

Incest

The Role of the Offender, the Child & the Spouse

"The Experiencing of Sexual Traumas as a Form of Sexual Activity"

(Abraham, 1927)

"In a great number of cases the trauma was desired by the child unconsciously. . . we have to recognize it as a form of infantile sexual activity."

(Abraham, 1927, p. 38)

"In all of them the trauma could have been prevented. The children could have called for help, run away or offered resistance instead of yielding to the seduction."

(Abraham, 1927, p. 50)

The girl "had allowed herself to be seduced. She had followed the neighbour into the woods and allowed him to go a long way in carrying out his purpose before she freed herself from him and ran away."

(Abraham, 1927, pp. 52-54)

"It is not to be wondered at that this child kept the occurrence secret."

(Abraham, 1927, pp. 52-53)

Sexual Abuse as a Form of Infantile Acting Out

Abrams, 1907
Bender & Blau, 1937
Sloane & Karpinski, 1942
Bender & Grugett, 1952
Weiss, Rogers, Darwin & Dutton, 1955
Revitch & Weiss, 1962
Weiner, 1962
Mohr, Turner & Jerry, 1964
Lukianowicz, 1972
Henderson, 1975, 1983

Victims

"The child might have been the actual seducer rather than the one innocently seduced."

(Bender & Blau, 1937, p. 514)

Victims

Predisposed Victims

Provocative Victims

Participating Victims

False Victims

(Fattah, 1967)

Offenders

"Harmless individuals and their victims . . . Aggressive and seductive children."

(Revitch & Weiss, 1962, p. 78)

Offenders

"They exploited him by accepting his gifts and money."

(Revitch & Weiss, 1962, p. 75)

Offenders

"Timid . . . childish and immature."

(Virkkunen, 1975, p.123)

Offenders

"Gentle, fond of children and benevolent."

(Virkkunen, 1975, p. 179)

Offenders

"Placed in the position of compensating the oral frustrations inflicted by the mother."

(Rascovsky & Rascovsky, 1950, p. 44)

Mothers

"Unconscious homosexual strivings in the mother."

(Lustig, Dresser, Spellman & Murray, 1966, p 34)

Mothers

"The mother . . . Keeps herself tired and worn out."

(Justice & Justice, 1979, p. 98)

Mothers

"collusive, oblivious, helpless, or denying. . . Have unmet childhood needs, are hostile and frigid, and are passive and subservient. . . Playing a martyr role"

(Vander Mey & Neff, 1986, p. 71)

Attitudes of Child Protection Workers

N = 200

Fathers also physically abusive 80%

Mothers gave unconscious consent 87%

Mothers equally responsible 67%

(Bines and Meyer, 1993)

"Just" Incest Offenders?

Abusing outside family
at same time 49%

Raping adult women 18%

(Abel, et al., 1988)

Behavior at Disclosure

Majority of mothers supportive of child

(DeJong, 1988; Pellegrin, 1990; Salt, 1990; Sirles, 1989)

Support for Child

Consistently supportive 44%

Ambivalent 32%

Unsupportive 24%

(Everson et al., 1989)

Types of Denial

Denial of facts

Denial of responsibility

Denial of impact

Types of Denial by Offender

Offender Denial of facts

Denial of impact

Denial of responsibility

Spouses Denial of impact

Victim Denial of impact

(Trepper et al., 1996)

What Effects Mom's Behavior at Disclosure

Childhood history of abuse?

Current psychological functioning?

Both?

What Correlates with Mom's Behavior at Disclosure

Current psychological functioning

(Leifer et al., 1993)

Impact of Maternal History of Child Sexual Abuse

Believing the Child

No difference in mothers with sexual abuse history and those without

(Deblinger et al., 1994)

Impact of Maternal History of Child Sexual Abuse

Maternal distress greater

(Deblinger et al., 1994; Timmons-Mitchell et al., 1996)

Reactions to Disclosure: Loss

Loss of trust in partner

Loss of faith in mothering ability

Loss of faith in femininity

Loss of belief in control over events

Loss of belief in a "just world"

(Hooper, 1992)

How Close is the Offender?

Relationship	Believes Child
Extended family member	92%
Biological fathers	86%
Boyfriend or stepfather	56%

(Sirles & Franke, 1989)

Impact of Maternal Support

Primary predictor of child's psychological functioning

(Everson et al. 1989)

Assessment of Spouse

Relationship with child

Dependence on offender

General coping

Social supports

Financial Dependence

"Financially, it has almost destroyed the family. It completely drained all the bank accounts."

(Wright, 1991, p. 137)

Financial Dependence

"For a while I had a second job . . . I was working 20 hours a day and it finally took its toll on me and I got really sick before Christmas."

(Wright, 1991, p. 138)

"I'm working a full-time and a part-time job and trying to keep everything up and it's not always real easy. . . I could barely go to work, on the verge of tears all the time, just barely holding together. The financial problems have been devastating."

(Patton, 1991, p. 138)

Comparison of Stressful Life Events

Stressful Event	Sexual Abuse	Controls
Marital conflict	60%	23%
Parent arrested	29%	5%
Violence in family	38%	8%
Parental drugs	38%	12%
Physical abuse	25%	3%
Financial hardship	42%	19%

(Levitt et al., 1990)

Impact of Disclosure

Shame

Shock

PTSD/ Depression

Phases of Treatment

Assessment

Early intervention

Strengthening ego

Surfacing traumatic effects

Identifying relational consequences

Resolution

(Strand, 2000)

Grooming

Trust

Deliberate attempts	90%
---------------------	-----

Reduced disclosure	73%
--------------------	-----

(Warner-Kearney, 1987)

Building Trust

Giving presents

Spending time

Assuring them of "rightness"

Denying harmfulness

Treating as special

(Christiansen & Blake, 1990)

Grooming Process

Building Trust

Alienation from other family members

Demands of secrecy

Boundary violations

Threats and Punishment

According to

Offenders < 25%

Victims 45%

(Christiansen & Blake, 1990)

Threats and Punishment

"He shot my dog – and I knew he would do the same to me."

(Christiansen & Blake, 1990, p. 96)

Threats and Punishment

"My father would hit me hard and throw me up against a wall. He dislocated my jaw once, and put me in the hospital."

(Christiansen & Blake, 1990, p. 96)

Threats and Punishment

"He told me I was his property until I was 18, and there was nothing I could do."

(Christiansen & Blake, 1990, p. 96)