



Trauma and Memory: Clinical and Legal Controversies

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The authenticity of memories of childhood sexual abuse has become one of the major social controversies of the 1990's. As persons who report histories of abuse have sought remedies in civil and criminal proceedings in the courts, the accuracy of their memories--particularly when they have been recalled after a period of time--has been subject to intense scrutiny.

This volume brings together many of the leading participants in the debate to provide a comprehensive picture of the psychological, physiological, and legal aspects of trauma. Beginning by defining the opposing positions in the debate, the contributors then offer a variety of perspectives on the nature of memory, including reviews of some of the most exciting recent developments in this fast-growing area of investigation. Next, consideration is given to the impact of trauma on memory, both in adults and in children. With this framework in place, the authors turn to an examination of the variety of treatment approaches available to victims of trauma, who are trying to cope with the painful consequences of those events. The book argues against a unidimensional approach to trauma, calling instead for a multidisciplinary synthesis that includes developmental, neurobiological, cognitive, and psychodynamic perspectives. Chapters address the legal dilemmas for patients, mental health professionals and society as a whole that have arisen from the trauma and memory controversy. Most importantly, the editors shift the focus of their discussion from the laboratory to the courtroom and from the research journal to the psychotherapist's office, looking at the issues from every relevant angle.

This is the only book in the field to treat the trauma and memory controversy comprehensively, from basic research on memory processes through clinical approaches to legal and policy issues. *Trauma and Memory* is a valuable tool for clinicians treating patients with traumatic memories. It is also intended for psychologists, physicians, social workers and lawyers who need a comprehensive reference on trauma and sexual abuse during childhood.

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