

Sexual Violence in adolescence: from trauma to individuation, SVS's experience

Alessandra Granata

Psicologa-psicoterapeuta

Soccorso Violenza Sessuale e Domestica (SVSeD)

Fondazione IRCCS Cà Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico



Characteristics of Sexual Violence Against Adolescent Girls: A 10 Years' Retrospective Study of 731 Sexually Abused Adolescents

Giusy Barbara ^{1,2}, Valentina Albertini³, Veronica Maria Tagi⁴, Lidia Maggioni⁵,
Maria Carlotta Gorio⁶, Cristina Cattaneo⁵, Fabio Parazzini², Elena Ricci ², Laura Buggio ¹,
Alessandra Kustermann¹

¹Gynecological Unit and SVSeD, Service for Sexual and Domestic Violence, Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Milan, Italy; ²Department of Clinical Sciences and Community Health, University of Milan, Milan, Italy; ³Department of Emergencies, ASST Grande Ospedale Metropolitano Niguarda, Milan, Italy; ⁴Department of Paediatrics, University of Chieti, Chieti, Italy; ⁵Department of Biomedical Science, Legal Medicine Section, University of Milan, Milan, Italy; ⁶Department of Clinical and Biomedical Sciences Luigi Sacco, University of Milan, Milan, Italy

Correspondence: Laura Buggio, Gynecological Unit and SVSeD, Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Via Commenda, 12, Milan, 20122, Italy, Tel +39 02 5503 2917, Fax +39 02 50320264, Email buggiolaura@gmail.com

ed from <https://www.dovepress.com/>
only.

THE LITERATURE DATA: SV in adolescence

- Victims predominantly female
- Only 9% occur in intra-family contexts
- Alcohol, substances and the internet as risk factors
 - Revelations to peers
- Early revelations (because extrafamilial)
 - Few complaints and convictions



Data from the literature: psychological consequences

ABSENCE OF A SPECIFIC SYNDROME OR UNIQUE TRAUMATIC PROCESS

- Recurrent intrusive thoughts, irritability, anger
- Attacks on the body (eating disorders, self-harm, TS)
 - Substance and alcohol abuse
 - Hypersexualized behaviors
 - School problems
- Relationship problems (social withdrawal, isolation, relationship difficulties)

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS AN ATTACK ON THE NARCISSISTIC BASIS

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ADOLESCENCE

In sexual violence the victim feels dispossessed of his own subjectivity while suffering a loss of physical and mental integrity, in a phase of life in which there is an excess of uncontrollable drive excitation and which triggers passivity and loss of limits (pubertaire psychic process)

Sexual violence suffered in adolescence represents a double, if not a triple traumatism determined by the traumatic intrusion of facts, by the intrusion of the sexual in subjects still immersed in various ways in the world of childhood and in some cases by the reactivation of childhood traumas (removed or unacknowledged) related to deficiencies in the relationship with the fundamental objects



THE TRAUMA WITHIN THE TRAUMA

What possibility on an evolutionary level? Suspension of the adolescent trial?
Sexual violence as a strong risk factor with respect to the adolescent process
Arrest or restart?



SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ADOLESCENCE: DATA OF SVSED

YEARS 2020-2024
366 CASES

- SEX: 244 female: 93,98% e 22 males
- NATIONALITY: 74,31% italians, 5,73 UE, 28,9 EUE
 - AGE: 28,9% 13-14 years
30,32% 15-16 years
48,08% anni 17-19 years

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ADOLESCENCE: DATES OF SVSED

TYPE OF VIOLENCE: 5,19 % NO STORY OF VIOLENCE
18,57 AMNESIA OF VIOLENCE WITH SUSPECTED
20,86% GROPING
63,93% PENETRATION

PERPETRETOR OF VIOLENCE: 18,57% unknown

81,43 attacker is know of which 12,02 is a familiar member

51,36% psychological care: victims desire and accept psychological help



SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ADOLESCENCE: DATES OF SVSED

VULNERABILITY: 41%

PREVIOUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE: : 9,88%

TAKING RISK : 53% consumption of alcohol and/or substances before the violence, online acquaintances, escapes and wanderings, imprudence (companioning with little-known or unknown people)



TEENAGE VICTIMS:TAKING RISK

Risk taking is a characteristic feature of the adolescent population

Consideration of the level of initial risk taking by the victim of sexual violence does not eliminate or reduce the responsibility for the act on the part of the aggressor but takes on importance on a treatment level.

Not only prevention of secondary victimization but also treatment of the issue of guilt and post-traumatic symptoms



SEXUAL VIOLENCE WITHOUT TAKING RISK

- Intrafamily aggression (dynamic similar to childhood abuse)
- Assaults by strangers (especially groping)

Need to be recognized as a victim

Sexual violence initially catalyzes and represents the opportunity to give voice to suffering

Sexual trauma, the attack allows them to be seen as suffering and to express pubertal traumatism



TAKING RISK WITHOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT: the passage the sexual act

Impasse regarding the evolutionary problem

Sexuality still understood today in a symbolic sense as a transition to adulthood, as
the ability to dispose of one's own body

Transition to the sexual act, with the use of sexuality as a vehicle

They do not recognize the subjectivity of the act which they perceive as violence,
in a dominator-dominated relationship.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK

Initial risk taking represented by the use of alcohol, cannabinoids, Internet meetings

In these cases the risk is mostly SUFFERED

STRONG SENSE OF GUILT AND SHAME that prevents disclosure and leaves the victim alone



TAKING RISK

N THE SEXUAL FIELD

They have as their basis a poorly controlled body, the exploration of one's identity, the ability to seduce, the confirmation of one's autonomy towards parents, belonging to the peer group, the reversal of passivity into its opposite

On a psychological level Feelings of guilt

EXPERIENCE THAT BRINGS THE LIMITS INTO PLAY IN THE BOND WITH OTHERS AND DENOTES A FAULT OF PROTECTION BY THE ENVIRONMENT



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK : the suffered risk

- Traumatic aspect given by the other's non-recognition of the action committed
- Guilt and shame are so strong that it is impossible to sustain the gaze of others
- Attempts to forget followed by an explosion of behaviors acted out (guilt and shame acted out)
- Revelation and denunciation: often further break-in (dispossessed of his will).
The complaint restores the social bond but does not repair the trauma
 - Parents' reactions: fusional or abandonment

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK : the suffered risk

- THE COMPLAINT: a new time and a new moment, From action to suspension
- The ambivalence of the victim: between the desire to close and the fear of not being recognized
 - GUILT AND SHAME Guilt supports the appropriation of experience
 - From guilt for risk taking to primary guilt



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK : MILENA'S HISTORY

Initial denial of trauma managed privately

At the beginning, violence invades his psychic space: adolescence and its themes seem to desert the psychic scene, occupied by trauma and its devastating effect

Everything focuses on the visual aspects: the importance of the gaze, the split but also the vital expectation of another seeing it

Therapeutic space as a new shell in which to experience trust and security

What space and position in the peer group? And in the family?

From victim to subject



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK :the risk acted

- Initial context of risk taking given by nocturnal escapes, wanderings, habitual consumption of alcohol and substances, following strangers in isolated places
 - Multi-problem situations at family level
 - Eroticized behaviors
 - Multiple accesses possible



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK :the risk acted

A STRONG TRAUMATOPHILIC APPETITE EMERGES, A PSEUDO-ACTIVE BEHAVIOR of which the adolescent does not know the deepest reasons, linked to an original trauma

The victim ignores the traumatic potential to which he exposes himself, resigned to the reification of himself

BASIC TRAUMATOGENIC SITUATION PRIOR TO YOUR



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TAKING RISK :the risk acted

- Sexual violence suffered in childhood and kept quiet
 - Cumulative traumatism as in borderline states
- Need to replace deficient parental figures in a confusion of languages in which the adolescent uses sexuality to access tenderness and warmth



The specificity of sexual violence in adolescence, characterized by risk-taking contexts, presents a creative potential if we work on the risk-taking context which reveals the presence of childhood traumas and difficulties reactivated by pubertal violence.

The therapist does not reproduce the trauma but detaches the sensations with which the victim identifies, putting the event in perspective with other events in his own history.

Violence reproduces the identifications prior to sacrificing oneself and renouncing the position of subject.





Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda
Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico

Sistema Socio Sanitario



Regione
Lombardia

Grazie

Riproduzione riservata-
Copyright A. Granata, 2024