

ETIOLOGY OF ELDER ABUSE
IN THE FAMILY:
LESSONS FROM CHILD
MALTREATMENT

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ETIOLOGICAL MODELS OF CHILD ABUSE

- I. Classic Psychiatric Model
- II. Sociological Model
- III. Child-Effects' Model
- IV. Ecological Integration

Classic Psychiatric Model

- A. Developmental History/Intergenerational Transmission
- B. Mechanisms: Social Learning, Emotional Development
- D. Personality and Psychological Resources of Perpetrator
 - mental illness: depression, alcohol/drugs
 - anti-social personality/hostility
- B. Elder Abuse Implication?
 - Was perpetrator mistreated by victim in childhood?
 - Was spouse mistreated by partner earlier in relationship?
 - Revenge/Anger as motivating factor?
 - Mental health of perpetrator
 - Exhaustion of perpetrator

Sociological Model

- A. Fundamental Critique: Blaming the Victim
- B. Life Circumstances and Contextual Conditions Matter
 - young age of parent
 - step child
 - economic disadvantage/poverty
 - unemployment
 - social isolation/social support
 - cultural/subcultural norms
 - spare the rod and spoil the child
 - the family's—not the community's—child
- C. Elder Abuse Implications?
 - caregiver old, unrelated to victim?
 - socially isolated/lack of social support?
 - poor/unemployed?
 - government financial assistance?
 - societal lack of respect for elderly?

Child-Effects Model

- A. Fundamental Critique: What about the child?
- B. Not All Children Equally Likely to be Mistreated.
 - age of child
 - step child
 - disability
 - misbehavior: cries, argues, disrespects, fights back
- C. Elder Abuse Implications?
 - victim age
 - victim disability: dementia, motor limitations,
bathing/toileting difficulties
 - victim emotional functioning: depressed, angry, hostile...
 - victim financial dependency

ECOLOGICAL INTEGRATION: Risk and Protective Factors

