

APRIL 2019

Introduction to the Turnaway Study

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The Turnaway Study is ANSIRH's prospective longitudinal study examining the effects of unintended pregnancy on women's lives. The major aim of the study is to describe the mental health, physical health, and socioeconomic consequences of receiving an abortion compared to carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term.

From 2008 to 2010, we recruited women from 30 abortion facilities around the country—from Maine to Washington, Texas to Minnesota. We interviewed nearly 1,000 women who sought abortions, some who received abortions because they presented for care under the gestational limit of the clinic and some who were “turned away” and carried to term because they were past the facility's gestational limit.

We interviewed participants by phone every six months over a period of five years. We conducted nearly 8,000 interviews over the course of the study, and the stories that women shared with us about their lives are fascinating. We will continue to document their experiences in articles and other publications for the next several years.

The Turnaway Study is an effort to capture women's stories, understand the role of abortion and childbearing in their lives, and contribute scientific data to the ongoing public policy debate on the mental health and life-course consequences of abortion and unwanted childbearing for women and families.

Turnaway Study annotated bibliography

1. Biggs MA, Gould H, Foster DG. [Understanding why women seek abortions in the US](#). *BMC Women's Health* (2013) Jul; 13(29) doi: 10.1186/1472-6874-13-29.

2. Roberts SC, Avalos LA, Sinkford D, Foster DG. Alcohol, tobacco and drug use as reasons for abortion. *Alcohol and Alcoholism* (2012) Nov; 47(6):640-8.
3. Chibber KS, Biggs MA, Roberts SCM, Foster DG. The role of intimate partners in women's reasons for seeking abortion. *Women's Health Issues* (2014) Jan-Feb; 24(1):e131–e138.

Describe some of the reasons why women seek abortion.

4. Upadhyay UD, Weitz TA, Jones RK, Barar RE, Foster DG. Denial of abortion because of provider gestational age limits in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health* (2014) Sept; 104(9):1687-1694.
5. Foster DG, Dobkin LM, Upadhyay UD. Denial of abortion care due to gestational age limits. *Contraception* (2013) Jan; 87(1):3-5.

Provide our estimate that even before most 20-week bans were implemented, more than 4,000 women were denied wanted abortions due to gestational limits.

6. Foster DG, Kimport K. Who seeks abortions at or after 20 weeks? *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (2013) Dec; 45(4):210-8.

Examines the predictors of seeking later abortions and the stories of women who sought them.

7. Dobkin L, Gould H, Barar R, Weiss E, Foster DG. Implementing a prospective study of women seeking abortion in the United States: The challenges of recruitment prior to informed consent. *Women's Health Issues* (2014) Jan-Feb; 24(1):e115–e123.

Provides a description of our study recruitment.

8. Gould H, Foster DG, Perrucci AC, Barar RE, Roberts SC. Predictors of abortion counseling receipt and helpfulness in the United States. *Women's Health Issues* (2013) Jul-Aug; 23(4):e249–e255.
9. Gould H, Perrucci A, Barar R, Sinkford D, Foster DG. Patient education and emotional support practices in abortion care facilities in the United States. *Women's Health Issues*. (2012) Jul-Aug; 22(4):e359–e364.

Describes what counseling occurs in abortion clinics; shows that most women don't feel pressured and that they find counseling less helpful when it is state-mandated.

10. Foster DG, Ralph LJ, Biggs MA, Gerdts C, Roberts SCM, Glymour MA. Socioeconomic outcomes of women who receive and women who are denied wanted abortions. *American Journal of Public Health* (2018) Mar; 108(3):407-413.

Shows that being denied a wanted abortion results in economic insecurity for women and their families, and an almost four-fold increase in odds that household income will fall below the Federal Poverty Level.

11. Roberts SCM, Foster DG, Gould H, Biggs MA. Changes in alcohol, tobacco, and drug use over five years after receiving versus being denied a pregnancy termination. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* (2018) Mar; 79(2):293-301.
12. Roberts SCM, Ralph L, Wilsnack SC, Foster DG. Which women are missed by primary health-care based interventions for alcohol and drug use? *Addictive Behaviors* (2016) Apr; 55:32-7.
13. Roberts SCM, Foster DG. Receiving versus being denied an abortion and subsequent tobacco use. *Maternal and Child Health Journal* (2015) Mar; 19(3):438-446.
14. Roberts SCM, Delucchi K, Wilsnack S, Foster DG. Receiving versus being denied a pregnancy termination and subsequent alcohol use: A longitudinal study. *Alcohol and Alcoholism* (2015) Jul; 50(4):477-484.
15. Roberts S. C., S. C. Wilsnack, et al. Alcohol use before and during unwanted pregnancy. *Alcoholism, Clinical and Experimental Research* (2014) Nov; 38(11):2844-2852.
16. Roberts SC, Rocca CH, Foster DG. Receiving versus being denied an abortion and subsequent drug use. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* (2014) Jan; 134:63-70.

Show the effect of receiving or being denied a wanted abortion on drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. Women continuing unwanted pregnancies reduce/cease some, but not all, substance use, while women who have abortions tend to continue substance use patterns from before their abortions. There is no indication that having an abortion leads women to increase binge drinking, alcohol-related problem symptoms, tobacco use, or drug use.

17. Mauldon J, Foster DG, Roberts SCM. Effect of abortion vs. carrying to term on a woman's relationship with the man involved in the pregnancy. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (2015) Mar; 47(1):11-18.
18. Roberts SCM, Biggs MA, Chibber KS, Gould H, Rocca CH, Foster DG. Risk of violence from the man involved in the pregnancy after receiving or being denied an abortion. *BMC Medicine* (2014) Sept; 12:144.

Show that carrying a pregnancy to term slows the dissolution of romantic relationships with the man involved, but by two years, there is no difference in romantic relationships between those who had the abortion and those who carried the pregnancy to term. For women who carry to term, ongoing contact with the man involved results in continued exposure to violence.

19. Woodruff K, Gould H, Biggs MA, Foster DG. C. Attitudes Toward Abortion After Receiving vs Being Denied an Abortion in the U.S. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* (2018) In press.

Illustrates that attitudes about abortion morality and legality are not always congruous. Also shows that women who are denied abortion become less supportive of abortion rights.

20. Upadhyay U, Biggs MA, Foster DG. The effect of abortion on having and achieving aspirational one-year plans. *BMC Women's Health* (2015) Nov; 15:102.
21. Biggs MA, Upadhyay UD, Steinberg JR, Foster DG. Does abortion reduce self-esteem and life satisfaction? *Quality of Life Research* (2014) Nov; 23(9):2505-13.
22. Harris LF, Roberts SCM, Biggs MA, Rocca CH, Foster DG. Perceived stress and emotional social support among women who are denied or receive abortions in the United States: a prospective cohort study. *BMC Women's Health* (2014) Jun; 14:76.

Describe the effect of receiving or being denied an abortion on self-esteem, life satisfaction, stress, social support, and life plans. Women denied wanted abortions initially have worse self-esteem and life satisfaction. Over time, there are not major differences in self-esteem, life satisfaction, stress, or social support. Women who receive abortions have six times higher odds of having positive life plans and are more likely to achieve them.

23. Biggs MA, Gould H, Barar RE, Foster DG. Five-year suicidal ideation trajectories among women receiving versus being denied an abortion. *American Journal of Psychiatry* (2018) In press.
24. Biggs MA, Upadhyay U, McCulloch CE, Foster DG. Women's mental health and well-being five years after receiving or being denied an abortion: A prospective, longitudinal cohort study. *JAMA Psychiatry* (2017) Feb; 74(2):169-178.
25. Biggs MA, Rowland B, McCulloch CE, Foster DG. Does abortion increase women's risk for post-traumatic stress? Findings from a prospective longitudinal cohort study. *BMJ Open* (2016) Feb; 6(2):e009698.
26. Biggs MA, Neuhaus J, Foster DG. Mental health diagnoses 3 years after receiving or being denied an abortion in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health* (2015) Dec; 105(12):2557-63.
27. Foster DG, Roberts S, Steinberg J, Neuhaus J, Biggs MA. A comparison of depression and anxiety symptom trajectories between women who had an abortion and women denied one. *Psychological Medicine* (2015) Jul; 45(10):2073-2082.

Describe the effects of receiving or being denied abortion on women's mental health. There is no evidence that abortion causes mental health problems, including depression, PTSD, and suicide. Women who are denied abortion initially have higher anxiety than women receiving an abortion; however, over time, there are no differences in depression or anxiety between the groups.

28. Rocca CH, Kimport K, Roberts SCM, Gould H, Neuhaus J, Foster DG. Decision rightness and emotional responses to abortion in the United States: a longitudinal study. *PLOS ONE* (2015) Jul; 10(7):e0128832.

29. Rocca C, Kimport K, Gould H, Foster DG. Women's emotions one week after receiving or being denied an abortion in the United States. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (2013) Sept; 45(3):122-131.

Show that women experience a mix of positive and negative emotions after an abortion, with relief predominating, and all emotions diminishing over time. The vast majority of women who have negative emotions about their abortion still think it was the right decision. Overall, 95% of women feel that abortion was the right decision.

30. Roberts SCM, Gould H, Kimport K, Weitz TA, Foster DG. Out-of-pocket costs and insurance coverage for abortion in the United States. *Women's Health Issues* (2014) Mar-Apr; 24(2):e211-e218.

Demonstrates the burden women face trying to raise money to pay for an abortion and that women who did not have access to public or private insurance coverage were delayed due to raising money for the abortion.

31. Kimport K, Weitz TA, Foster DG. Beyond political claims: Women's interest in and emotional response to viewing their ultrasound image in abortion care. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (2014) Dec; 46(4):185-191.

Describes who chooses to view their ultrasounds and women's emotional responses to viewing, which are not all negative, and some are even positive.

32. Sisson G, Ralph L, Gould H, Foster DG. Adoption decision making among women seeking abortion. *Women's Health Issues* (2017) Mar; 27(2):136-144.

Demonstrates that choosing adoption is rare even when abortion is no longer an option and describes the experiences of the women who make that choice.

33. Foster DG, Kimport K, Gould H, Roberts SC, Weitz TA. Effect of abortion protesters on women's emotional response to abortion. *Contraception* (2013) Jan; 87(1):81-7.

Describes women's exposure to protesters and shows that the more contact, the more upsetting the protesters are. But also shows that protesters don't change how women feel about their abortions.

34. Gerds C, Dobkin L, Foster DG, Schwarz EB. Side Effects, Physical Health Consequences, and Mortality Associated with Abortion and Birth after an Unwanted Pregnancy. *Women's Health Issues* (2015) Jan-Feb; 26(1):55-9.

Shows that carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term is far riskier to women's physical health than having an abortion.

35. Moseson H, Foster DG, Upadhyay U, Vittinghoff E, Rocca C. Contraceptive use over five years after receipt or denial of abortion services. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (2018) Mar; 50(1):7-14.

Women who have an abortion are more likely to use contraception overall than those denied the abortion, but they rely less on sterilization and more on condoms and short-acting hormonal methods.

36. Aztlan EA, Foster DG, Upadhyay U. Subsequent unintended pregnancy among US women who receive or are denied a wanted abortion. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* (2018) Jan; 63(1):45-52.

37. Upadhyay UD, Aztlan-James EA, Rocca CH, Foster DG. Intended pregnancy after receiving vs. being denied a wanted abortion. *Contraception* (2018) Sept; PMID: 30244161.

Shows there is no difference in the rate of unintended pregnancy between women who received an abortion and women who were denied a wanted abortion. Women who receive an abortion are more likely to have an intended pregnancy in the next five years compared to women who are denied.

38. Foster DG, Raifman SE, Gipson JD, Rocca CH, Biggs MA. Effects of Carrying an Unwanted Pregnancy to Term on Women's Existing Children. *The Journal of Pediatrics* (2018) Oct; PMID: 30389101.

39. Foster DG, Biggs MA, Raifman S, Gipson JD, Kimport K, Rocca CH. Comparison of Health, Development, Maternal Bonding, and Poverty Among Children Born After Denial of Abortion vs After Pregnancies Subsequent to an Abortion. *JAMA Pediatrics* (2018) Sept; 172(11):1053-1060.

Demonstrates that when women have control over the timing of having children, the children benefit. We find measurable differences in the economic wellbeing and development of existing children that adversely affects those whose mothers were denied an abortion. And we find that children born later to women who are able to get an abortion experience more economic security and better maternal bonding than the children born because a woman was denied an abortion.

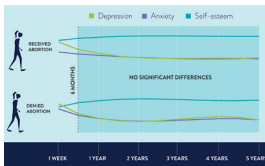
Additional Resources:



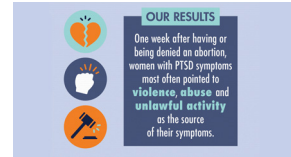
How obtaining an abortion versus being denied one impacts alcohol, tobacco, and drug use. (2018) Mar; <http://bit.ly/2FYyixi>



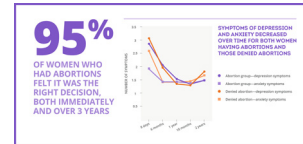
Socioeconomic outcomes of women who receive and women who are denied wanted abortions. (2018) Jan; <http://bit.ly/2mIBHYS>



Abortion does not cause mental health harm. (2016) Dec; <http://bit.ly/2nxMW8b>



Abortion does not increase risk of PTSD. (2016) Feb; <http://bit.ly/2o3ySEo>



Large nationwide study finds no evidence of psychological problems after abortion. (2015) Jul; <http://bit.ly/2ngje53>