

## Results of a Thirty Year Experiment on Women 7/23/2003

By Kathryn Hooks

### ***Abortion has Failed Women***

After a three-decade experiment initiated by *Roe v. Wade*, the results clearly show that abortion harms women.

America has polarized the abortion debate between the unborn child and the woman, but in reality abortion does not offer the best choice for either. A survey by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, research arm for Planned Parenthood, showed women primarily choose abortion because of lack of financial resources and lack of emotional support.<sup>1</sup> Abortion appears to these women to be the only choice available. The false notion that abortion provides the best and easiest solution to an unwanted pregnancy deceptively misleads women.

The "[Women Deserve Better](#)" campaign supported by Feminists for Life among others claims that abortion has failed to meet the needs of women, and women deserve better than a "quick-fix" that ironically — and sadly — leaves women in a more harmful "fix" than previously. Abortion changes a woman's perceived social inconvenience into a health detriment.

In fact, America should be concerned about abortion as a women's health issue.

According to a 1994 report by the Guttmacher Institute 43 percent of women will have an abortion by age 45<sup>2</sup>; therefore the often unreported consequences of abortion affect almost half of the female population. Abortion has failed to offer a physically safe choice for women, and they deserve to know the facts.

- *The Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* stated, "Since 1957, evidence linking induced abortion to the later development of breast cancer has been observed in 27 of 33 studies world-wide."<sup>3</sup> *The International Journal of Cancer* reported a higher risk of developing cervical and ovarian cancer after abortion.<sup>4,5,6</sup>
- The *L.A. Daily News* quoted pro-choice Dr. Janet Daling stating, "I have three sisters with breast cancer, and I resent people messing around with scientific data to further their own agenda, be they pro-choice or pro-life. I would have loved to have found no association between breast cancer and abortion, but our research is rock solid, and our data is accurate. It's not a matter of believing. It's a matter of what is."<sup>7</sup>
- Research by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons reported 6 percent of women who have abortions are left sterile.<sup>8</sup> If a woman has an STD during an abortion, her risk for infertility increases.<sup>9</sup> A study by the *Journal of Infectious Diseases* found 87 percent of women carrying one or more STDs showed no symptoms.<sup>10</sup>
- *Southern Medical Journal* reported that two years after an abortion women have a death rate twice as high as women who continue their pregnancy.<sup>11</sup> Hospital codes only report a present cause of death such as hemorrhage, infection, or ectopic pregnancy not the underlying reason — abortion — so many deaths due to abortion go unreported.
- *The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* found abortion can lead to future pregnancy complications such as premature birth, placenta previa, and ectopic pregnancy.<sup>12,13,14</sup>

Author Ann Saltenberger quotes medical researchers Margaret and Arthur Wynn, who

support abortion-on-demand, acknowledging that "any patient who has had a previous history of abortion should be regarded as a high-risk patient."<sup>15</sup>

Women frequently suffer psychological effects from abortion, which also link to more physical side effects. A study in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* found that women were 63 percent more likely to receive mental care within 90 days of an abortion compared to delivery. In addition, significantly higher rates of subsequent mental health treatment persisted over the entire four years of data examined. Abortion was most strongly associated with subsequent treatments for neurotic depression, bipolar disorder, adjustment reactions, and schizophrenic disorders.<sup>16</sup>

Yet, incredibly, abortion doctors fail to warn and prepare women for the psychological damage of post-abortion syndrome (PAS). PAS creates a psychological dysfunction from the traumatic experience of abortion resulting in intense fear, the feeling of helplessness or being trapped, and loss of control.

- *The British Medical Journal* reported that a woman who experiences an abortion has a suicide risk six times higher than a woman who gives birth to a child.<sup>17</sup> Suicide attempts fall most heavily among teenagers.
- A 1994 survey published by the Elliott Institute found that for women who sought counseling after an abortion, the range of problems included: increased drug and alcohol abuse to deaden pain, reoccurring insomnia and nightmares, and eating disorders.<sup>18</sup>
- *The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* reported that women with a prior history of abortion are twice as likely to use alcohol, five times more likely to use illicit drugs and ten times more likely to use marijuana during the first pregnancy they carry to term compared to women delivering their first pregnancy.<sup>19</sup>
- According to a *Social Science and Medicine*, 30 to 50 percent of women who undergo abortion experience sexual dysfunction that could include increased pain, aversion to sex, or development of a promiscuous life-style.<sup>20</sup>
- Journals, including *Family Planning Perspectives* and *Social Science and Medicine*, have reported links to post-abortion couples and the increased likelihood of divorce or separation. The difficulty for many post-abortion women to form lasting bonds can develop from a lowered self-esteem, greater distrust of males, sexual dysfunction, substance abuse, and greater levels of depression, anxiety, and anger.<sup>21,22,23,24,25,26,27</sup>

Since *Roe v. Wade*, the feminist movement has been so consumed with the abortion issue that many women have made the assumption that to be a feminist and for women's rights, one must be pro-choice, i.e. pro-abortion. Yet, the original leaders of the woman's movement, women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, strongly opposed abortion.

Today, some former pro-abortion women are rejoining the early feminists. Michaelene Jenkins, executive director for Life Resource Network, changed from pro-abortion to pro-life after the horror of her own abortion. Both her boyfriend and her boss advised abortion as the best solution to save her relationship and her career as a dancer. Still unsure of her decision minutes before the procedure, she requested a few more moments to think about it as the doctor entered the room. Immediately the doctor said, "Shut her up" and turned on the loud machine. After the abortion, she ended up leaving her boyfriend and job to escape depression and to break free of the destructive cycle of personal behavior that followed her abortion.

Today Jenkins shares her story to educate women on the true nature of abortion. A national

campaign called "[Silent No More](#)" has brought thousands of women together to tell their stories about post-abortion suffering. These women defy the public paradigm that women's rights equal abortion as a positive choice for women.

Abortion propaganda tells women they need abortion so that there are no consequences to their behavior and choices. The propaganda tells them that abortion is necessary so that they can remain on an equal level with men. Abortion sends the message that fighting discrimination is more important than a woman's health. Yet, equality gained at the cost of a woman's physical and psychological well being diminishes all women and further blinds them to their own self-destructive behavior and choices. Women deserve better than being told that their career is more important than their child. Women deserve better than being told, "A baby will ruin your life." Women deserve better than the lie that a risky and dangerous surgery offers a solution to their situation.

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## End Notes

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