrent. Punishment should protect us. Punishment should make the perpetrator avoid any such act in the future. Punishment should counterbalance injustice. Our laws are a composite of these theories, but none of them fitted this case exactly.

In 'The Ethiopian' he continues on this topic :

We punish according to someone's guilt; we ask to what extent we can make him responsible for his actions. It's complicated. In the Middle Ages, things were simpler : punishment was only commensurate with the act itself...Punishment in those days was a form of mathematics; every act carried a precisely established weight of retribution. Our contemporary criminal law is more intelligent, it is more just as regards life, but it is also more difficult.

In 'Summertime', von Schirach compares real-world crime with what happens in detective novels.

In detective novels, the person who did it confesses when he or she is screamed at; in real life, it's not that simple. And when a man with a bloody knife in his hand is bent over a corpse, that means he's the murderer. No reasonable policeman would believe he had only walked past by chance and tried to help by pulling the knife out of the body. The detective superintendent's observation that a particular solution is too simple is a screenwriter's conceit. The opposite is true. What is obvious is what is plausible. And most often, it's also what's right.

In one of my favourite stories, 'Self-Defence', von Schirach contemplates on how much self defence is acceptable when one is attacked.

When you are attacked, you have the right to defend yourself, and there is no limit to your choice of means.

You may respond to a fist with a cudgel, and to a knife with a gun; you are under no obligation to choose the mildest form of counterattack. But equally, you may not overreact : if you've already rendered your attacker helpless with a pistol shot, you may not cut off his head for good measure. The law does not tolerate such excesses.

I loved that passage :)

In 'The Ethiopian', the author talks about the prosecutor's role in Germany, which I found quite fascinating :

In a trial, it is the prosecutor who presents his closing argument first. Unlike in the United States or England, the prosecutor takes no position; he or she is neutral. The prosecutor's office is neutral; it also establishes exonerating circumstances, and thus it neither wins nor loses – the only passion in the prosecutor's office is for the law. The law is all it serves – that, and justice. That at least is the theory.

This was one of my favourite passages in the book.

The fourth thing I liked about the book was the cover. I found it very beautiful.

After starting the book, one day I was on my way to the grocery store and thinking about the book while walking. For some reason I started thinking about the translator's name. And I wondered whether her name was Carol Brown Janeway or Carol Jane Brownway. The two seemed to be philosophically different (the first one had a middle name which was closer to a last name, while the second one had a middle name which was closer to a first name) and I pondered which one of them was the right name. After thinking a bit, it seemed to me that Brownway seemed to be more plausible than Janeway. Then I came back and I looked at the book cover and discovered that her name was Janeway! Have you heard of this last name before?

Ferdinand von Schirach's prose style is simple, plain, uncomplicated, down-to-earth. The focus is on narrating the story and conveying the subtleties of law and justice. Not a single word is wasted. I thought of Hemingway's prose when I read this book.

My favourite story in the book was 'Self-Defence'. A middle-aged man who looks like a bank clerk is sitting on a bench near the railway station. Two thugs come by. They sense a prey there. They want to bully the man and have fun. They come near and try to have a conversation with him. The man is quiet. One of the thugs pulls out a knife and tries to hurt the man mildly so that he will talk to them. Our bank clerk looks at the two men without any expression on his face. The thugs don't know that they have opened a bottle and a genie is going to come out. Before they know our bank clerk hero delivers lethal kungfu kicks on them and in no time they are lying on the floor. What our bank clerk hero did – whether it was legally the appropriate level of self-defence or it was excessive – the answer to this question forms the rest of the story. I loved the mysterious bank clerk hero – he rocked :)

Another favourite story of mine was 'The Ethiopian'. I liked it because of my Ethiopian connection. I also liked 'The Thorn' for showing how a man who lives alone and does a solitary job can change fundamentally across years, 'The Hedgehog' where a young man who is bullied by everyone around has a parallel life as an intelligent genius and how his genius saves his family members (this story had one of my favourite lines – *"The fox knows many things, the hedgehog only one thing. The judges and the prosecutors might be foxes, but he was the hedgehog and he'd learned his skills."*), 'Tanata's Tea Bowl' for showing an interesting glimpse into Japanese culture and 'Summertime' for this line – *"He told his friends that when she drank, he could see the water running down inside the throat."* I have heard someone actually say this when he wanted to impress another about a girl's beauty.

'Crime' is a wonderful addition to literature on true-crime. I can't wait to read von Schirach's second story collection 'Sin' ('Schuld').

Have you read 'Crime' by Ferdinand von Schirach? What do you think about it?

Teresa Proença says

Este é o primeiro livro de contos, seleccionados pelo autor de entre centenas de casos reais nos quais ele foi advogado de defesa.

Onze histórias verdadeiras, de tal forma estranhas e surpreendentes que parecem imaginadas. Ou, talvez sejam assim por serem autênticas e a imaginação não ter capacidade para transcender a realidade.

É extraordinária a forma como Ferdinand von Schirach nos envolve desde a primeira frase e nos apresenta vítimas e carrascos - em que, muitas vezes, os papéis são invertidos - caracterizando e dando humanidade às personagens que nos leva a compreender e aceitar os motivos do crime.

Rotina - a monotonia que leva à loucura, à alucinação e ao crime...

Promessa - a vítima, maltratada durante uma vida inteira e que um dia atinge o limite...

Generosidade - como matar pode ser uma dádiva de amor extremo...

Amor - o que alguém apaixonado pode fazer para salvar a pessoa amada...

Defesa - matar ou morrer...

Natureza - amar e desejar tanto uma pessoa que apetece comê-la...

Se continuo a ler Ferdinand von Schirach vou acabar convencida que sou uma potencial assassina. Não seremos todos?

KruemelGizmo says

Nach vierzig Jahren Ehe tötet ein freundlicher alter Doktor seine Ehefrau mit einer Axt, eine Prostituierte soll von einem führenden Industriellen ermordet worden sein, und ein Mann wird von seiner Schwester getötet... In elf Geschichten, die auf Fälle seiner Kanzlei basieren, erzählt der Strafverteidiger Ferdinand von Schirach über die Abgründe der menschlichen Natur.

Verbrechen von Ferdinand von Schirach

In einer für mich sehr nüchternen Art präsentiert der Autor in diesem Buch elf Geschichten, die auf Fälle aus seiner Kanzlei basieren. Ob sich alles dabei so zugetragen hat wie geschildert oder ob doch auch ein wenig dichterische Freiheit bei den Erzählungen eine Rolle spielt ist mir nicht immer klar, denn manchmal hatte ich schon das Gefühl das es doch eigentlich nicht so ablaufen kann oder sollte, aber mein Rechtswissen ist aber einfach zu beschränkt um dies wirklich beurteilen zu können.

Die Geschichten empfand ich interessant und auch die für mein Empfinden recht nüchterne Erzählweise hat mir ausgesprochen gut gefallen und lies sich gut lesen. Dadurch, dass die einzelnen Geschichten recht kurz gehalten sind, kann man dieses Buch auch gut mal zwischendurch lesen.

Mein Fazit:

Eine Kurzgeschichtensammlung, die mir gefallen hat und gut zwischendurch gelesen werden kann.

Alex says

Wow ! A great collection of stories, you cannot put away this book. i cannot wait to read more from Ferdinand von Schirach. highly recommended.

João Carlos says

Ilustração de **Jens Bonnke** (The New York Times)

”Crimes” é a estreia literária de **Ferdinand von Schirach** (n. 1964) um advogado de defesa que trabalha em Berlim, Alemanha.

“No exercício da sua profissão tem-se confrontado com pessoas que cometeram ou assistiram a crimes de extrema violência. Estes terríveis crimes fazem parte do dia-a-dia de **von Schirach**, uma vez que protege os direitos de importantes réus, tal como os de inocentes que entram em conflito com a lei.”

”Crimes” é composto por 11 contos ou 11 histórias, todas diferentes, sobre pessoas que directa ou indirectamente se envolveram em acontecimentos dramáticos e trágicos, com descrições minuciosas e detalhadas das sequências, mas onde não existe nenhum tipo de formalismo muito específico sobre o sistema jurídico alemão, o que confere aos relatos a sua universalidade.

Mais do que encontrar o culpado ou solucionar o crime, **Ferdinand von Schirach** através de um estilo literário claro e simples, procura a verdade – e nada mais do que a verdade, guiando-nos através de acontecimentos e de ocorrências imprevisíveis, que muitas das vezes terminam em actos intoleráveis ou inadmissíveis, mas que têm quase sempre uma justificação plausível e perfeitamente entendível.

Em **”Crimes”** não existe o “bom” e o “mau”, não há julgamentos morais, o narrador (sem nome) pretende unicamente defender legalmente as suas personagens, ou melhor os seus clientes, nesse contexto, são os sentimentos e a imaginação do leitor que acabam por juntar as peças dos diferentes puzzles e cada um tirará as suas ilações ou as suas conclusões. Incluindo uma questão fundamental: Qual é a função da culpa, da punição e do castigo?

” Culpa” será uma próxima leitura.

Destaco quatro histórias/contos: **Fahner**, **O Violoncelo**, **Legítima Defesa** e o **O Etíope**.
(view spoiler)

Luís C. says

Ferdinand von Schirach has a name difficult to bear, his grandfather Baldur von Schirach (1907-1974) was chief of the Hitler Youth and gauleiter of Vienna, but this may have made him want to become a lawyer.

In Crime, the criminal law specialist reports eleven cases in the form of novels. Cases where the perpetrators are "ordinary" people who have reacted violently by a combination of unfortunate circumstances for the victims, or for real motives which, if they do not excuse their crime, partly explain it.

Ferdinand von Schirach's thorough and ironic analysis of the conjunctural or psychological causes of the crime, combined with the experience and understanding of the depths of the human soul, make this first collection a real success.

Carlos Subiabre Sierralta says

Lo disfruté mucho. Quedé con ganas de leer más de von Schirach. Este libro es un conjunto de relatos nacidos de la propia experiencia del autor como abogado. Precisos, ágiles, concisos, muy bien escritos. Desde mi lectura, sin puntos bajos y con algunos bien altos. El último relato lo terminé en la micro, con los ojos nublados y sorbeteando los mocos en medio de los pasajeros, camuflando la emoción con la alergia primaveral que no tengo.

Ghiomara Beov says

Es un libro que me gusto mucho. Son once historias de casos criminales, contadas por el abogado que llevo los casos.

Todas las historias son impresionantes, vale mucho tenerlo e ir leyendo de a poco,

Leselust says

Spannende Geschichten und Interessante Schicksale. Kühl und schnörkels berichtet Schirach von spektakulären Fällen. Beim Lesen hat es mich manchmal mehr gegruselt, als bei einem Thriller, weil ich das Wissen im Hinterkopf hatte, dass es sich hier um echte Fälle handelt. Die Geschichten sind sehr gut zu lesen. Was ich vor allem aus der Lektüre mitnehme: Die Frage nach der Schuld ist oft nicht so leicht zu beantworten, wie man auf den ersten Blick meinen könnte. "Verbrechen" wird definitiv nicht mein letztes Buch von Schirach gewesen sein.

Natascha says

Anscheinen schreibt wirklich das Leben die interessantesten Geschichten und von Schirach schafft es trotz seines sehr sachlichen Stils immer wieder die Menschlichkeit im deutschen Rechtssystem in den Vordergrund zu stellen. Für mich eine sehr gelungene Sammlung und ich bin schon neugierig auf weitere Werke des Autors.

Huseyn Ahadzade says

Çox ilginç cinayətlər var. Bir hüquqşünas, qarşılaşdığı cinayətləri qəlmə alıb. 2-ci hissəsi də var. Mütləq oxunmalıdır. Görün necə fərqli psixoloji durumlara sahib insanlar varmı?...

Carla says

11 histórias.
11 crimes.
11 culpados?

Nem sempre o que parece é e Ferdinand Von Schirach demonstra-o com simplicidade e de forma magistral. Por detrás de um crime há sempre uma história. Nem sempre linear. E há pessoas. Vítimas e carrascos.

Uma das histórias que mais me comoveu foi “Verde”, o relato dos estranhos crimes perpetrados por um jovem esquizofrénico que quando olhava para as pessoas via números. Literalmente. E ele, Philipp, como se via a si próprio?

“No final da visita Philipp acompanhou-me até ao portão. Nesse momento já só era um rapazinho solitário, triste e acochado pelos seus medos. Foi então que disse: - Tu nunca me perguntaste qual é o meu número.

- É verdade. E então que número és tu?

- Verde – disse, e, virando-se, começou a andar de regresso à clínica.” (P. 150)

A leitura deste livro foi mais um passo dado na minha convicção de que é impossível captar na totalidade a essência da natureza humana. Afinal, o que somos nós?

Ascari Vau says

Ferdinand von Schirach kann sich rühmen, einen eigenen Eintrag in der Wikipedia zu haben - und nicht mal einen so kurzen. Das ist aber nicht der Grund, warum wir, die #bbfliest Runde, uns nach dem letzten Buch für etwas ganz anderes entschieden haben.

Schirach ist Strafverteidiger und als solcher hat er schon viele Menschen, Schicksale und Geschichten kennengelernt. "Verbrechen" ist sein erstes Buch aus dem Jahr 2009, aber nicht sein letztes.

Der Klappentext:

Ein angesehener, freundlicher Herr, Doktor der Medizin, erschlägt nach 40 Ehejahren seine Frau mit einer

Axt. Er zerlegt sie förmlich, bevor er schließlich die Polizei informiert. Sein Geständnis ist ebenso außergewöhnlich wie seine Strafe.

Ein Mann raubt eine Bank aus, und so unglaublich das klingt: Er hat seine Gründe. Gegen jede Wahrscheinlichkeit wird er von der deutschen Justiz an Leib und Seele gerettet. Eine junge Frau tötet ihren Bruder. Aus Liebe. Lauter unglaubliche Geschichten, doch sie sind wahr.

Meine Meinung:

In meinen Augen gibt der Klappentext nur unzureichend wieder, was den Leser in diesem Buch erwartet. Denn die elf Geschichten sind so unterschiedlich wie das Leben selbst. Bereits die erste Geschichte stellt eine interessante Frage, denn beurteilt man ausschließlich nach der Tat, ist der freundliche Herr so schuldig wie nur irgendetwas.

Folgt man allerdings der Lebensgeschichte des Herrn, beginnt man, die Tat mit anderen Augen zu sehen, sogar etwas wie Sympathie zu empfinden. Die Frage nach Schuld und Unschuld ist nicht immer so eindeutig, wie man annehmen möchte, das führt dieses Buch sehr eindrücklich vor Augen.

Die Verbrechen, die Schirach schildert, umfassen ebenfalls die gesamte Bandbreite des menschlichen Lebens, denn ein Verbrechen muss nicht zwangsläufig mit einem Toten enden genauso wenig wie mit einem Schuldigen, der bestraft werden kann.

Das wahre Leben schreibt Geschichten, die sich oft nicht einmal der ausgebuffteste Krimi- oder Thriller-Autor ausdenken kann, und ist gerade deswegen umso grausamer, wenn man weiß, dass die beschriebenen Gräueltaten so wirklich passiert sind. Das Wissen darum, was Menschen einander antun können, führt uns Schirach an einigen Stellen sehr ausdrucksvoll vor Augen - was mich beim Lesen einige Mal schlucken ließ.

Dabei hat der Autor einen eher sachlichen Schreibstil, umreißt kurz und bündig den Werdegang der Menschen, der sie zu dem werden ließ, was sie zu dem Zeitpunkt sind, wo der Autor sie in seiner Funktion als Strafverteidiger kennenlernt. Die einfache und eher knapp gehaltene Sprache entspricht dem, was ich mir von einem Menschen in diesem Beruf vorstelle, trotzdem hätte ich mir an der einen oder anderen Stelle gewünscht, noch mehr Details zu erfahren. Viele Dingen blieben - bewusst oder unbewusst - an der Oberfläche.

Trotzdem halte ich dieses Buch für eine interessante Möglichkeit, über den Tellerrand des eigenen Lebens zu blicken. Was Menschen bewegt, Dinge zu tun, wird meist von den Medien verschwiegen, Schirach dagegen widmet sich meiner Meinung nach genau diesen Dingen, um zu zeigen, dass die Frage nach Schuld, Schuldfähigkeit und entsprechender Strafe nicht immer ein Schwarzweiß ist.

Mein Fazit:

Ferdinand von Schirach geht in "Verbrechen" mit seinen Geschichten sehr schön darauf ein, dass das Leben nicht immer so leicht in Schablonen zu pressen ist, wie wir das gern tun. Auch wenn ich an manchen Stellen gern mehr erfahren hätte, wird dieses Buch sich ganz bestimmt in mein Gedächtnis einbrennen, da es viele spannende Fragen über das Menschsein stellt.

Jim Coughenour says

Most things are complicated, and guilt always presents a bit of a problem.

These true crime stories hover somewhere between reportage and (to my American ear) an especially German style of storytelling that makes our courtroom dramas sound hyperbolic and naive. Ferdinand von Schirach is a criminal lawyer with some very peculiar clients. He's also an excellent writer. The crimes are bizarre; serving them justice requires imaginative calculations of compassion, punishment and morality. At times I was reminded of the essayistic short stories of John Berger or Paul Auster, but von Schirach's tales are grim originals, quietly shocking, tied together with a twisted humor too dark for laughs.

Sanja says

3.5 von 5

Nancy Oakes says

Sorry about the waffling re genre but I had to go and read up on the writing of this book and it turns out that while the stories offered here are based on real-life cases that passed through the author's offices, the stories themselves are fictional.

These are not your standard legal defense narratives by any stretch; it is the circumstances leading up to the commission of each crime which informs the basis of each story. The book also serves as an exploration into not only what constitutes the idea of guilt, but also what it is that lies at the core of each human being in this book. These people are not the sort of monsters one might expect in cases such as these; some of them make very bad judgment calls, some are driven by mental illness, while others, well, those I'll leave for readers to discover. He also, I think, asks us to consider the nature of sentencing and justice -- given the human factors beneath what these people have done, is it right to hand down a one-size-fits-all-by-law, prescribed sort of judgment?

The first story, "Fähnner," sets the tone of both writing and discourse within this book. The author employs a rather lean, unemotional sort of prose style to relate the tale of a GP from Rotweil who, as the cover blurb notes, finally got a "reprieve" the day he took an axe to his wife's head. While it sounds like it may be the usual lurid crime fare, it is most definitely not. Throughout Fähnner's experiences, and actually, throughout this entire set of stories, we are called upon to consider something Von Schirach's uncle once told him: "Most things are complicated, and guilt always presents a bit of a problem."

I was floored after finishing it, and there were moments in this book where I had to put it down and really think before I could go back to it. Whether or not anyone will sympathize with the people in this book is an individual judgment call, but it is really tough not to feel something. The book itself is an excellent use of crime fiction as a way to understand not only human nature, but also in offering insights into society itself.

Definitely recommended; not at all usual crime fare but something unique. And by the way, anyone who has access to MHZ can see six of these stories come to life in a very well-done series called "Crime Stories."

