This chapter examines the association between brain development, trauma onset, memory, and neurobiological consequences of childhood trauma. It proposes a model of how stress-induced changes in the brain systems involved in stress and memory mediate changes in traumatic memories in patients with childhood abuse-related disorders. The relevance of the model to current controversies regarding the delayed recall of childhood abuse is discussed.

Prologue

Mark L. Howe, Gail S. Goodman, and Dante Cicchetti

This prologue begins by considering the role of stress and trauma in memories of childhood experiences. It poses two broad questions: does the fact that one has experienced trauma during childhood affect subsequent memory processing? Can children who have been maltreated remember and report those experiences accurately? It argues that children can remember traumatic experiences especially if they occur after the period known as infantile amnesia, and care is taken with the manner in which children attempt to recollect this information. Stress, trauma, and maltreatment also affect the course of normal memory development. An overview of the succeeding chapters is presented.
Few questions in psychology have generated as much debate as those concerning the impact of childhood trauma on memory. A lack of scientific research to constrain theory has helped fuel arguments about whether childhood trauma leads to deficits that result in conditions, such as false memory or lost memory, and whether neurohormonal changes that are correlated with childhood trauma can be associated with changes in memory. Scientists have also struggled with more theoretical concerns, such as how to conceptualize and measure distress and other negative emotions in terms of, for example, discrete emotions, physiological response, and observer ratings. To answer these questions, this book brings together neurobiological, cognitive, clinical, and legal research on stress and memory development. This research examines the effects of early stressful and traumatic experiences on the development of memory in childhood, and elucidates how early trauma is related to other measures of cognitive and clinical functioning in childhood. It also goes beyond childhood to explore the long-term impact of stressful and traumatic experiences on the entire course of “normal” memory development, and determine the longevity of trauma memories that are formed early in life.

Chapter 2 summarizes prior work on the effects of childhood trauma on children’s life-course and provides a general overview of the different types of traumatic experience that shaped the life-course of the young men in this study. This chapter shows that childhood trauma was able to unfold its full impact on these young men’s life-course because most families did not have access to mental health services that could have intervened proactively.
This chapter examines the complex relationship between childhood trauma and substance use. Not all children who experience childhood trauma will go on to use substances, and persons with no childhood trauma may develop substance use disorders. However, trauma has been found to greatly increase the risk of later substance use. Further, research suggests that individuals with histories of childhood trauma are more likely to report chronic pain symptoms that interfere with daily activities and are also more likely to be prescribed multiple prescription medications. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been directly associated with substance misuse and substance use disorders in adulthood, including illicit drug use, with a dose–response relationship such that the more ACEs children experience, the more likely they are to have such substance use problems as adults. Implications for prevention of opioid use disorder in particular, and substance misuse and addiction more generally, are discussed.

Hallucinations can be a common symptom of mental illness and traditionally were often associated with conditions such as schizophrenia. However, the reality is regarded as much more complex now. Data on hallucinations illustrate this. For example, hallucinations are experienced by approximately 10 percent of patients diagnosed as suffering from bipolar disorder and also sometimes by patients suffering from major depression. This chapter discusses hallucinations in a wider context than just certain mental illnesses. This chapter asks: what exactly are hallucinations and can they occur in other situations besides illness? It concludes that there is an association between childhood trauma and psychosis but they are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
The Adaptive Value of Survival Processing in Childhood Trauma Victims
Linsey Raymaekers, Henry Otgaar, Maarten J. V. Peters, and Tom Smeets
in What Is Adaptive about Adaptive Memory?

Past research showed the robust effect of survival processing in several undergraduate samples. Recently, this effect was also demonstrated in children (Aslan & Bäuml, 2012; Otgaar & Smeets, 2010). To our knowledge, the present study is the first to illustrate the survival recall effect in childhood trauma victims. The present study was the first to examine the influence of rating words according to an abuse scenario, a new (i.e., not used in previous studies) scenario that could also be viewed as a form of survival and potentially inducing self-referential processing in people with a history of abuse. The present data illustrate the adaptive role of the memory system in people with a history of trauma.

Haunted by Parents
Leonard Shengold

This book examines why some people are resistant to change, even when it seems to promise a change for the better. Drawing on a lifetime of clinical experience as well as wide readings of world literature, the book shows how early childhood relationships with parents can lead to a powerful conviction that change means loss. The book continues previous explorations into the consequences of early psychological injury and loss. In the examples of real patients and in the lives and work of such figures as Edna St. Vincent Millay, William Wordsworth, and Henrik Ibsen, it looks at the different ways in which unconscious impressions connected with early experiences and fantasies about parents are integrated into individual lives. The book shows the difficulties that have been encountered with patients in raising these memories to the conscious level where they can be known and owned; and it also shows, in a survey of literary figures, how these memories can become part of the creative process. The book offers a deeply humane reflection on the
values and limitations of therapy, on memory and the lingering effects of the past, and on the possibility of recognizing the promise of the future.

Childhood Trauma
Johnny S. Kim, Jacqui von Cziffra-Bergs, and Stacey Anne Williams

in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy with Clients Managing Trauma
Published in print: 2018 Published Online: December 2018
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Item type: chapter

This chapter examines how SFBT can be used with clients who have experienced childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences. This chapter will look at the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACES), what happens when incidents are compounded, the societal and economic impacts of childhood trauma, and bullying during childhood. We will explore how the SFBT model can be used to help children to cope with and reframe negative thoughts or experiences into positive and growth-oriented ones. The chapter also describes the application of SFBT using the solution-focused art gallery in the case of a young nine-year-old girl who is being bullied at school.

Memory Work and Trauma in Research on Children
Diane Wolf

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Publisher: NYU Press
Item type: chapter

This chapter argues that using memory as a primary source in child-centered research on the recent past explicates the interconnection between the child and the adult in yet another distinct way. In particular, the story of the “hidden children” of World War II offers keen insights into how memories reveal the emotional texture of situations from childhood, even if the chronological facts and details of the events become blurred. With this in mind, the chapter focuses on three main areas concerning the memory of childhood trauma: the formation of distinct memories during childhood, memories of childhood that are difficult to access, and making sense of these memories once they are accessed.
This book takes advantage of 30 years of recent scholarship, new biographical information, and deeper understanding of Schoenberg’s aims and significance to produce a newly revised guide to Schoenberg’s life and work. The book demonstrates the indissoluble links among Schoenberg’s musical language (particularly the enigmatic and influential 12-tone method), his personal character, and his creative ideas, as well as the deep connection between his genius as a teacher and as a revolutionary composer. Exploring influences on the composer’s early life, the book offers a new perspective on Schoenberg’s creative process and the emotional content of his music. For example, as a previously unsuspected source of childhood trauma, the book points to the Vienna Ringtheater disaster of 1881, in which hundreds of people were burned to death, including Schoenberg’s uncle and aunt, whose orphaned children were then adopted by Schoenberg’s parents. The book brings such experiences to bear on the music itself, examining virtually every work in the oeuvre to demonstrate its vitality and many-sidedness.