

Questions for Brian re: peer-review process

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I could not think of very many examples of articles that are outside of the mainstream but should be published in journals such as JAMA. However, in most cases, such articles would never be published or pass the peer review process since they are outside of the mainstream and/or are NOT politically correct. I found several articles like the one below when I typed "Abortion/Breast Cancer" into the google search engine.

It's my guess that any members of the peer review committee that approved the following article or similar article would be fired ASAP. Do you agree?

Source: World Net Daily (worldnetdaily.com)
WND Exclusive MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH
Abortion-breast cancer link covered up by scientists?
Researcher says 'pro-choice' bias has hidden deadly risks to women
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A pioneer researcher into the connection between abortion and breast cancer says an overwhelming amount of evidence collected in nearly 50 years of studies demonstrating a conclusive link has been systematically covered up by biased scientists, government agencies and the news media using fraudulent data to deceive women about potentially life-and-death decisions.

Joel Brind, a Ph.D. and professor of human biology and endocrinology at Baruch College, City University of New York and president of the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute, has authored a paper for the National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly refuting several recent studies downplaying the abortion-breast cancer link.

In particular, Brind cites a widely noticed paper published by Valerie Beral and four other Oxford University scientists in *The Lancet* in 2004 and statements of the National Cancer Institute in 2003.

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The Beral study finding was unequivocal: "Pregnancies that end as a spontaneous or induced abortion do not increase a woman's risk of developing breast cancer." The NCI has stated on its website since 2003 "having an abortion or miscarriage does not increase a woman's subsequent risk of developing breast cancer."

"The trouble is, to accept this conclusion, one needs to dismiss almost half a century's worth of data which do show a significant link between abortion and an increased risk of breast cancer," writes Brind.

Brind says "denial of the ABC link has become the party line of all major governmental agencies (including the World Health Organization), mainstream medical associations (including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists) and the most prestigious medical journals (including the New England Journal of Medicine)."

The first study done on the link was in 1957 in Japan, published in the Japanese Journal of Cancer Research, and found breast cancer had a three-fold higher frequency in women who had abortions. Again in 1979, the World Health Organization commissioned a high-profile study based at Harvard and published in the WHO Bulletin that reported a disturbing trend "in the direction which suggested increased risk associated with abortion - contrary to the reduction in risk with full-term births."

"The fact that the WHO findings never entered the debate reveals a disturbing - and continuing - disconnect between the so-called women's health advocates pushing for legalized abortion and any genuine concern for women's health," writes Brind.

Those studies were followed by the first based on American women in 1981 by Malcolm Pike and his colleagues at the University of Southern California. The results showed women who had an abortion before they had any children were at a 2.4-fold increased risk for breast cancer.

"One would think, especially given the overwhelmingly elective nature of the induced abortion, that the precautionary principle would prevail, if not in terms of legal regulation, then at least in terms of recommendations by medical societies and public health agencies," writes Brind. "That is to say, even one or two studies showing a significant association between induced abortion and future breast cancer risk would surely raise some red flags about the procedure's safety. Yet not only was a statistical connection showing up in the vast majority of studies that had examined the issue, but by the early 1980s, a clear picture of the physiological events explaining that connection was beginning to emerge."

Brind points out that the connection went beyond statistics. In the 1970s, the science explaining the connection was becoming understood through laboratory research into reproductive endocrinology. In 1976, the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology published a study documenting the

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difference between the enormous rise of estrogen and progesterone in the first trimester of viable pregnancies and the stunted and short-lived rise of these hormones during pregnancies destined to abort spontaneously through miscarriage. These findings, he says, dovetail perfectly with the patterns of differences in breast cancer risk following different pregnancy outcomes.

Tests during the 1970s on research animals again demonstrated the link between abortions and breast cancer risk, connecting it conclusively with the estrogen and progesterone levels produced in early stages of pregnancy.

"Knowledge of the actions of estrogen and progesterone in terms of their effects upon breast growth completes the coherent picture of induced - but not spontaneous - abortion and breast cancer risk," explains Brind.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Brind asserts that study after study - in Japan, Europe and the U.S. - continued to report significant increased breast cancer risk in women who had an induced abortion.

"By 1994, six epidemiological studies out of seven in the United States, on women of both black and white ethnicity, had reported increased risk with induced abortion," he writes.

Then in 1994, Janet Daling and colleagues of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle published a study in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute showing a 50 percent increase in the risk of breast cancer among women who had chosen abortion. It also showed an increase of more than 100 percent for women who had an abortion prior to the age of 18 or after age 30. The risk was compounded for those who had family histories of breast cancer.

"But forces were already set in motion to make sure the news was short-lived," explains Brind. "For one thing, the Daling study was accompanied by a most unusual JNCI editorial. It was unusual because most medical journal editorials, written by a scientist who has peer-reviewed the study, are published by the journal in order to highlight the importance of a major study on a subject of wide public interest. Such editorials typically make it easier for reporters - usually non-scientists working on short deadlines - to glean the major points of a study and render it understandable to the general public. Instead, Dr. Lynn Rosenberg, of Boston University School of Medicine, took the opportunity to write an editorial which sandbagged the Daling study, concluding - among other things - that "... the overall results as well as the particulars are far from conclusive, and it is difficult to see how they will be informative to the public." Rosenberg even speculated the study may have been faulty because of "reporting bias" that generated false positive results.

Brind accuses Rosenberg of misrepresenting the Daling study, "an act which

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by itself satisfies most definitions of scientific misconduct."

Brind even suggests a possible motive: "Rosenberg has also shown herself to take a stance that appears to go beyond 'pro-choice' (as Janet Daling has described herself), and that is radically pro-abortion. In 1999, for example, she served on behalf of a group of Florida abortion clinics as an expert witness in their (ultimately successful) facial challenge of a new parental notification law in Florida for minors seeking an abortion. Such minimal restrictions on abortions are supported by the vast majority of even 'pro-choice' citizens, but not by the likes of Rosenberg."

Brind points out that when Rosenberg served as editor of the American Journal of Epidemiology in 1988, a study on breast cancer in South American women was published. Only seven years later was it revealed in the British Journal of Cancer that the study found abortion was the biggest risk factor in that study - a point not revealed under Rosenberg's watch.

Government agencies such as the NCI, some volunteer organizations such as the American Cancer Society and major medical journals all seem determined, Brind asserts, to downplay and conceal the breast cancer links with abortion.

"The only effective counterweight to such unified enforcement of the party line (in this case, 'safe abortion') is an independent media," he says.

In 1996, Brind, along with three colleagues, published a comprehensive review and meta-analysis of the ABC link in the British Medical Association's epidemiology journal, the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. It reported data compiled from 23 previous studies. It found there was a 30 percent increase in risk of breast cancer among women who had an induced abortion with no significant link to miscarriages.

Three months later, a new paper widely hailed as the definitive disproof of the ABC link appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine. It was funded by the U.S. Department of Defense and focused exclusively on women in Denmark. Nevertheless, an editorial in the journal by a senior NCI scientist concluded: "In short, a woman need not worry about the risk of breast cancer when facing the difficult decision of whether to terminate a pregnancy."

"Just how, one may reasonably ask, could one single study's result nullify almost half a century's data from dozens of studies?" writes Brind.

But he goes further, pointing out what appears to be a serious flaw in the methodology - the misclassification of some 60,000 women in the study who had abortions but were categorized as not having the procedure.

Yet, Brind contends the raw data of the study still shows a 44 percent increase in breast cancer risk with induced abortion - an increase that did not appear in print in the study "and which was made to disappear with

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statistical adjustment."

"Despite the worst efforts of scientists, doctors, politicians, journalists and judges to quash public knowledge of the ABC link, the fact that published evidence of it abounds would make it a daunting task to convince a jury of its nonexistence, given a well-presented case," writes Brind.

He says two recent court cases have found in favor of plaintiffs who did not receive warnings about breast cancer risk before their abortions.

"It is indeed unfortunate that - even assuming the truth will eventually win out - it may not occur until the issue is forced into the courtroom," he concludes. "We have estimated that upwards of 10,000 cases of breast cancer each year presently, and up to 25,000 per year in 20 or 30 years hence, are or will be attributable to induced abortion. How many thousands of women will be subjected to the pain and suffering of this horrible life-threatening disease, only because doctors, the public health agencies, the media and even voluntary anti-cancer organizations are under the thumb of the 'safe abortion' lobby?"

Brind says there is new - even stronger - evidence to link abortion to premature births in subsequent pregnancies, "which in turn raises the risk of breast cancer and cerebral palsy in the prematurely born children."

"Many adjectives may be used to properly describe induced abortion, but 'safe' is assuredly not one of them," he concludes. "The day will surely come when this is common knowledge, and for every day sooner that this happens, thousands of lives may be saved."

Research finds there are other negative effects of abortion on mothers who undergo the procedure.

According to a report yesterday in the London Telegraph, a French study of 2,837 births - the first to investigate the link between terminations and extremely premature births - found that mothers who had previously had an abortion were 1.7 times more likely to give birth to a baby at less than 28 weeks' gestation. Many babies born this early die soon after birth, and a large number who survive suffer serious disability, the report state.

"Clearly there is a link. The results suggest that induced abortion can damage the cervix in some way that makes a premature birth more likely in subsequent pregnancies," the paper quotes Dr Caroline Moreau, the lead researcher, as saying.

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