

Alliance for Post-Abortion Research & Training

MEN & ABORTION: SCHOLARLY PAPERS

Publication	Country	Sample Size (males only)	Methodology	Time of Assessment	Findings
Blumberg, B.D., Golbus, M.S., & Hanson, KH. (1975). The psychological sequelae of abortion performed for a genetic indication. <i>American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology</i> , 122 (7), 799-808.	USA	13	Quantitative/ Qualitative	2 days to 37 months after abortion	Depression was observed among 82% of men.
Gordon, R.H. & Kilpatrick, C.A. (1977). A program of group counseling for men who accompany women seeking legal abortion. <i>Community Mental Health Journal</i> , 13 (4),	USA	Not reported	Clinical Observation	At time of abortion procedure	Anxiety Helplessness Guilt Responsibility

291-295.					Regret
Gordon, R.H. (1978). Efficacy of a group crisis-counseling program for men who accompany women seeking abortions. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology</i> , 6 (3), 239-246.	USA	46	Intervention Study	At time of abortion procedure	Counseling was associated with a significant decrease in state-anxiety.
Rothstein, A, (1977a). Abortion: A dyadic perspective. <i>The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i> , 47 (1), 111-118.	USA	60	Qualitative	26 at time of abortion procedure & 34 at time of preabortion medical screening	Some reports of negative impact on sexual relationships with one case of impotence.
Rothstein, A. (1977b). Men's reactions to their partners' elective abortions. <i>American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology</i> , 128 (8), 831-837.	USA	60 (same as 1977a)	Quantitative/ Qualitative	26 at time of abortion procedure & 34 at time of preabortion medical screening	20% expressed interest in counseling, 26.7% were concerned about safety of abortion, and 86.7% believed they were being helpful in some way.
Rothstein, A. (1978). Adolescent males, fatherhood,				# at time of	Adolescents were especially concerned with

and abortion. <i>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</i> , 7 (2), 203-214.	USA	35 (subsample of 1977a)	Qualitative	abortion and # at time of preabortion medical screening not specified	autonomy and struggled with assuming the parental role and its threats to their own dependency needs.
Shostak, A.B. (1979). Abortion as fatherhood lost: Problems and reforms. <i>Family Coordinator</i> , 28 (4), 569-574.	USA	50	Quantitative/ Qualitative	Some at time of abortion and others were college students with abortion history. Specific numbers not reported	72% disagreed that abortion is easy for men & that they have few lingering or disturbing thoughts about it. 20% believed abortion contributed to relationship failure. 40% reported thoughts about the "child that might have been."
McAll, R.K. & McAll, F.M. (1980). Ritual mourning in anorexia nervosa. <i>Lancet</i> , 2(8190), 368.	USA	1	Case Study	>20 years after abortion	Following a process of mourning for & committal of his aborted child, depression and anorexia were resolved in a male client.

<p>Dubouis-Bonnefond, J.C. & Galle-Tessonau, J.R. (1982). Psychological aspects of voluntary induced abortion among fathers drafted into military service. <i>Psychological Medicine</i>, 14 (8), 187-1189.</p>	<p>France</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Men experienced depression, anxiety, and guilt as well as behavioral problems leading to expulsion from the military.</p>
<p>Shostak, A.B. (1983). Men and abortion: Three neglected ethical aspects. <i>Humanity and Society</i>, 7 (1), 66-85.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>100</p>	<p>Quantitative/ Qualitative</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>75% disagreed that abortion is easy for men & that they have few lingering or disturbing thoughts about it.</p> <p>61% believed men should have equal power in abortion decisions.</p> <p>44% reported dreams or thoughts about the “infant they might have fathered.”</p>
<p>Jones, O.W. et al. (1984). Parental response to mid-trimester therapeutic abortion following amniocentesis. <i>Prenatal Diagnosis</i>, 4 (4), 249-256.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>4 to 43 months after abortion</p>	<p>75% reported relief, 50% depression, & 1/3 guilt.</p> <p>70% reported increased closeness in relationships with partners.</p>

<p>Shostak, A. & McLouth, G. (1984). <i>Men and Abortion: Lessons, Losses, and Love.</i> New York: Praeger.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>1000 + 75</p>	<p>Quantitative/ Qualitative</p>	<p>1000 at time of abortion procedure 75 “months and often years” after abortion</p>	<p>47% of clinic-day and 63% of post-abortion men agreed that men involved in abortion have disturbing thoughts about it afterwards. 68% of clinic-day and 75% of post-abortion men disagreed that men involved in abortion generally have an easy time of it.</p>
<p>Mattinson, J. (1985). The effects of abortion on a marriage. <i>Ciba Foundation Symposium, 115</i>, 165-177.</p>	<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Clinical Observation</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Delayed grief reactions may occur in men with abortion history.</p>
<p>Rue, V.M. (1985). Abortion in relationship context. <i>International Review of Natural Family Planning, 9</i> (2), 95-121.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>Clinical Observation</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Abortion may create confusion and anxiety about men’s role performance.</p>
<p>Schelotto, G. & Arcuri, C. (1986). Supposing it hurt me too? Abortion: The anguish experienced by men. <i>IPPF Eur Reg Inf (Planned Parenthood in Europe), 15</i> (1), 25-34.</p>	<p>Italy</p>	<p>64</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Most men reported fear, anxiety, and tension with only 9.3% stating that the abortion did not affect them. Nearly ½ indicated that relationships with partners were negatively</p>

					affected and 15.6% blamed the abortion for ending those relationships.
Buchanan, M. & Robbins, C. (1990). Early adult psychological consequences for males of adolescent pregnancy and its resolution. <i>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</i> , 19 (4), 413-424.	USA	2,533, 15.4% of whom experienced an adolescent pregnancy (38.3% of this subgroup experienced abortion as resolution of pregnancy)	Quantitative	During early adulthood but after abortion experienced during adolescence	Men who experienced abortion during adolescence were more psychologically distressed than men who became fathers during adolescence.
Rothstein, A. (1991). Male experience of elective abortion: Psychoanalytic perspectives. In N. L. Stotland (Ed.) <i>Psychiatric aspects of abortion</i> (pp. 145-158). Washington DC: American Psychiatric Association.	USA	60 (same as 1977a)	Qualitative	26 at time of abortion procedure & 34 at time of preabortion medical screening	Men were uninformed concerning abortion procedures, expectant of relationship problems, and struggled with guilt and anxiety.
White-van Mourik, M.C., Connor, J.M. & Ferguson-					47% experienced depression, 33% anger,

<p>Smith, M.A. (1992). The psychological sequelae of a second-trimester termination of pregnancy for fetal abnormality. <i>Prenatal Diagnosis</i>, 12 (3), 189-204.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>68</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>approximately 2 years after abortion</p>	<p>37% fear, 22% guilt, 26% failure, 32% relief, 32% withdrawn, and 41% concentration difficulties. Over half reported negative effects on sexual relationship including one case of impotence. 58% were at risk for unresolved grief.</p>
<p>Speckhard, A. & Rue, V. (1993). Complicated mourning: Dynamics of impacted post abortion grief. <i>Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology</i>, 8 (1), 5-32.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>Not reported</p>	<p>Clinical Observation</p>	<p>After abortion, time not specified</p>	<p>Men may experience threats to masculinity, failure, guilt, grief, trauma reactions, and relationship difficulties.</p>
<p>Berger, J. (1994). The psychotherapeutic treatment of male homosexuality. <i>American Journal of Psychotherapy</i>, 48 (2), 251-261.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Case Study</p>	<p>After abortion, time not specified</p>	<p>Abortion may be a factor in the etiology of male homosexuality.</p>
<p>Robbins, C.A. & Streetman, L.G. (1994). Resolution of nonmarital adolescent pregnancy and the transition to adulthood: Educational attainment and financial well-</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>2,868, 14.6% of whom experienced an adolescent pregnancy (34.4% of this</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>During early adulthood and after abortion experienced</p>	<p>Post-abortion men less likely to complete college than men who did not experience adolescent pregnancy but no different from them in</p>

being. <i>Policy Studies Review</i> , 13 (1/2), 141-156.		subgroup experienced abortion as resolution of pregnancy and sample overlaps with that of Buchanan & Robbins, 1990)		during adolescence	terms of financial well-being.
Rue, V.M. (1996). His abortion experience. <i>Ethics and Medics</i> , 21, 3-4.	USA	NA	Clinical Observation	After abortion, time not specified	Abortion poses a threat to masculinity and may cause grief, guilt, feelings of loss, and problems in men's relationships.
Coyle, C.T. & Enright, R.D. (1997). Forgiveness intervention with postabortion men. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> , 65 (6), 1042-1046.	USA	10	Intervention Study	6 months to 22 years after abortion	Forgiveness therapy was associated with a significant increase in forgiveness and significant reductions in anxiety, anger, and grief.
Coleman, P.K. & Nelson, E.S. (1998). The quality of abortion decisions and college students' reports of post-abortion emotional sequelae and abortion attitudes. <i>Journal of</i>	USA	32	Quantitative	From less than one year to more than two years after	51.6 % reported regret, 45.2% sadness, 25.8% depression, & 1/3 longing for the fetus.

<i>Social and Clinical Psychology</i> , 17 (4), 425-442.				abortion	
Johansson, A. et al. (1998). Husbands' involvement in abortion in Vietnam. <i>Studies in Family Planning</i> , 29 (4), 400-413.	Vietnam	20	Qualitative	Not specified	Those men who had "moral doubts" about abortion as well as those who were ambivalent expressed feelings of guilt, unease, or worry.
Ring-Cassidy, E. & Gentles, I. (1998). Abortion: Its Effect on Men in <i>Women's Health after Abortion: The Medical and Psychological Evidence</i> . Toronto: de Veber Institute.	Canada	NA	Literature Review	Not specified	Men may experience depression, guilt, anger, grief, feelings of powerlessness and substance abuse after abortion. Future relationships and fatherhood may be adversely affected by a past abortion.
Kero, A., Lalos, A. Hogberg, U. & Jacobsson, L. (1999). The male partner involved in legal abortion. <i>Human Reproduction</i> , 14 (10), 2669-2675.	Sweden	75	Quantitative	After abortion decision but prior to abortion procedure	57% of men chose words indicative of both positive and negative emotions to describe their feelings about the expected abortion and 29% chose only words indicative of negative emotions.

<p>Stern, E. M. (1999). Men and post-abortion grief: Amendment, resolution and hope. <i>Journal of Couples Therapy, 8</i> (2), 61-71.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Clinical Observation</p>	<p>After abortion, time not specified</p>	<p>Men may experience grief, fear of failure, moral anguish, guilt, regret, & a threat to the continuity of their own lives.</p>
<p>Kero, A. & Lalos, A. (2000). Ambivalence – a logical response to abortion: A prospective study among women and men. <i>Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine, 21</i> (2), 81-91.</p>	<p>Sweden</p>	<p>11 (subsample of Kero, Lalos, Hogberg, & Jacobsson, 1999).</p>	<p>Quantitative/ Qualitative</p>	<p>One year after abortion</p>	<p>Most commonly chosen words to describe feelings related to abortion were responsibility, maturity, & grief. Most men experienced “conflicts of conscience.”</p>
<p>Lauzon, P., Roger-Achim, D., Achim, A. & Boyer, R. (2000). Emotional distress among couples involved in first-trimester induced abortions. <i>Canadian Family Physician, Oct.</i> (46), 2033-2040.</p>	<p>Canada</p>	<p>69</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>Preabortion & 1 to 3 weeks after abortion</p>	<p>17.6% of men believed abortion had negative impact on relationships with partners, 30.4% would have liked to have been offered counseling, 21.3% of those who remained with partners during the abortion thought it was a traumatizing experience.</p>
<p>Myburgh, M., Gmeiner, A. & van Wyk, S. (2001a). The</p>					<p>Men experienced powerlessness, emotional</p>

experience of biological fathers of their partners' termination of pregnancy. <i>Health SA Gesondheid</i> , 6 (1), 28-37.	South Africa	9	Qualitative	After abortion, time not specified	turmoil related to relationship problems & used psychological defense mechanisms to cope.
Myburgh, M., Gmeiner, A. & van Wyk, S. (2001b). Support for adult biological fathers during termination of their partners' pregnancies. <i>Health SA Gesondheid</i> , 6 (1), 38-48.	South Africa	9 (Same sample as Myburgh, et al., 2001a)	Qualitative	After abortion, time not specified	Biological fathers need professional support in dealing with abortion and its impact on their lives and relationships.
Robson, F.M. (2002). 'Yes! – A chance to tell my side of the story': A case study of a male partner of a woman undergoing termination of pregnancy for foetal abnormality. <i>Journal of Health Psychology</i> , 7 (2), 183-193.	United Kingdom	1	Case Study	At least 14 months after abortion	Male reported feeling excluded, saw his primary role as one of support to his partner, & suffered from re-experiencing the abortion procedure. He exhibited repression of emotions, particularly grief.
Poggenpoel, M. & Myburgh, M. (2002). The developmental implications of a termination of pregnancy on adolescents with reference to the girl and her partner. <i>Education</i> , 122 (4),	South Africa	Not Reported	Qualitative	After abortion, time not	Adolescent male partners experienced guilt, grief helplessness, social pain, psychological pain, and spiritual pain, as well as overwhelming thoughts about the

731-831.				specified	abortion and the future.
Holmes, M.C. (2004). Reconsidering a “woman’s issue:” Psychotherapy and one man’s post abortion experiences. <i>American Journal of Psychotherapy</i> , 58 (1), 103-115.	USA	1	Case Study	Six months after abortion	Male partner experienced sleep disturbance, somatic complaints, rumination about the fetus, worthlessness, emasculation, voicelessness, and threat to belief system.
Kero, A. & Lalos, A. (2004). Reactions and reflections in men, 4 and 12 months post-abortion. <i>Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology</i> , 25 (2), 135-143.	Sweden	26	Quantitative/ Qualitative	4 months & 12 months after abortion	While nearly all men reported satisfaction with abortion decision, many also experienced abortion as sad, ethically problematic, & painful.
Reich, J.A. & Brindis, C.D. (2006). Conceiving risk and responsibility: A qualitative examination of men’s experiences of unintended pregnancy and abortion. <i>International Journal of Men’s Health</i> , 5 (2), 133-152.	USA	20	Qualitative	After abortion, time not specified	Men tended to feel excluded from the abortion decision. The theme of “responsibility” was evident among the men. A “significant portion” of the men did not confide in anyone about the abortion.
Rodrigues, M.M.L. & Hoga, L.A.K. (2006). Spontaneous and induced abortion: Feelings					Following miscarriage, men felt anguish related to the loss. Following

experienced by men. <i>Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem</i> , 59 (1), 14-19.	Brazil	17	Qualitative	After abortion, time not specified	induced abortion, men struggled with culpability and its consequences. Authors noted the need to support men emotionally and to provide them with accurate information.
Coyle, C.T. (2007). Men and abortion: A review of empirical reports concerning the impact of abortion on men. <i>The Internet Journal of Mental Health</i> , 3 (2).	Varied by study, review published in the USA	Varied by study	Systematic Review	Varied by study	Common findings among the studies included: men's desire for counseling, feelings of ambivalence, relief, anxiety, grief, guilt, powerlessness, men's tendency to defer abortion decision to partners and to repress their own emotions.
Ferguson, H. & Hogan, F. (2007). Men, sexuality and crisis pregnancy: A study of men's experiences. <i>Crisis Pregnancy Agency Report Number 18</i> . Dublin.	Ireland	8	Qualitative	Six months to 34 years after abortion	Men's emotional responses to abortion included sadness, despair, anger, and relief. The dominant pattern observed was for men to provide stoic support to their partners.

<p>Naziri, D. (2007). Man's involvement in the experience of abortion and the dynamics of the couple's relationship: A clinical study. <i>The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care</i>, 12 (2), 168-174.</p>	<p>Belgium and Greece</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>One to three weeks after abortion</p>	<p>Sixteen men disagreed with the decision and responded with anger. Even those couples who agreed to abort experienced stress in their relationships.</p>
<p>Coleman, P.K, Rue, V.M., Spence, M. & Coyle, C.T. (2008). Abortion and the sexual lives of men and women: Is casual sexual behavior more appealing and more common after abortion? <i>International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology</i>, 8 (1), 77-91.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>872 of which 105 experienced a partner's abortion</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>After abortion, time not specified</p>	<p>Men's experience of a partner's abortion was significantly associated with attitudes endorsing sex with both more than one partner and with strangers, and with having had more sex partners in the last year.</p>
<p>Reich, J. (2008). Not ready to fill his father's shoes: A masculine discourse of abortion. <i>Men and Masculinities</i>, 11 (1), 3-21.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>After abortion, time not specified</p>	<p>Men's experience of abortion may reflect cultural expectations concerning fatherhood and masculinity.</p>
<p>Coleman, P.K., Rue, V.M. & Coyle, C.T. (2009). Induced abortion and intimate relationship quality in the</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>658, of which 100 men experienced abortion with</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>After abortion,</p>	<p>The experience of abortion in a previous relationship was associated with negative</p>

Chicago Health and Social Life Survey. <i>Public Health</i> , 123, 331-338.		a previous partner and 53 men whose current partner aborted		time not specified	outcomes in the current relationship. Abortion in the current relationship predicted arguing about children and jealousy in the current relationship.
Coyle, C.T., Coleman, P.K. & Rue, V.M. (2010). Inadequate preabortion counseling and decision conflict as predictors of subsequent relationship difficulties and psychological stress in men and women. <i>Traumatology</i> , 16 (1), 16-30. DOI: 10.1177/15344765609347550	Primarily USA with many other nations represented	198	Quantitative	Average of 14½ years after abortion	Men may experience symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and relationship difficulties after abortion.
Hallden, B. & Christensson, K. (2010). Swedish young men's lived experiences of a girlfriend's early induced abortion. <i>International Journal of Men's Health</i> , 9 (2), 126-143.	Sweden	10	Qualitative	After abortion follow-up visit to the gynecology clinic. However, one participant experienced his partner's abortion 3 years prior.	Four main themes were identified among the young men: 1) having interrupted a life-giving process, 2) desire to relieve their partners' pain, 3) helplessness, and 4) defending the abortion decision.

<p>Kero, A., Lalos, A. & Wulff, M. (2010). Home abortion-experiences of male involvement. <i>The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care</i>, 15, 264-270.</p>	<p>Sweden</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>One to two weeks after abortion</p>	<p>“Most men considered that their experiences during the expulsion had been ‘easier than expected’ and their dominant feeling was one of relief.”</p>
<p>Coyle, C. T. & Rue, V.M. (2010). Men’s experience of elective abortion: A mixed methods study of loss. <i>Journal of Pastoral Counseling</i>, XLV, 4-31.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Qualitative/ Quantitative</p>	<p>6 months to 22 years after abortion</p>	<p>The primary meaning men ascribed to abortion was profound loss. Men experienced relationship difficulties, helplessness, anger, anxiety, grief, guilt.</p>
<p>Baker, A., Morrison, J.A. & Coffey, S.F. (2011). Using prolonged exposure to treat abortion-related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in alcohol dependent men: A case study. <i>Clinical Case Studies</i>, 10 (6), 427-439.</p>	<p>USA</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Case Study</p>	<p>20 years</p>	<p>Prolonged Exposure therapy significantly reduced abortion-related symptoms of PTSD in a man who became socially withdrawn, depressed, and alcohol dependent after his wife’s abortion.</p>
<p>Canario, C., Figueiredo, B. & Ricou, M. (2011). Women’s and</p>					<p>“Couple relationship moderates the effect of</p>

men's psychological adjustment after abortion. <i>Journal of Reproductive Psychology, 29</i> (3), 262-275.	Portugal	15 men at first assessment and 7 at second assessment	Quantitative	One and six months after abortion	the etiology of abortion on trauma symptoms one month after abortion." (This was not the case at the six-month assessment.)
Papworth, V. (2011). Abortion services: The need to include men in care provision. <i>Nursing Standard, 25</i> (40), 35-37.	USA	NA	Commentary	NA	"Nurses have an important role in ensuring men are adequately prepared and supported throughout the process," [of abortion].
Makenzius, M., Tyden, T., Darj. E. & Larrson, M. (2013). Autonomy and dependence: Experiences of home abortion, contraception and prevention. <i>Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences</i> . DOI:10.1111/j.1471-6712.2012.01068.x	Sweden	24 women 13 men	Qualitative	Within six weeks after abortion	Primary themes identified were autonomy and dependence. Men "should be considered as individuals with their own needs in the context of abortion."
Coyle, C.T. & Rue, V.M. (2015). Men's perceptions concerning disclosure of a partner's abortion: Implications for counseling. <i>The European Journal of Counselling</i>	USA	101 men	Qualitative	1 day to 43 years after abortion	Positive aspects of disclosure included relief, spiritual benefits, support, acceptance, empathy, forgiveness, helping others,

<i>Psychology</i> , 3 (2), 159-173. doi:10.5964/ejcop.v3i2.54					acknowledgment of child, and increased understanding. Negative aspects of disclosure included lack of empathy, pain of facing reality, lack of resolution, and condemnation.
Coyle, C.T. & Rue, V.M. (2015). A thematic analysis of men's experience with a partner's elective abortion. <i>Journal of Counseling and Values</i> , 60, 138-150.	USA	89 men	Qualitative	1 day to 46 years after abortion	The salient themes identified were: 1) loss and grief, 2) helplessness and/or victimization, and 3) spiritual healing.
Newton, S.L., Hebert, L.E., Nguyen, B.T. & Gilliam, M.L. (2018). Negotiating masculinity in a women's space: Findings from a qualitative of male partners accompanying women at the time of abortion. <i>Men and Masculinities</i> , XX (X), 1-18. DOI: 10.1177/1097184X18762260	USA	27 men	Qualitative	At the time of abortion.	Explored the variety of masculinities observed among men who accompanied their female partners for abortion. Abortion is described as an experience which "confronts men's power in multiple ways."
Nagy, B. & Rigo, A. (2019). The psychological aspects of induced abortion: Men in the	Varied by study,	Varied by	Review of	Varied by	Overview of current research concerning the psychological aspects of

<p>focus. <i>Men and Masculinities</i>, XX (X), 1-19. DOI: 10.1177/1097184X19856399</p>	<p>published in the USA</p>	<p>study</p>	<p>studies</p>	<p>study</p>	<p>abortion for male partners. Authors conclude that “taking account of the characteristics, needs, and expectations of men concerned in abortion has vital importance in developing efficient interventions that ensure adequate psychological support for couples considering the abortion decision.”</p>
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Prepared by the *Alliance for Post Abortion Research and Training*