

Forced Abortion in America

Unwanted abortions and other risks and human rights abuses

The Un-Choice:

- 64% of women reported feeling pressured to abort.¹
- 79% weren't told of available resources.¹
- Pressure to abort can escalate to violence.²
- Clinics fail to screen for coercion.⁴
- Suicide rates 6 times higher after abortion.⁶
- Most felt rushed or uncertain, yet 67% weren't counseled.¹
- 84% weren't sufficiently informed before abortion.¹
- Homicide is the leading killer of pregnant women.³
- Women nearly 4 times more likely to die after abortion.⁵
- 65% of women suffer trauma symptoms after abortion.¹

Unwanted Choice: Most abortions are unwanted or coerced. Many are forced.

Most abortions are unwanted are coerced and many are forced, sometimes violently. Escalating pressure to abort can come from employers, husbands, parents, doctors, partners, profit-driven abortion businesses, landlords, friends and family, or even trusted financial, personal, school or religious guides, gatekeepers or authorities. They may be negligent in telling young or vulnerable individuals or couples about available resources. They may misrepresent information or present false information as fact. They may threaten or blackmail.

These are not idle threats. Coercion can escalate to violence. As this report shows, women who resist abortion have been beaten, tortured and killed. Some have been forcibly injected with drugs, secretly given veterinary or other abortifacient drugs to force a miscarriage. Others were the victim of hit men hired to injure or kill the baby, the mother, or both.

Sometimes, the threats involve blackmail or loss of one's home or job, or the exploitation of those facing a crisis. In one case, an employer threatened to push his pregnant employee down the stairs if she didn't agree to have an abortion. In another case, a maternity-shop retailer fired pregnant employees. In yet another, a homeless woman was denied shelter until she agreed to an abortion. Often, such pressure comes from all sides and can escalate.

Coerced Choice ... Taken to the Clinic to Make Sure She Keeps the Appointment

A former abortion clinic security guard testified before the Massachusetts legislature that women were routinely threatened and abused by the boyfriends or husbands who took them to the clinics to make sure they underwent their scheduled abortions.⁷ Many women are also pressured by clinic staff financially rewarded for selling abortions.⁸

Forced Choice ... Threats Can Escalate to Violence or Homicide — the Leading Killer of Pregnant Women

Many pregnant women have been killed by partners trying to prevent the birth. Simply being pregnant places women at higher risk of being attacked.⁹ Homicide is the leading cause of death among pregnant women.³ Women are aware of these risks. 92% of women surveyed list domestic violence and assault as the women's issue that is of highest concern to them.¹⁰

Uninformed Non-Choice ... "When I learned the truth, I can't tell you how betrayed I felt."

- 54% were unsure of their decision, yet 67% received no counseling beforehand.¹
- 84% were inadequately counseled beforehand.¹ 79% not told or deceived about available resources.¹
- Many were misinformed by experts about fetal development, abortion alternatives or risks.¹¹
- Many were denied essential personal, family, societal or economic support.¹¹

Unsafe Choice ... Americans Concerned About Coercion and Risks; Support Research and Screening.

Nearly half of voters believe coerced abortion is common. They believe negative effects are more common than generally reported. They'll support candidates who advocate legislation holding abortionists liable for failing to screen for evidence of coercion.¹² Nearly 80% of abortions take place in non-hospital facilities, ill-equipped for emergency care.¹³

- 31% had health complications afterwards.¹
- 65% higher risk of clinical depression.¹⁴
- 3.5x higher risk of death from all causes.⁵
- 65% suffer multiple symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.¹
- 10% have immediate complications, some are life-threatening.¹⁵
- Suicide rates are 6 times higher if women abort vs. giving birth.⁶

Learn More

Download the special report, *Forced Abortion in America*, at www.theunchoice.com/ForcedAbortions.pdf

Citations

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4. See stopforcedabortions.com.
5. M Gissler et. al., "Pregnancy Associated Deaths in Finland 1987-1994 -- definition problems and benefits of record linkage," *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica* 76:651-657, (1997). Another study found that, compared to women who gave birth, women who had abortions had a 62% higher risk of death from all causes for at least *eight* years after their pregnancies. DC Reardon et. al., "Deaths Associated With Pregnancy Outcome: A Record Linkage Study of Low Income Women," *Southern Medical Journal* 95(8):834-41, (2002).
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7. Brian McQuarrie, "Guard, clinic at odds at abortion hearing," *Boston Globe*, April 16, 1999.
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11. See Theresa Burke, *Forbidden Grief: The Unspoken Pain of Abortion* (Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 2000) and www.theunchoice.com.
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