



## TILLER AND THE "MENTAL HEALTH" EXCEPTION

*Abortion: the newest cure for women's mental health problems?*

The eternal and always pending "investigation" against third trimester abortionist George Tiller for allegedly using the "mental health" exception to skirt Kansas law, remains on Attorney General Paul Morrison's desk. He received the case as a legacy from then-attorney-general Phill Kline who appointed a special investigator subsequently fired by Morrison. This case has mysteriously caused an incalculable and insurmountable work load for Morrison's staff; the 30 charges given probable cause by two sitting judges just never seems to get done in spite of the oft-claimed professionalism of seasoned prosecutor Morrison. Recently, a key expert witness, Dr. Paul McHugh, came to Kansas City to share his opinion on the 44 redacted (personal information removed) medical files collected by Kline's office. His opinion: **none** of the cases warranted a diagnosis of statutorily-required irrevocable and permanent harm to a bodily function before a third trimester abortion can be performed. Apparently, however, Attorney General Paul Morrison has his staff well-trained for emergency "cease and desist" orders, because Dr. McHugh was immediately served with threats to keep quiet about the case. Dr. McHugh, by the way, is the former head of the Department of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Medical School with a 27-page resume of accomplishments, papers, lectures, awards, etc.

### Irreparable and irrevocable harm?

In the cases in question, abortionist Tiller claimed that if the women did not have an abortion, they would suffer irreparable and irrevocable harm to their mental state. Those who support abortion claim that women have been helped by having "the right to choose." However, does abortion come without risk? Is a woman's mental condition helped by abortion? Does abortion have its own "consequences?"

### The harm an abortion inflicts

A condition described as "Post-Abortion Syndrome" has arrived in the lexicon of professional counselors who work with women who have had abortions. The women demonstrate what counselors describe as a "cluster" of reactions that fit the model of post-traumatic stress disorder. This syndrome, whether triggered by combat, violence or by abortion, is described as a psychological dysfunction resulting from a traumatic experience which overwhelms a person's normal healthy defense mechanisms. Some of the typical symptoms are: intense fear, anxiety, feelings of helplessness and loss of control, emotional numbing, difficulty in recalling the event precipitating feelings of guilt, pain, grief, and depression. Also included are: irritability, angry outbursts, aggressive behavior, sleep difficulties and sexual dysfunction. Other symptoms include: flashbacks (many women cannot turn on a vacuum without remembering the sound of the suction machine that is used in abortions), nightmares, anniversary reactions, withdrawal from relationships, avoidance

of children, pessimism regarding the future, drug and alcohol abuse and suicidal thoughts. A California study of 50,000 California Medicaid patients from 1989-1994 found women who aborted having 2.6 times more psychiatric admissions in the first 90 days than women giving birth and 17 percent higher mental health claims over the following four years. Full documentation can be found at [www.nrlc.org](http://www.nrlc.org). Obviously, abortion does not help the mental state of many women, yet abortionist Tiller uses that reason to justify third trimester abortions on babies from 20 weeks to full gestation.

### The physical cost

The physical cost of abortion can be measured as well, in spite of pro-choice claims that abortion is safer than having a child. Surgical abortion can harm a woman's reproductive system; it is a blind invasive procedure that can introduce infections, scarring the delicate reproductive tissues; the uterine wall can be perforated, and the cervix can be damaged leading to premature delivery in subsequent pregnancies. Women having abortions have more than a doubled risk of future sterility according to the National Right to Life statistical analysis. A study detailed in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 1998 found women who had abortions faced a 50 percent increase in dangerous ectopic pregnancies (a pregnancy forming in the Fallopian tube). The risk was twice as high (90 percent) for women who have had two or more previous abortions. Miscarriages and premature births are another risk of having abortions according to at least ten international studies.

### Abortion is linked to breast cancer

A controversial possible risk of abortion is the link between breast cancer and abortions, particularly before the first full-term pregnancy, due to the interruption of the maturation of breast lobules in the first pregnancy. Thirteen out of seventeen studies in the U.S. reported more breast cancer among women who chose abortion. A 1996 meta-analysis of all published reports on the incidence of induced abortion and breast cancer appearing in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* found, on average, a 30 percent increased risk.

### An inestimable cost

It is estimated that 48,589,993 abortions have occurred since *Roe v. Wade* (based on numbers issued by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood) from 1973-2003 with estimates of 1,287,000 for 2004-2006. If only a few of those experienced the risks described in this article, it would account for hundreds of thousands of damaged women who thought they had solved their problem by having an abortion. Couple that with abortionists who convince them their mental health would be irrevocably damaged by not aborting their fully-viable babies, and we have a national tragedy that knows no bounds. Think about it and call Attorney General Morrison (785-296-2215) and Governor Sebelius (877-579-6757) and urge them to protect women and the babies they carry by following the law. Urge them to let abortionist Tiller answer the charges against him.