

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	III
Table of Contents.....	V
Abbreviations.....	IX
Index of Tables and Figures.....	XII
1 Introduction and Objectives.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	2
1.2 Scope of the Thesis.....	5
1.2.1 Objectives.....	5
1.2.2 Hypotheses.....	5
1.2.3 Approach.....	6
1.3 Outline of the Thesis.....	7
2 Theoretical Background.....	9
2.1 Overview of Major Types of Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	10
2.2 Adverse Childhood Experiences in Form of Sexual Violence, Physical Violence, and Parental Loss.....	11
2.3 Adverse Childhood Experiences and Vulnerability to Mental Disorders and Physical Illnesses.....	12
2.4 Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience to Mental Disorders and Physical Illnesses.....	13
2.5 Biological Consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	14
2.6 Theoretical Models of Long-Term Consequences of Early Experiences.....	18
3 Pituitary-Adrenal Responses to Physical Exercise in Women with Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	27
3.1 Preface.....	28
3.2 Abstract.....	29
3.3 Introduction.....	30
3.4 Material and Methods.....	33
3.4.1 Participants.....	33
3.4.2 Psychiatric and ACE Assessment.....	33

3.4.3	Physical Stress Test.....	34
3.4.4	Laboratory Assays.....	35
3.4.5	Statistical Analysis.....	35
3.5	Results.....	36
3.5.1	Study Participants and Exercise Test.....	36
3.5.2	Neuroendocrine Data.....	38
3.6	Discussion.....	44
4	Pituitary Responses in the Arginine Vasopressin Stimulation Test in Women with Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	51
4.1	Preface.....	52
4.2	Abstract.....	53
4.3	Introduction.....	54
4.4	Material and Methods.....	56
4.4.1	Participants.....	56
4.4.2	Psychiatric, ACE, and Chronic Stress Assessment.....	56
4.4.3	Arginine Vasopressin Stimulation Test.....	57
4.4.4	Laboratory Assays.....	58
4.4.5	Statistical Analysis.....	60
4.5	Results.....	60
4.5.1	Study Participants.....	60
4.5.2	Neuroendocrine Data.....	63
4.5.2.1	<i>Between-Group Comparisons</i>	63
4.5.2.2	<i>Multiple Regression Analyses</i>	63
4.6	Discussion.....	68
5	First Evidence for Altered Female Sex Hormone Effects on Adreno- corticotropin Secretion in Women with Adverse Childhood Experiences....	73
5.1	Preface.....	74
5.2	Abstract.....	75
5.3	Introduction.....	76
5.4	Material and Methods.....	80
5.4.1	Participants.....	80
5.4.2	Psychiatric, ACE, and Chronic Stress Assessment.....	81

5.4.3 Arginine Vasopressin Stimulation Test.....	81
5.4.4 Laboratory Assays.....	82
5.4.5 Statistical Analysis.....	82
5.5 Results.....	84
5.5.1 Study Participants.....	84
5.5.2 Neuroendocrine Data.....	87
5.6 Discussion.....	92
6 Sensitivity to Intranasal Oxytocin in Adult Men After Early Parental Separation.....	101
6.1 Preface.....	102
6.2 Abstract.....	104
6.3 Introduction.....	105
6.4 Material and Methods.....	107
6.4.1 Participants and Their Psychological and Biographical Assessment.....	107
6.4.2 Oxytocin Application and Laboratory Assays.....	107
6.4.3 Statistical Analysis.....	107
6.5 Results.....	108
6.6 Discussion.....	111
7 Summary and Main Conclusions.....	113
7.1 Hypothesis One.....	114
7.2 Hypothesis Two.....	114
7.3 Hypothesis Three.....	115
7.4 Hypothesis Four.....	116
8 General Discussion.....	117
8.1 General Limitations of the Studies.....	118
8.2 Implications for Biological Models of Long-Term Consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	122
8.3 Implications for Theoretical Models of Long-Term Consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences.....	129
8.4 Implications for Vulnerability and Resilience.....	136

9 Outlook.....	141
9.1 Future Research Directions.....	142
9.2 Future Diagnostic Directions.....	146
9.3 Future Directions for Prevention and Treatment.....	147
 Abstract in English.....	151
Abstract in German / Zusammenfassung.....	153
References.....	155