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# The Truth About Women and Abortion — Lasting Trauma

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Guilt, distress, and mental trauma among women who have experienced an abortion are far more common and long-lasting than abortion rights proponents have claimed. Researchers with the Norwegian Council for Mental Health and the University of Oslo evaluated 40 women who had experienced miscarriage and 80 women who had experienced an abortion. The women were then followed by the researchers for five years.

According to a report in *The Washington Times*: *Out of the entire group of women, only a dozen — one who had miscarried, the rest who had aborted — did not describe the experience of losing a baby as difficult. The researchers also reported that seven women who had abortions dropped out of the study all together “because it was too difficult for them to answer questions about the pregnancy termination.” Although the women who had miscarried experienced more immediate grief, those feelings abated and began to resolve over time — a pattern “expected after a traumatic and sad life event,” the study stated.*

More: *In the aftermath of abortion, women “experienced more mental distress long after the event — two and five years afterwards — than women who had a miscarriage,” the researchers reported. Along with “high levels” of anxiety and feelings of guilt and shame, the women who had voluntarily ended their pregnancy also “had to make efforts to avoid thoughts about the event,” the study also noted. Avoidance, in fact, “was consistently elevated.”*

According to *The Telegraph* [London], a spokesman for the Family Planning Association (pro-abortion) rejected the research out of hand: “There is no evidence to suggest that abortion directly causes psychological trauma. Women can experience mixed feelings after an abortion such as relief or sadness. These are natural reactions and few women experience long-term problems.”

Notably, the paper’s editors found this dismissal hard to take. In an editorial published today, the paper declares: *The politicisation of the debate means that it is usually only unfashionable pro-life activists who point out its psychological dangers, and they are rarely given a proper hearing. Meanwhile, the Family Planning Association continues to insist that “there is no evidence to suggest that abortion directly causes psychological trauma”. The Oslo research exposes the absolute fatuity of that last claim. Abortion, like miscarriage, involves the loss of a baby; unlike miscarriage, the loss is the result of a conscious decision. And the operation itself, as Germaine Greer has taken to reminding her fellow feminists, is a gruesome one. No wonder that a fifth of women continue to feel depression, shame or guilt.*

Why are American newspapers giving this story so little attention? That fact speaks for itself.

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