

Letters to the Editor - Nada L. Stotland, M.D.
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To the Editor:

Your article about the strategy of anti-abortion activists reveals their new claim that by pushing for mandatory counseling about abortion's alleged psychological and physical risks, they're working in the interests of women.

The Supreme Court narrowly endorsed that claim when it upheld the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, substituting political propaganda for medical science.

But meticulous research shows that there is no causal relationship between abortions and mental illnesses. Women's mental health is jeopardized when laws require doctors to mislead them and is best served when women make their own decisions. That's why the American Psychiatric Association stands in favor of women's access to reproductive health care.

Anti-abortion activists have even made up a mental disease: "abortion trauma syndrome." Recently I told Congress that the association recognizes no such disorder.

Doctors take an oath to work in the best interest of patients. Anti-choice activists merely claim that mantle as their tactic du jour.

Nada L. Stotland, M.D.
Chicago, May 22, 2007

The writer is president-elect of the American Psychiatric Association.