

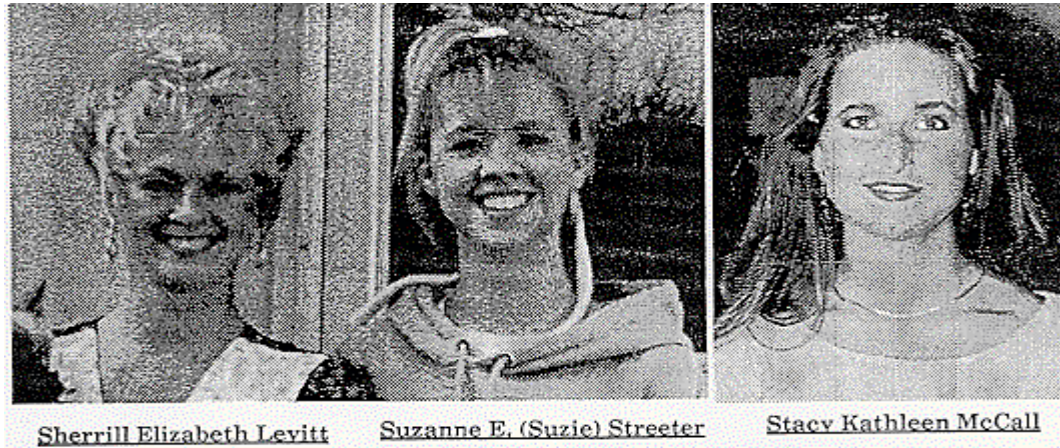
Abortion Research and Findings

Mary Lee Ingram, LCSW
Catholic Charities



Prevalence of Induced Abortion

- ❑ 43% of all U S women will have an abortion by age 45
- ❑ 1 out of every 3 women in the US above the age of 45 have had an abortion
- ❑ 47% Protestant 27% Catholic



Sherrill Elizabeth Levitt

Suzanne E. (Suzie) Streeter

Stacy Kathleen McCall

Factors which indicate Risk for Trauma after an abortion

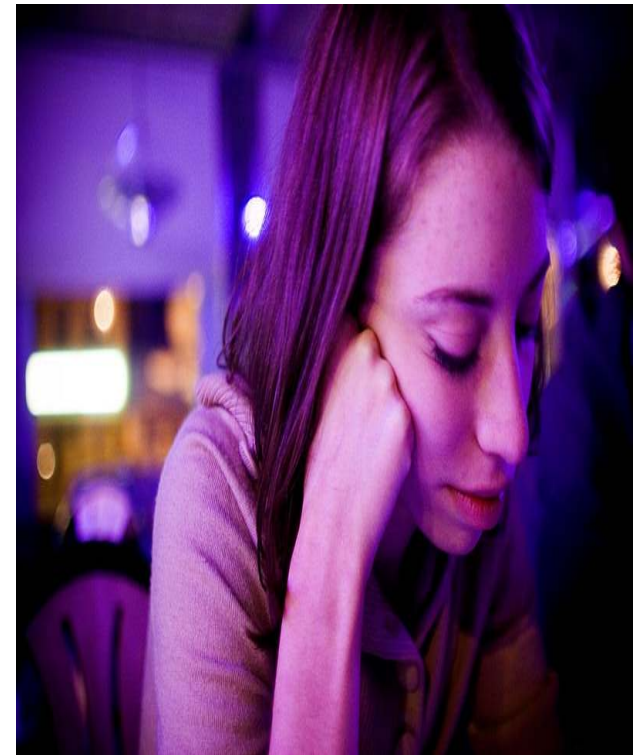
Feeling Pressured into an abortion



- To comply with the needs or wishes of others
- Threats to withhold love or approval unless she does the “best thing”
- Lack of emotional support to keep the baby
- Pressure from unfavorable circumstances
- Pre-natal testing which reveals a defect

Factors which indicate risk for Trauma after an abortion

- Ambivalence/ uncertainty about their choice
- Attachment/Desire to keep the baby
- History of sexual abuse
- Previous psychiatric history



Women's Experience of Abortion

abandonment rejection isolation shame



Men's experience after abortion

Over 80% think of the child that might have been born

30% think of the child often

Many men cry during the interview process

Inability to enjoy their lives



Men's experience of abortion

- 45% pushed the mother of their baby to abort
- Many expressed powerlessness if voiceless in the decision
- Most of the men think of abortion years later



“Pre – abortion counseling”



In a survey of 252 women...
66% said their counselor's
advice was very biased
toward abortion

40-60% said they were
uncertain of their decision
prior to counseling of
whom 44% were hoping
to find an alternative to
abortion during their
counseling

“Pre-abortion counseling”

Only 5% were encouraged to ask questions

52 to 71% felt their questions were sidestepped, trivialized, or inadequately answered

Over 90% said they were not given enough information to make an informed choice



Pre-abortion

Over 80% said it was very unlikely they would have aborted if they had not been so strongly encouraged to abort by others, their “abortion counselors” and their parents



After abortion decision

52% of women who suffer from post abortion trauma report being “forced by others” into unwanted abortions



The abortion decision

The National Abortion Federation reports that One in five women served by their clinics are morally opposed to abortion. Other research says 70% of women seeking abortion are morally opposed to it



The abortion decision

The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports that the primary reason women abort are a lack of financial resources and emotional support





Abortion & the African-American Community



- ❑ **Since abortion was legalized in 1973, more than 14 million African-American babies have been killed. This is more than the total number of African-American deaths from all other causes combined (heart disease, diabetes, cancer, crime, accidents, AIDS, etc.) This is about 1/3 of the 43 million abortions that have occurred since 1973.**
- ❑ **About 1,200 African-American babies are killed by abortion in the United States every day.**
- ❑ **A disproportionate number of the nation's abortion clinics are located in low-income and minority neighborhoods, where a majority of African-Americans live.**
- ❑ **Approximately 35% of all abortions in the United States are performed on African-American women, while they represent only 13% of the female population of the country.**

In 1990, African-Americans comprised the largest minority group in the U.S. Hispanics are now the largest minority group.



Depression

Post abortive women are 138% more likely to be at high risk for depression compared with women who carry to term



DEPRESSION



Depression rates
discovered on average
of 8 years following
abortion

Source: British Medical Journal

Los Angeles Times Poll

56% women admit guilt
26% regretted choice



66% Men report guilt
33% Regretted choice

Los Angeles Times Poll

This poll indicates that most women and men are neither psychologically or emotionally at peace with their abortion decision



Research on post-abortion trauma

162% more likely to be admitted for psychiatric treatment within 90 days of their abortion compared to women who delivered and over 4 years they continued to be more at risk than women who delivered (Coleman et al., 2002)



Research on Post-Abortion Trauma



Compared to delivering women, women who have abortions subsequently require more psychiatric care.

American Journal of Orthopsychiatry

Research on Post-Abortion Trauma

Psychiatric Admissions

- 67% higher even four years following abortion
- Aborting women are more likely to be admitted for adjustment reactions and depressive psychosis



Promiscuity and Abortion

- ❑ Promiscuity can be used as a form of degrading self punishment driven by low self- esteem
- ❑ A desperate need to feel valued by another, if only superficially
- ❑ Reenact feelings of shame and guilt related to abortion



ABORTION BREAKS A MOTHER'S HEART



Physical Effects Heart Disease



Over the eight years following an abortion, there is nearly a six fold increase in cardiovascular disease which results in death. (5.46%)

Physical Effects Breast Cancer

- ❑ Women who abort before age 18 increase their risk of breast cancer 2.5 times (150% increase)
Journal of the National Cancer Institute
- ❑ 25 out of 31 studies worldwide have demonstrated a link between abortion & breast cancer



Physical Effects

Cervical, Ovarian, Liver Cancer



Women who have had one abortion
More than double their risk of
Cervical, ovarian and liver cancer.
Life Dynamics & Rutherford Institute

Substance Abuse



- 460% more likely to use illegal drugs
- 122% more likely to use alcohol after abortion

(Coleman et al., 2002)

Substance Abuse

- ❑ In a study of women without a history of substance abuse, women who had aborted their first pregnancy were 4.5 times higher risk of subsequent abuse
- ❑ 150,000 women/year



Substance Abuse



- ❑ Women use drugs and alcohol to cope with unresolved emotional issues related to past abortions
- ❑ Since unaddressed issues of loss, grief, and guilt may become more intense during subsequent wanted pregnancies, women may have more difficulty abstaining from drugs or alcohol even though they know it puts their wanted pregnancy at risk.

Substance Abuse

Women with a prior history of abortion are...

- Twice as likely to use alcohol
- Five times more likely to use illicit drugs
- Ten times more likely to use marijuana

...during the first pregnancy they carry to term compared with women delivering their first pregnancies



*American Journal of Obstetrics
and Gynecology*

Risks for future children

- The use of drugs or alcohol places a newborn at higher risk on congenital defects, low birth weight and death

American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology



Risks for future Children

- ❑ The children of women who have had abortions have less supportive home environments and more behavioral problems than the children of women without a history of abortion;
- ❑ This finding supports the view that abortion may negatively effect bonding with later children, cause disturbed mothering skills, and impact a women's psychology and psychiatry.

The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry



Risks for Future Children

Key findings of a Danish Study on 61,000 women:
Doubled risk of a very Preterm birth (before 34 Weeks gestation) with Women with previous Induced abortions



Risk for Future Children

- 95% increased risk of premature birth for women with 2 previous “evacuation” type abortions



Vanessa Booth, right, shares her knowledge and experience with a patient on what to expect and how to cope with a premature newborn.

Suicide Abortion Link



Reichers vineyard survey

- 65% had experienced suicidal thoughts
 - 17% had attempted suicide

Suicide abortion Link



- Suicide Anonymous in Cincinnati reported that in a 35 month period her group worked with 4,000 women.
- Nearly 1/2 of those calling had had an abortion.

Suicide Abortion Link

Teenage Suicide

University of Minnesota found that teenage girls are 10x more likely to attempt suicide if they have an abortion in the last six months than are teens who have not had an abortion



Suicide Abortion Link



- Six times more likely to commit suicide one year later compared to women who deliver. (Gissler et al., 1996)

Suicide Abortion Link

The high relative suicide risk means that the myth of elective abortion being safer than term delivery has been revealed as just that --- a MYTH



Suicide Abortion Link



The strong association between suicide and abortion bears witness to how suicidal impulses serve as a means to reenacting a traumatic abortion experience. When she is later faced with depression, isolation or an emptiness that cannot be filled by drugs, alcohol or sex, death again offers a solution. "After all," some reason, "I killed my child. Why not me?"



Suicide Abortion Link



- ▣ Sample 150,000 women's medical records
- ▣ 2.5% more likely than delivering women to commit suicide within 8 yrs of their abortion



China: A Case Study



56% of all
female suicides
in the world
occur in China

The suicide rate in China is the highest in the world.

China: A Case Study



- China is the only country where more women die of suicide than men
World Health Organization
 - Deaths among rural women between 15 and 34 years of age are the result of suicide

China: A Case Study



The suicide rate among Chinese women (around 500 per day) may be partially explained by China's "one child" family policy

China: *A Case Study*



- ❖ Forbids women from having as many children as they want
 - ❖ Requires government permission to become pregnant
 - ❖ Extended Family is taxed according to number of children

China: A Case Study

- ❑ The government monitors Ovulation
- ❑ One must have a license to become pregnant
- ❑ Family Planning in China also involves coerced abortions



Healing after abortion

Rachel Ministries



Catholic Charities

- ❑ Weekend retreats Supportive, confidential and non-judgmental place to release painful emotions, grieve and begin the healing process. Open to men, women, couples- anyone hurting because of abortion
- ❑ Individual support- telephone helpline and peer support
- ❑ Professional and Pastoral counseling and referrals
- ❑ Growin' on the Vine



- Dr. Teresa Burke
- Jeremiah 31: 15-17
- Healing one retreat at a time
- Throughout the country and world
- Interdenominational and Catholic Retreats
- National and Regional Leadership training

Healing one weekend at a Time

- USA
- The Americas
Canada Chile Mexico
Uruguay
- Africa Cameroon
- Asia Taiwan
Australia
- Europe England
Ireland Northern
Ireland Portugal Spain
Russia



Rachel's Vineyard Team

- Priest
- Licensed Therapist
- Supportive team members (men and women)– all have participated in a retreat



Screen for the retreat



- ❑ Complete questionnaire
- ❑ Screen for medical and mental health history
- ❑ Men and women attend retreat
- ❑ Individual interview required with psychiatric history
- ❑ One need not be Catholic to attend, most are not
- ❑ Fearful to call and attend ~ Prepare for retreat

Emotional numbness

- ❑ Rocks
- ❑ Oil
- ❑ Living Scripture –
- ❑ Visual imagery- music
- ❑ Prayer – facility with chapel
- ❑ Flowers
- ❑ Palanca



A time to let go and begin the healing



- ❑ Write letter to child/ children
- ❑ Memorial service
- ❑ Invite others to attend ~ or have participants or team to stand with
- ❑ Transitional objects ~ rose, pin, certificate of life, memorial mass bulletin with name of child

Follow up and referrals

- ❑ Monthly follow up gatherings
- ❑ Referrals to mental health professionals and spiritual directors
- ❑ Open to developing their faith life



Women Helping
Women



Help us Help Others

- ❑ Make referral to Rachel's Vineyard Retreats
- ❑ Collaborate with us- let's work together to offer healing that comes from Christ to those who are hurting
- ❑ Keep brochures and cards available in waiting rooms, churches
- ❑ Place notices about upcoming retreats on your bulletin boards, newsletters, website
- ❑ Include Rachel's Vineyard or Catholic Charities Pregnancy and Adoption Services on your website



Suffering from an **Abortion?**

Rachel's Vineyard
Healing & Support

877-hope-4-me

RespectLifeTulsa.org



June 5-7, 2009

September 25-27, 2009

CALL 949-HOPE