

# Salt & Light

Winter 2006

The Newsletter of the Social Concerns Ministry Team

*Educating and informing the church body in light of biblical principles*

You are the salt of the earth...  
You are the light of the world...

*Mt. 5:13-14*

## Editorial Note:

This issue of Salt & Light addresses the tragedy of abortion. It builds on an issue produced three years ago—archived at [www.wbc.org](http://www.wbc.org)—that discussed why the act of abortion itself is wrong and identified resources explaining constructive alternatives to it. The present issue examines the social impacts of abortion—impacts that are often overlooked in discussions of abortion.

Many people are surprised to discover how harmful abortion is not only to the women who resort to it, but also to the other children those women have and to the broader society in economic and cultural terms. Women who abort are more likely than others to get breast cancer, to suffer from placenta previa, and to commit suicide. Their other children are more likely to experience abuse—perhaps not so surprising since the aborted siblings of these children have been subjected to the ultimate abuse. And huge economic losses have resulted from tens of millions of potential workers and consumers being aborted. Minority groups have borne a disproportionately large share of these losses.

Such considerations must not continue to be overlooked in discussions of abortion.

## Does Abortion Harm Women?

From: Elizabeth Shadigian, "The Cost of Choice" (2004)

**Breast Cancer.** Based upon a review of the four previously published systematic reviews of the literature and relying on two independent meta-analyses (one published and one unpublished), induced abortion causes an increased risk of breast cancer in two different ways. First, the protective effect of a first full-term pregnancy (fftp) is lost, creating an increased risk of breast cancer by delaying the fftp to a later time in a woman's life. Second, apart from the delay of fftp, induced abortion carries with it an independent risk of breast cancer.

The medical literature since the 1970s has shown that a full-term delivery early in one's reproductive life reduces the chance of subsequent breast cancer development. This is called "the protective effect of the first full-term pregnancy (fftp)." A woman's decision to have an abortion instead of a full-term pregnancy at age 18 can almost double her five-year and lifetime risk of breast cancer at age 50, regardless of race.

Abortion as an independent risk of breast cancer, apart from the delay of first full-term pregnancy, has been controversial. After a variety of studies, finally a meta-analysis was published by Brind et al.

[The Brind meta-analysis] reported an odds-ratio ("OR") for breast cancer at 1.3 in women with a previous induced abortion. (An odds ratio of 1.3 means that for every ten women who developed breast cancer and had not had an abortion, 13 women who developed breast cancer had had an abortion.) One yet unpublished independent meta-analysis found the OR 1.21. A further finding of these two studies

was that the risk of breast cancer increased if the abortion is preformed before a first full-term pregnancy. Brind found an OR=1.4, while the unpublished study showed an OR=1.27. The two meta-analyses used different methodologies, but reported nearly equivalent results which are statistically significant, and do show that induced abortion is an independent risk factor for breast cancer.

In addition, the risk of breast cancer increases with induced abortion when (a) the induced abortion precedes a first full-term pregnancy, (b) the woman is a teen, (c) the woman is over the age of 30, (d) the pregnancy is terminated at more than 12 weeks gestation, or (e) the woman has a family history of breast cancer. One researcher (Daling) also reported that *all* pregnant teens that had a family history of breast cancer *and* aborted their first pregnancy developed breast cancer.

**Placenta Previa.** "Placenta previa" is a medical condition of pregnancy where the placenta covers the cervix, making a cesarean section medically necessary to deliver the child. In general, this condition puts women at higher risk, not just because surgery (the c-section) is necessary, but also because blood loss is greater and blood transfusions may be necessary. Placenta previa also creates a higher risk of hysterectomy (the loss of the uterus), and therefore the need for more extensive surgery.

Three studies, each with over 100 subjects, as well as one meta-analysis, were found to have

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Prior issues of *Salt & Light*: [www.wbc.org](http://www.wbc.org) (Adult Ministries)

## Does Abortion Harm Born Children?

From: Randy Alcorn, *ProLife Answers*, and NRL News (November 2005)

Child abuse has not decreased since abortion was legalized, but has dramatically increased. Statistics reveal a sharp rise in child abuse in countries that legalize abortion. In 1973, when abortion was legalized, child abuse cases in the United States were estimated at 167,000. By 1982, the number had risen to 929,000.

Experts agree that child abuse—not just the reporting of it—has dramatically increased since the early seventies. About 47 out of every 1,000 children are reported as victims of child maltreatment. While some of those reported are not truly abused, many who are abused are not reported.

The actual increase in child abuse is even more dramatic than it appears, however, since surgical abortion alone (not counting chemical abortion) has left us 40 million fewer children in America to abuse. Since these children were abused to death by abortion, they too should be counted as victims of child abuse.

If children are viewed as expendable before birth, they will be viewed as expendable after birth. Princeton bioethics professor Peter Singer draws a logical but frightening conclusion from the reasoning used to justify abortion: “Human babies are not born self-aware, or capable of grasping that they exist over time. They are not persons. Hence their lives would seem to be no more worthy of protection than the life of a fetus.” Once we assume the fetus isn’t worthy of protection, we must logically conclude other human beings aren’t either.

Studies indicate that child abuse is more frequent among mothers who have previously had an abortion. Dr. Philip G. Ney’s studies indicated that this is partially due to the guilt and depression caused by abortion and its hindering of the mother’s ability to bond with future

children. Writing in a psychiatric journal, Dr. Ney documents that having an abortion may decrease a parent’s natural restraint against feelings of rage felt toward small children.

A parent overcomes her natural impulse to care for a child’s helplessness when she chooses abortion. Having suppressed the preserving instinct once before, that instinct may become less effective in holding back rage against the helplessness of a newborn or the crying of a toddler or the defiance of a preschooler.

*The attitude that results in abortion is exactly the same attitude that results in child abuse.*

The pressure to abort is a pressure to reject the child. Even if she doesn’t abort, the mother can look at her baby and think, “I could have aborted you,” or even, “I should have aborted you.” The child owes her everything, she owes the child nothing. This can cause resentment for any demands or needs of the child that require parental sacrifice. The logic, whether conscious or unconscious, is inseparable—if it was all right to kill the same baby before birth, is it really so bad to slap him around once in a while now?

Of the five thousand “born children” in this country murdered every year, 95 percent are killed by one or both of their parents. The horror stories of young people discarding newborns in trashcans, fields, or hotels, and even at the prom, have been spawned by the notion that children belong to their parents, who believe they have the same right to dispose of them that society told them they had before the child was born. Once the child-abuse mentality grips a society, it does not restrict itself to abusing only one group of children. If preborn children aren’t safe, neither are born children....

Does maternal abortion history increase the risk of child abuse? A new study recently published in the Scandinavian medical journal *Acta Paediatrica* suggests the answer is “yes,” [based on]...data from the *Fertility and Contraception among Low-Income Child Abusing and Neglecting Mothers in Baltimore, MD* study.

Compared to women with no history of induced abortion, those with one prior abortion had a 144% higher risk for child physical abuse. By contrast, if the woman had a history of one miscarriage or stillbirth there was no enhanced risk for physically abusing a later born child.

One of the frequently uttered claims of those who support abortion is that abortion will result in fewer unwanted children and should therefore result in a reduction in child maltreatment. Ironically, just the opposite seems to be occurring.

One of the assumptions is that because a woman has freely chosen to abort, she—and her subsequent children—would not be negatively affected. But more recent research on the psychological effects of abortion suggests that women who abort often are, at a minimum, ambivalent, if not also under pressure from others to abort.

A handful of earlier studies identified a correlation between maternal history of abortion and problematic parenting. This includes lower emotional support and heightened risk for both child abuse and neglect.

However, this new study is considered stronger than previous reports linking abortion to child maltreatment because the researchers were able to control for demographic, personal, and social factors found to be related to child physical abuse (frequent residential moves, number of children, worries regarding income, education, age, history of depression, and binge drinking, among other factors). †

## Abortion's Impact on Minority Groups

From: Statistics from 2000 U.S. Census and the Allan Guttmacher Institute

While representing only a quarter of the U.S. population of women of child-bearing age, African American and Hispanic American women account for over half of all abortions performed each year in the United States.

Hispanic American abortions in 2000: 263,911. Hispanic American women represented:

- ◆ **12.8% of the U.S. population of women of child-bearing age in 2000.**
- ◆ **accounted for 20.1% of all abortions performed that year in America.**

African American abortions in 2000: 416,218. African American women represented:

- ◆ **13.7% of the U.S. population of women of child-bearing age in 2000.**
- ◆ **accounted for 31.7% of all abortions performed that year in America.**

The loss to these communities is more than just numbers or population. Abortion means the loss of black and Hispanic athletes, artists, political leaders, scientists, teachers, engineers, businessmen and businesswomen. †



## Does Abortion Harm Society?

From: [www.ibnet.org](http://www.ibnet.org) and data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, Social Security Administration, Alan Guttmacher Institute, and National Center for Health Statistics

The following economic loses are due to abortion:

- ◆ Lost obstetrical/gynecological economy: \$18 billion
- ◆ Lost hospital economy: \$63 billion
- ◆ Lost pediatrician/family practice economy: \$67 billion
- ◆ Lost diaper makers economy: \$35 billion
- ◆ Lost shoe economy: \$19 billion
- ◆ Lost food economy: \$113 billion
- ◆ Lost children's clothing economy: \$73 billion
- ◆ Lost school construction economy: \$306 billion
- ◆ Lost school teachers, administration and service

personnel economy: \$112 billion

- ◆ Lost college/university economy: \$35 billion

This list addresses only part of the lost consumption as a result of 40 million abortions.

While it is true that God alone knows "what might have been" had abortion never been legalized, we can know that the economic impact of losing such a significant percentage of our youth has been and will be tremendous.

Abortion, of course, is not wrong [just] because it has a negative economic impact, but it appears that many of our current social problems, and even the demand for government funded abortions,

stem partially from a weakened economy. But is that not the way it is with sin and rebellion? Whenever mankind has sought to avoid responsibility, or escape the results of sin, the problems only become worse.

If abortion had not been legalized in 1973.... 25 years later in the U.S:

- ◆ 6,310,109 more people would be employed
- ◆ \$61,767,776,910 earned by those employees
- ◆ \$1,719,614,909 contributed to Medicare
- ◆ \$7,352,836,163 contributed to Social Security
- ◆ 785,559 more retired workers could receive benefits. †

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## Abortion Harms Women

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examined induced abortion and placenta previa. The three studies found a positive association, as did the meta-analysis. Induced abortion increased the risk of placenta previa by approximately 50%.

**Suicide.** Two studies have shown increased rates of suicide after induced abortion, one from Finland and one from the United States. The Finnish study (by Gissler et al) reported an OR=3.1 when women choosing induced abortion were compared to women in the general population. The odds ratio increased to 6.0 when women choosing induced abortion were compared to women completing a pregnancy. (The odds ratio, in this instance, means that for every woman who had a baby at term who committed suicide, six women who had an abortion committed suicide during the same time period.) The American study (by Reardon et al.) recently reported that suicide

OR=2.5 was more common after induced abortion.

**Conclusion.** Induced abortion is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer, placenta previa, ...and maternal suicide. Maternal deaths from induced abortion are underreported, do not include maternal suicide, and do not include deaths from all causes in the years immediately following abortion. All of these risks should appear on consent forms for induced abortion, but currently do not....

Given the widespread utilization

of elective abortion, the health consequences of that procedure are of profound importance to society. It is imperative for professional medical organizations, government, and health agencies to fund research that follows women who have had an elective abortion through their lifetime so as to document and quantify health risks. Doing anything less is a disservice to women, further compounding the emotional turmoil that occurs with an unintended or crisis pregnancy.

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