

Unmasking The Hidden effects of abortion on men:

Reframing Men in the Effect and the Abortion Decision Through a Trauma Lens

After Choice Symposium

November 8, 2014

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Video

Dead Poet's Society

What is a Mask?

- A mask can be defense mechanism or a symptom that is seen on the outside that is covering up the real problem on the inside
- Often the person who has the mask, does not recognize it or correlate symptoms back to past trauma

- A Mask is usually what gets a man to counseling in a Crisis and not because they have an abortion in their past. They are usually “acting out” their internalized pain. They most likely have not made the correlation.

“To mask or substitute the need to grieve fosters denial and forces a male to become a ‘fugitive’; from life, loving and healing”

Dr. Vincent Rue

Reframe: Reframing is a common practice in psychotherapy and counseling as a technique to provide a different perspective in the mind of the client

A reframe can change meaning without arguing

Stuart. (2008, October 20). *World of NLP*.

Retrieved from

<http://www.worldofnlp.com/nlp-definition-reframing/>

Objectives

- To explore society's view of men regarding abortion
- To unmask the hidden effects of abortion on men
- Reframe how men are viewed regarding the abortion decision and the after effects through a trauma lens

What do you notice about your thoughts and feelings when you view this frame?

Examples of how men are viewed from a psycho/social lens in society

- Symptom and behavioral focus and not empathy for the trauma that might be at the root of the symptoms and behaviors in the first place
- Strong
- Fighters

- Abusers
- Controllers

Examples of how men are viewed from a psycho/social lens in society

- Sexually driven
- Objectify women
- Non emotional
- Fixers
- Angry
- Logical

Examples of how Men view themselves from a psycho/social lens

- Symptom and behavioral focus and not empathy for the trauma that might be at the root of the symptoms and behavior in the first place
- Need to be strong

- Keep emotions inside
- "Men don't cry"
- It is weak to be vulnerable

Examples of how Men view themselves from a psycho/social lens

- Don't ask for help
 - *80% who attend counseling are women
- One's emotions from trauma are not valid since everyone seems ok
- Objectify women
- Sexually driven
- Anger is an okay emotion

"Most men think we have to bear our burdens alone. We don't confess our worries, our sadness's, our confusion, our despair, and that kills men."

<http://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/bnr-hiding-weakness-kills-us/#sthash.pwFzQ>

G2x.dpuf

Abortion, Women's Rights and
Not a Men's Issue: A lesson in Quotes

"There cannot be true democracy unless women's voices are heard. There cannot be true democracy unless women are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own lives."

Hillary Clinton
July 1997

"I consider abortion to be a deeply personal and intimate issue for women and I don't believe male legislators should even vote on the issue."

Alan K. Simpson
Former Republican Senator

"When it comes to reproductive health decisions, nobody knows better than an

individual woman what is best for herself and her family."

Bloomberg

Former New York City Mayor

"No woman can call herself free who does not control her own body."

Margaret Sanger

Founder of American Birth Control League

in 1921. Became Planned Parenthood

Federation of America in 1942

- Early Options/ New Sof Touch Method
- Doctor Fleischman
- Advertise that they are the only clinic in the country where the man can be by their partner in the room during the procedure
- "Understand That It Is Her Decision. It may not be fair, or right, but you are not in control.

You can work together to make the best decision for everyone involved. Direct your energy into supporting her."

<http://www.earlyabortionoptions.com/your-decision/for-men/>

Seventy-seven percent of anti-abortion leaders are men. 100% of them will never be pregnant.

~Planned Parenthood advertisement

"But it doesn't matter how much men scream and holler that they are being left out [of the abortion decision] There are some things that they are never going to be **able** to experience fully. I say, tough luck."

Louise Taylor

Former Vice President of Medical Affairs
Planned Parenthood

Summary of Themes from the quotes

- Woman's voice
- Personal issue for women
- Control
- Sense of not being understood
- My body
- Anger
- Lack of empathy for men
- Ego centric/Survival mentality

- These themes all speak the language of trauma

Unmasking the Hidden Effects of Abortion Men
The Top Ten List

Number Ten

- Society would like you to think that men don't hurt from an abortion decision, but research and experience in counseling shows the opposite.

Video

Happy Birthday

By Flipsyde

What Does the Research Show Regarding men and Abortion?

- Approximately 31 published studies as of 2008
Most popular study by Shostak and McLouth (1984)
- Over 1000 men at 30 clinics
- 84% full partner in the decision to abort
- 98% to ever be in situation again
- 26% believed abortion was killing the child
- Majority had thoughts and dreams
- Single greatest concern was partner's wellbeing

Summary of symptoms found in the research

- Regret
- Helplessness
- Grief
- Depression
- Guilt/pressure
- Shame/passive
- Anxiety
- Some PTSD
- Anger/left out
- Emasculation/Legal disenfranchisement
- Feelings of powerlessness
- Ambivalence
- Relationship problems or the relationship ends
Failure rate 25% (Shostak & Mclouth, 1984) to
70% (Milling, 1975)

Additional Findings in Research: Male Suppression of Emotions

Prior to abortion:

- Typical man rushes to placate partner
Shostak and McLouth (1984)
- Believe to support/protect partner is to suppress their own emotions

Gordon and Kilpatrick (1977)

Patterson (1982)

After the abortion:

"The man will typically suppress his emotions again denying the psychological impact. This combined with a cultural "disenfranchised grief" can create a "double disenfranchisement" Men rarely share with others."

Rue (1996)

Don Henley and Stevie Nicks

- She became pregnant, and neither doubted Henley was the father. The 'situation' was resolved quickly and quietly when Nicks, between tour dates, had an abortion. Although Henley did not try to force the issue,

according to friends, she was deeply upset about what she considered his fast and easy consent to her decision. Nicks took it as Henley's way of saying he wasn't interested in any type of serious long-term commitment.

- <http://www.truthrevolt.org/news/stevie-nicks-talks-about-aborting-child-don-henley>

The Mask of Sex Addiction

Medicating Father-loss and Lost Fatherhood within the context of a sexualized culture

Hypothesis Based on my work with Hundreds of Post Abortion men and the risk of sex addiction

- That men who have lost a child/role due to abortion are at *increased risk/or escalation* of sexual addiction. Living in a sexualized culture combined with a culture of denial, has created a place of escape (false intimacy/connection) by medicating through sexual addictions, from where they can detach from the emotional trauma and loss of attachment from both Father-loss and Fatherhood Loss. In addition

they may reenact the trauma unconsciously hoping for a better outcome.

Greg Hasek

280 percent increased risk for any substance use disorder in the study of 3000 women

Mota, NP et. al., "Associations Between Abortion, Mental Disorders and Suicidal Behavior in a Nationally Representative Sample," *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 55(4): 239-246 (April 2010).

You'll Never Call me Daddy

By Steve Siler

Number Nine

- Many men have experienced previous trauma as a child and that trauma has a direct impact on

their ability to make a *rational* decision upon finding out their partner is pregnant. Their response is often a *limbic system* response. Rational prefrontal cortex kicks post abortion, as a result feelings of regret hit. The relief stage is ever so brief for the limbic angst. Both men *and* women often ask, "How can I have done this?"

- Not unlike an addict after he has spent his last dollar on a slot machine.
- Seeking pleasure and avoiding pain in a crisis seems to do the same thing to the brain when it comes to the ability to have rational thought.

How Could I Have Done This?

How Did I Get Here?

The Prevalence of Male Trauma Experienced as a child

- 29.9% of adult males have been physically abused as a child

- 21.8% of adult males reported that they grew up in a home where their parents were separated or divorced
- 16% of males have experienced sexual abuse
Adverse Childhood Experience Study, 1998

The Prevalence of Male Trauma experienced as an adult

- 2.78 million men in the U.S. have been victims of sexual assault and rape
National Institute of Justice and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998
- 30% of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan meet the criteria for PTSD
Office of Public Health. Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veteran Affairs, 2012
- 41% of victims of domestic violence are males
Centers for Disease Control, 2010
- Approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of males have lost a child due to an abortion decision

Life Issues Institute

The Abortion Decision for a Male with Previous Trauma in his life



I am pregnant!



Shock



Deer in headlights



Previous trauma is triggered because of being caught off guard



Arousal of nervous system, reliving of PTSD symptoms, decrease in ability to be rational and empathetic, fight or flight response triggered

Some neuro/bio Evidence to support the reframe through a trauma lens

- Men and women respond to stress differently. Fight or flight versus tend and befriend
- Under stress women are able to evaluate and read facial expressions better than men

Taylor, S.E. (2002) *The tending instinct: Women, men and the biology of our relationships*. New York: Henry Holt

Wickelgren, I. (2010, April 19). Under threat, women bond, men withdraw. *Scientific American*, Retrieved from <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=under-threat-women-bond>

" That's why one of the largest shocks that sexually active young men encounter is the shock that comes from hearing their sex partner say "The test is back and *we're* pregnant and *I'm* going to have an abortion." I call this the longest run-on sentence in the English language and one of the most painful. It brings information at the start of the sentence, brings a decision near the end, but it usually ends with the equivalent of a question mark because it's a test and a probe. She want's to know "what do you think?" Now the guy has just been hit with a lightening bolt and

what he thinks is "I've just been hit with a lightning bolt!!" But usually the response is "Whatever you want."

Arthur Shostak

The Abortion Decision: Reframing through a Trauma Lens

- Avoidant/Fearful Attachment triggered resulting in a wall of defense going up. (Instinctual protection/survival often leads to abandonment for the woman) The male withdraws in his aloneness
- Detached from emotions/can't feel
- Most common response seen is the man abandons, is passive or pressures her (out of fear?) in the decision

Understanding the impact a male's previous trauma has on their response or lack of, is the greatest asset for the female partner being able to forgive and also the male being able to forgive himself.

Some curriculum to use:
Ev Worthington REACH Model of
Forgiveness

R: Recall the hurt

E: Express empathy to the person that
hurt you

Catherine Coyle: Men and Abortion

Video

Its not Your Fault

Number Eight

- In our society men are often invalidated for the psychological pain they have experienced due to trauma. Abortion is just one example.

Definition of Invalidation

"Invalidation is to reject, ignore, mock, tease, judge, or diminish someone's feelings. It is an attempt to control how they feel and how long they feel it".

Retrieved from <http://eqi.org/invalid.htm>

the invalidation of male trauma in our culture
based on psycho/social theory

- Males tend to be identified by their symptoms and behaviors in our culture and not by the possible trauma that may be the etiology of the symptoms and behaviors
- Invalidation of male trauma as a child is often at the root of the symptoms and behaviors and further invalidation of trauma as adults just makes those symptoms and behaviors worse
- Females are triggered in their trauma as a result

Lack of Programs and services for Males Reflect
the invalidation

- "The most comprehensive review of scholarly domestic violence research literature ever conducted concludes, among other things, that women perpetrate physical and emotional

abuse, as well as engage in control behaviors, at comparable rates to men."

The Partner Abuse State of Knowledge Project

Published in the Partner Abuse Journal, May 2013

- There are over 4000 domestic violence programs in the United States but very few oriented to male victims

The Big Three of Invalidation for the male

- Sex abuse
Sex Addicts
- Domestic Violence
Abusers
- Abortion
Abandoners
- The mental health world and legal world has followed suit
- Legal system bias against male when it comes to woman's body

- Thus the reason both Sex Addiction and Abortion Trauma as been deemed not legitimate in DSM. They both were once in but taken out.

"Even with sex abuse, for a male to receive validation they have to be seen as a child being abused and even at that they are lucky in our society."

Greg Hasek

Abortion took the spotlight the same time for women as sex abuse during the 1970's. The idea that women should have a right to choose regarding their body and that they may suffer from PTSD because of sex abuse. In addition awareness and empathy began for post abortion effects in women.

Men lost their legal rights.

Little or no empathy for men in regards to the issue of abortion, sex abuse, domestic violence

etc. Compassion for men in trauma seemed to be only allowed or expressed for soldiers after Vietnam.

Vietnam and After: Finally
Validation and empathy allowed only in a
"protecting" role

The Power of Invalidation
in Our Culture

- Lessons in couple's therapy with trauma
- The very thing culture complains about is the very thing it creates through invalidation of a male's pain due to an abortion decision
- Culture helps create the mask it complains about

"Just like children, emotions heal when they are heard and validated"

Jill Bolte Taylor

Number Seven

- Father loss often leads to Fatherhood Lost

- 1/3 of men grow up without fathers in the home*
- Many that do, have poor relationships with them
- Divorce rate and out of wedlock births contribute to this problem
- Our society combined with media offers a man little or no positive role modeling
- How can one expect a man to know how to respond to the statement, "I am pregnant"?
- The question should be not why but why not, when it comes to questioning a man's response to a partner's pregnancy
- * United States Census Bureau

Social Learning Theory Fatherhood Loss is directly tied to father loss and the Choice

- Early attachment trauma possibly with father
- Over dependency on mother
- Lack of ability to label emotions and have empathy

- Possible addictions
- Lack of healthy role modeling
- No tools in the tool box

"I began to wonder if those of us without dads are making mistakes in our lives, we wouldn't make, if we had a father to guide us"

"What kinds of ways would a father help a son? "Is there practical information we are supposed to know about work, women, decisions, authority, leadership, marriage, and family that we would have learned if there were a guide around to help us navigate our journey?"

Don Miller author
To Own a Dragon
Blue Like Jazz

National Fatherhood Initiative

Pop Culture: A National Survey of Dads' attitudes on fathering

- Seven hundred and one American men were surveyed and when the respondents were asked which of eight possible sources of help they had drawn upon to be a better father, "wife, partner, or child's mother" was most frequently chosen (by 89 percent of the respondents), followed by "other fathers or men," their own mother, and then their own father. About half had received help from a place of worship, and only 29 percent had sought help from a professional person.
- Ninety-nine percent of the fathers agreed that being a father was a very important part of who they are.

Daughter's Love of Her Father

Number Six

- Men are often unaware of the major influence they have over the abortion decision with their partner. The influence is often at the level of attachment that is deep in the unconscious.

Men Become Involved in an Abortion in 5 Different Ways

- Encouraged or supported the woman
- Pressured the woman to abort
- Abandoned her in the decision
- Unsuccessfully opposed the abortion
- Learned about it after it happen

In a study 80% of females who have had abortions report that if they would have had a supportive male in deciding to keep their child, they would not have had an abortion.

Reardon, D. (2005). Forced abortion. The Post-Abortion Review, 13(3), 5. Retrieved from <http://www.afterabortion.org/pdf/Vol13No3.pdf>

48% of women having abortions say as a reason that they don't want to be a single parent or they are having trouble with their

partner.

Guttmacher Institute, 2004.

Pregnant woman who lacked support from their father were more likely to choose abortion.

International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 2009.

64% of American women having abortions said they felt pressure from others to abort
Rue, V. (2004). "Induced abortion and traumatic stress: A preliminary comparison of American and Russian women. *Medical Science Monitor.*

Research With Adolescent's Views on Abortion

- Future
- Moral image
- Father of child wanted abortion

- Parents of mother

350 adolescents surveyed. By far the most common response was if the father of the child wanted an abortion.

Rosemary Crock, 2008

Doctoral Dissertation

The Codependent Link Among our Young Women
as a result of a Divorce/Wounded Father
Generation

Fear of Abandonment over Child
An Unconscious Limbic Decision?

Number Five

- Not having a legal right as a male in the abortion decision, strips a man at the very core of who he is wired to be. The ability to provide and protect their partner and their child is stripped from them. This has lasting consequences that is deeper than words can describe.

Can you say Double Standard?

"If women choose motherhood, men are obligated for 18 years of child support. When men promote abortion for their partners, it is typified as coercion and selfishness. When women choose abortion, it is the exclamation of women's rights."

Rue, V.M. (1986). *Forgotten Fathers: Men and Abortion*.

Some Recent Legal Hope ?

- Since *Roe v. Wade*, some states in the United States have attempted to enact laws requiring spousal consent. All of these laws have been ruled unconstitutional, spousal consent 1976 decision *Planned Parenthood v. Danforth* and spousal awareness in the 1992 decision *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*.
- In the state assembly of Ohio a bill has been

tabled in 2014, which would give fathers a final say in abortion. Their written consent would have to be obtained before an abortion could be effected. If a father refused consent, the abortion would not be allowed.

- Previously attempted in 2009

The Inhibited Flight or Flight at the Abortion Clinic

- Male is not able to *act* on his fight response to protect
- Female is not able to *act* on her flight response from intrusive trauma to protect self and child
- They are in a trauma bubble together! Look at their faces!

Flight During 911

Hurricane Katrina

Video

Beautiful Sacrifice

Number Four

- Men grieve differently than women over the loss of their child due to an abortion decision. Often times their grief comes out in anger, addictions etc. So what you look for as evidence of a man hurting from abortion needs to change.

"Anger is a man's way of weeping. It is an expression of underlying pain that women would more likely display with tears or more direct expression of sadness and loss. Men also weep by drinking, withdrawing, acting defensive, blaming others, getting irritable, being possessive, working excessively, becoming overly competitive, suffering somatic complaints and insomnia, and philandering"

Author William Pollack

How Men Grieve Differently
Than Women

- Biological differences
- Cultural/Society norms and conditioning

- Cognitive and *action* oriented, less verbal
- Lessons from a Tsunami
- Grieve those that they develop relationship through *action* also

How Men Grieve Differently Than Women

- Isolated and alone
- By far men grieve the most over the loss of a _____ relationship and attachment?
- That issue has to be addressed first in recovery .
- Grieve through symptoms

"If men grieve the most over *father-loss* and the affect on attachment, then wouldn't it make sense that men would most likely also have tremendous grief over *fatherhood lost* and the loss of attachment?"

Greg Hasek

Some Additional Books

- *When Men Grieve: Why Men Grieve Differently and How You Can Help* by Elizabeth Levang
- *Swallowed by a Snake: The Gift of the Masculine Side of Healing* by Tom Golden
- *When a Man Faces Grief / A Man You Know Is Grieving* by James Miller and Tom Golden

Number Three

- Men don't connect with the abortion word as much as they do "Lost Fatherhood". Men often connect with children through activity and roles. That is also how they connect with the reality of their loss by reflecting on the loss of the role of not being a dad.

"Don't just spend time with your kids because it's good for the kids; understand that there's

nothing that's going to be more precious in your life and you are going to savor every memory."

"When you're on your death bed, that's the stuff you're going to remember: you holding hands with your daughter and taking them to the park and pushing them on a swing and hearing them laugh... You just want to make sure you don't miss out on that."

Jenna Bush Hager interviews President Barack Obama about fatherhood.

Number Two

- Men often experience problems bonding and attaching with their future partner and children after an abortion decision.

"After we married, I was filled with rage and it was often directed towards my wife. I had a son and it was hard for me to be overly

excited at his birth and to really bond with him. I was not committed to my new family and continued to medicate my pain through partying, adulterous relationships and pursuing success through my continued education and career. Five short hard years later, at the age of 27, we divorced."

David L. Williams Sr

Former Chaplain Cincinnati Bengals

The Generational Attachment Curse Through Father-loss and Lost Fatherhood

- Attachment trauma with father
- Father-loss
- Insecure attachment with partner/spouse
- Abortion
- Attachment trauma with lost child
- Lost Fatherhood
- Attachment trauma with future children
- Father-loss again
- Insecure attachment with future

partner/spouse

- Potential Lost Fatherhood

"I used to think the worst thing in life was to end up all alone. It's not. The worst thing in life is to end up with people who make you feel all alone."

Robin Williams

<http://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/bnr-hiding-weakness-kills-us/#sthash.pwFzQG2x.dpuf>

Number One

- Men may actually hurt more than women after an abortion decision

Past Research: Men may

Hurt More than Women

Skelton (1989) Los Angeles Times Survey

- 66% of men regretted the choice

- 25% of the women

Major (1992)

- Men overwhelmingly tended to blame the unwanted pregnancy more on their own character than did their partner, perhaps indicating a level of omnipotent responsibility

Coleman and Nelson (1998)

- 52% of men and 33% of women reported regret following the abortion
- 73% of men felt grief and 55% women
- 47% decision discomfort and 32% women
- 45 % men felt powerlessness and 24% women

The Emotional Experiment Shows men more Emotional than women

The Findings

- June 2014, published by Royal Mail and the

study was conducted by Mindlab

- Men experience greater level of emotions (2x) than women when presented with heart warming material
- Their physiological reactions were measured
- When asked verbally how it made them feel, women said it made them more emotional than what the men said, but the physiological response showed different
- Men may have more emotional responses but less likely to express them because of society expectations
- Number one phrase for father day in terms of response was " you are the number one dad"

Why the Need to Understand Masks?

- Masks provide the key to evidence of abortion's effect of men
- Masks provide an opportunity to work with post abortion men. They wouldn't normally come to counseling for the real issue inside such as father-loss or fatherhood loss
- Understand the importance of slowly taking

away and managing the masks prior to addressing traumas. Symptom approach first

- Understand the importance of treating preexisting trauma first in order for post abortion healing to be most effective
- Understand and respect defenses and apply a slow process of releasing repressed/suppressed trauma to provide integration of memory and emotion so to not re-traumatize, cause regression or a return to the use of masks to cope

Why the Need to Reframe Men in the Abortion Decision?

- Understanding can lead to empathy and forgiveness for both men and women
- Understanding can bring resolution
- Can aid in the prevention of relationship failure and divorce
- Prevention of further trauma
- The underlying attachment wound that a person experiences on an unconscious level

seems to be what fuels the unresolved pain between genders especially if there is previous sex abuse/attachment trauma

- Reframing the decision has the greatest potential to change the "crazy cycle" in our culture between men and women that is/has been fueling abortion since the beginning
- Based on social and cultural norms, number of men who will attend counseling, how men grieve differently, and knowledge of externalized symptoms or masks, our greatest opportunity to affect culture is by better research into these "acting" out symptoms at their "crisis point", and the correlation to abortion's affect on men.

We have been looking for pain in all the wrong places too long

Interpersonal Neurobiology Attachment and Rewiring the Brain

- " A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face. And when you are near I will tear your eyes out and place them instead of mine, and you will tear my eyes out and will place them instead of yours, then I will look at me with mine."

Jacob Levy Moreno

Originator of Pyschodrama

What do you notice about
your thoughts and feelings?

A quick story

A final reframe of forgiveness

The stopping place

Closing Thought

"We can help men integrate their brains,
connect with emotions, restore pathways and
have empathy for the unborn by modeling
empathy for their pain and the choice and

giving them the language and permission. Without culture providing for them a different experience, men will remain stuck in the very same behaviors that culture complains about. The cycle of emotional reactions from early trauma and cultural conditioning will not only deepen the chasm of unspoken/unresolved pain between the genders but also feed the very thing that got us here in the first place."

Greg Hasek