



Trauma and Sexuality: The Effects of Childhood Sexual, Physical, and Emotional Abuse on Sexual Identity and Behavior

James Chu, Elizabeth S. Bowman

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Examine the effects of childhood trauma on sexual orientation and behavior!

This pioneering book examines the effects of childhood trauma—including sexual abuse—on sexual orientation and behavior. It will help you expand your sensitivity and expertise in a critically important way: by providing a nonjudgmental look at the profound effects of long-standing early abuse on the sexual identities, orientation, behaviors, and fantasies of the people who come to you for help.

From the editors: *“In the modern era of trauma studies, clinicians and researchers have been treating and investigating the effects of trauma—including the sexual abuse of children—for more than two decades. And yet, we know far more about sequelae such as post-traumatic and dissociative symptoms, disrupted attachment, addictions, eating disorders, and somatoform symptoms than we do about the effects of trauma on sexual behavior. With the exception of a relatively few articles in the scientific literature (many of which were written by the authors in this collection), little has been published about the sexual effects of sexual abuse and other childhood maltreatment.*

“Why have we neglected this obvious and important area? Perhaps the reason can be simply attributed to our Victorian legacy of reluctance to openly discuss sexuality. Or, perhaps the reason may be related to some of the expressions of sexuality that are sometimes seen in persons with childhood trauma. At times, expressions such as sexual addiction, homosexuality, sadomasochistic behavior, and prostitution have been classified as deviant. This may have contributed to our reluctance to discuss them openly. Or, perhaps the reason is that we collectively wish to deny the effects of abuse on one of the core aspects of ourselves—to deny that early traumatic events forever change the sexual lives of persons in such an intimate and profound way.”

The contributors to this well-referenced book combine their insight and expertise to address sensitive areas, including:

- the concepts of “femininity” and “masculinity”—and how these personality styles are direct and indirect outcomes of trauma and reflective of dissociation
- treatment approaches for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered trauma survivors
- the need to address sexuality in treatment—and to always keep in mind that there are many different healthy expressions of sexuality and gender
- the relationship of dissociation to sexual addiction/compulsivity in survivors of childhood sexual abuse
- sexual behavior problems in children who have been abused, including sexually reactive behaviors, extensive but mutual sexual behaviors, and children who molest—essential reading for anyone who doesn't want to see abused children mislabeled as sexual offenders!
- hyposexuality and hypersexuality as a result of childhood trauma
- the relationship between trauma history, trauma-related symptoms, and sexual risk behaviors that can lead to infection by HIV or other STDs as well as unplanned pregnancy

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