

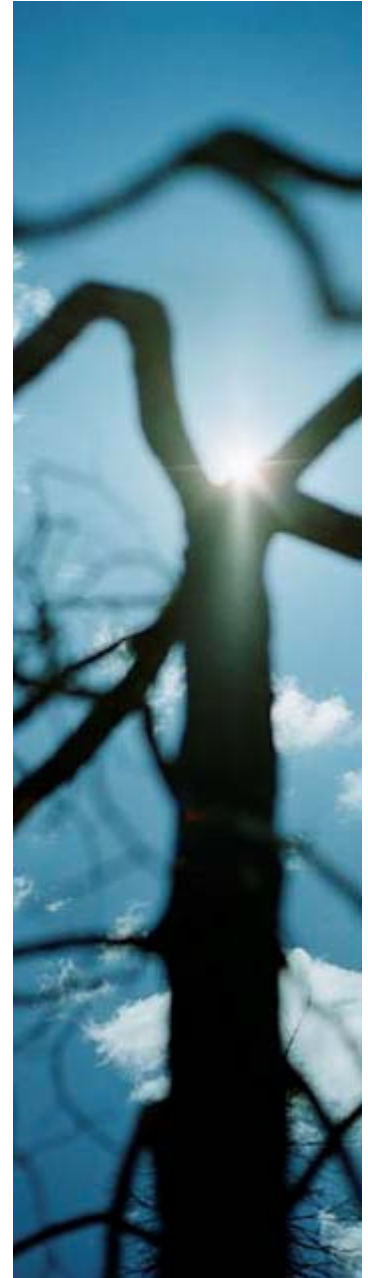
Reactions and reflections in men involved in induced abortion

Ann Lalos

Professor

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden



Men involved in abortion
constitute
an invisible group



Aim

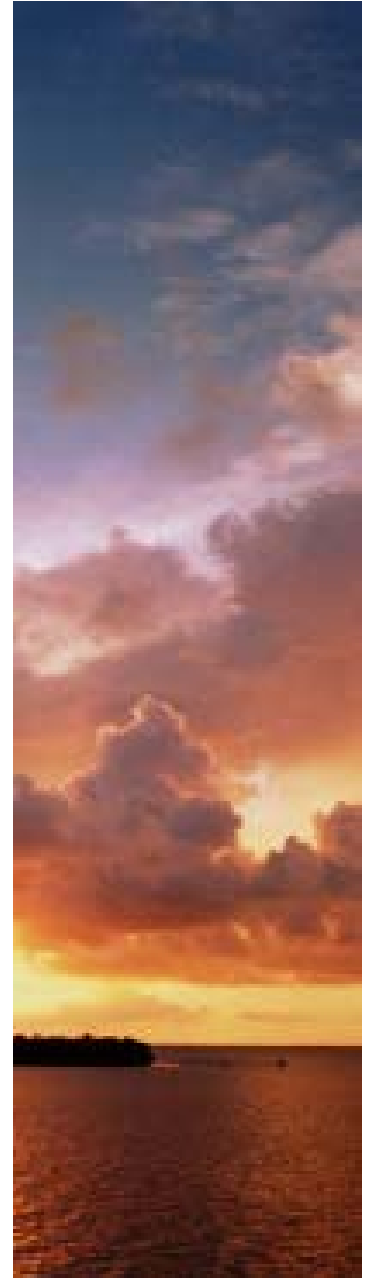
To increase
knowledge and understanding
of the abortion situation
by focusing on
men's views and experiences



Qualitative & Quantitative methods

One questionnaire (n=75)

Three follow-up interviews (n=27)





Results

Mean & median age 29 years
(range 18-50 years)

A quarter had previously
experienced an abortion

Stable relationships
with a financially good position

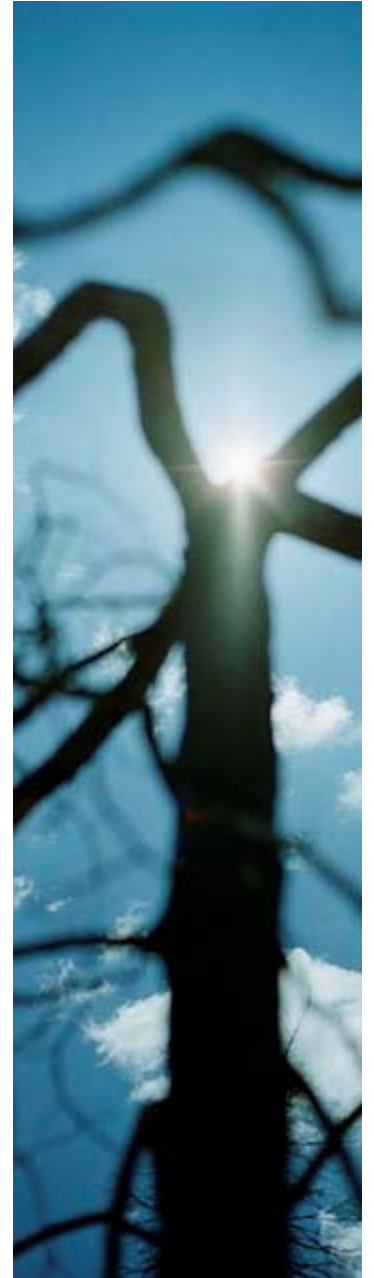


Results

Two thirds clearly stated that they wanted an abortion (64%)

A quarter did not take any specific standpoint but left it to the woman to decide (27%)

Two wanted the woman to complete the pregnancy



Motives for abortion

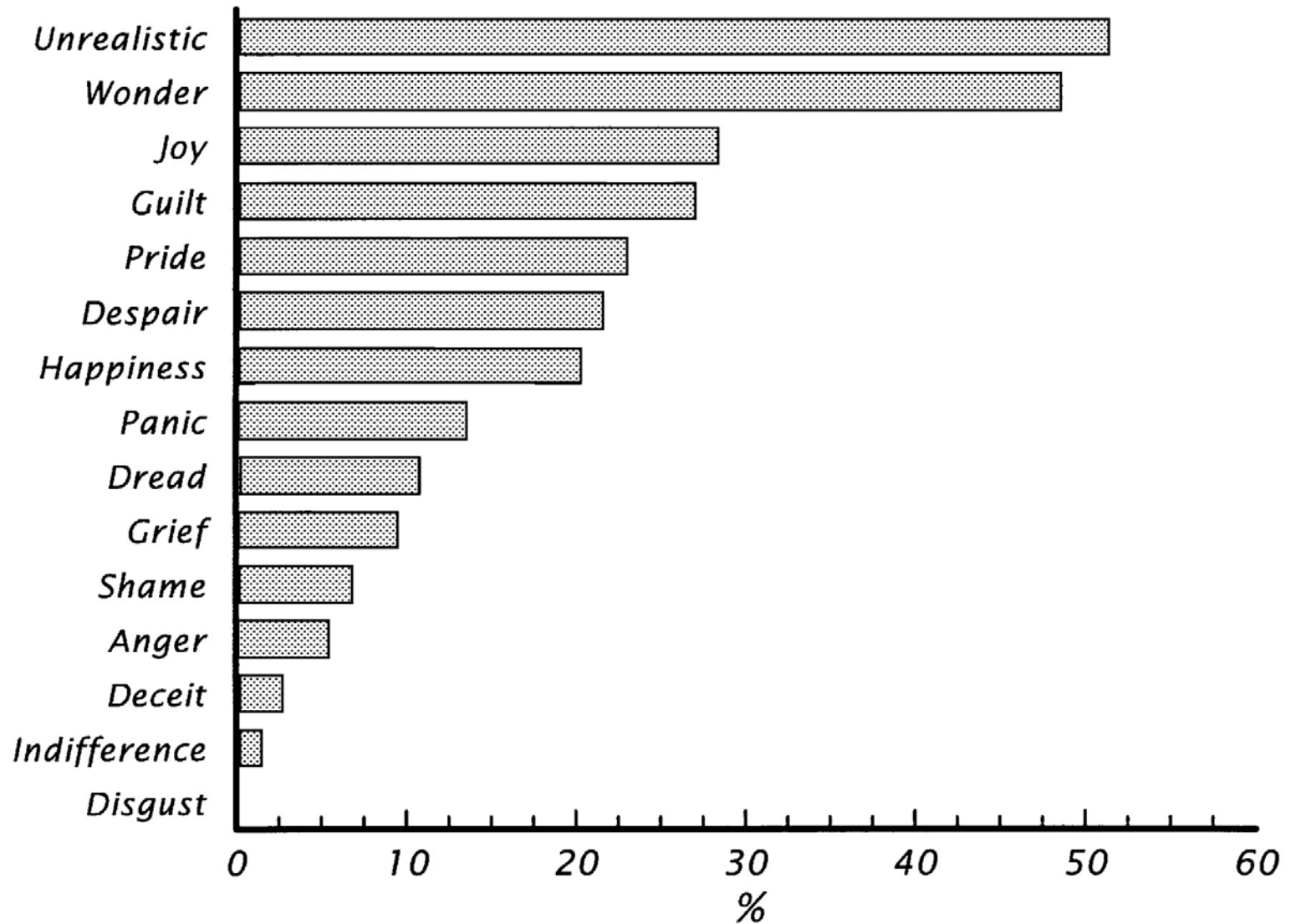
- had all the children they wanted
- not the right time becoming a parent
- gave priority to other things
- unable to offer a child a caring environment
- insecure relationship with the woman
- socio-economic motives
- age
- no time for an extra child
- health



Negative feelings → → Painful feelings



Initial feelings related to the pregnancy (n=74 men)

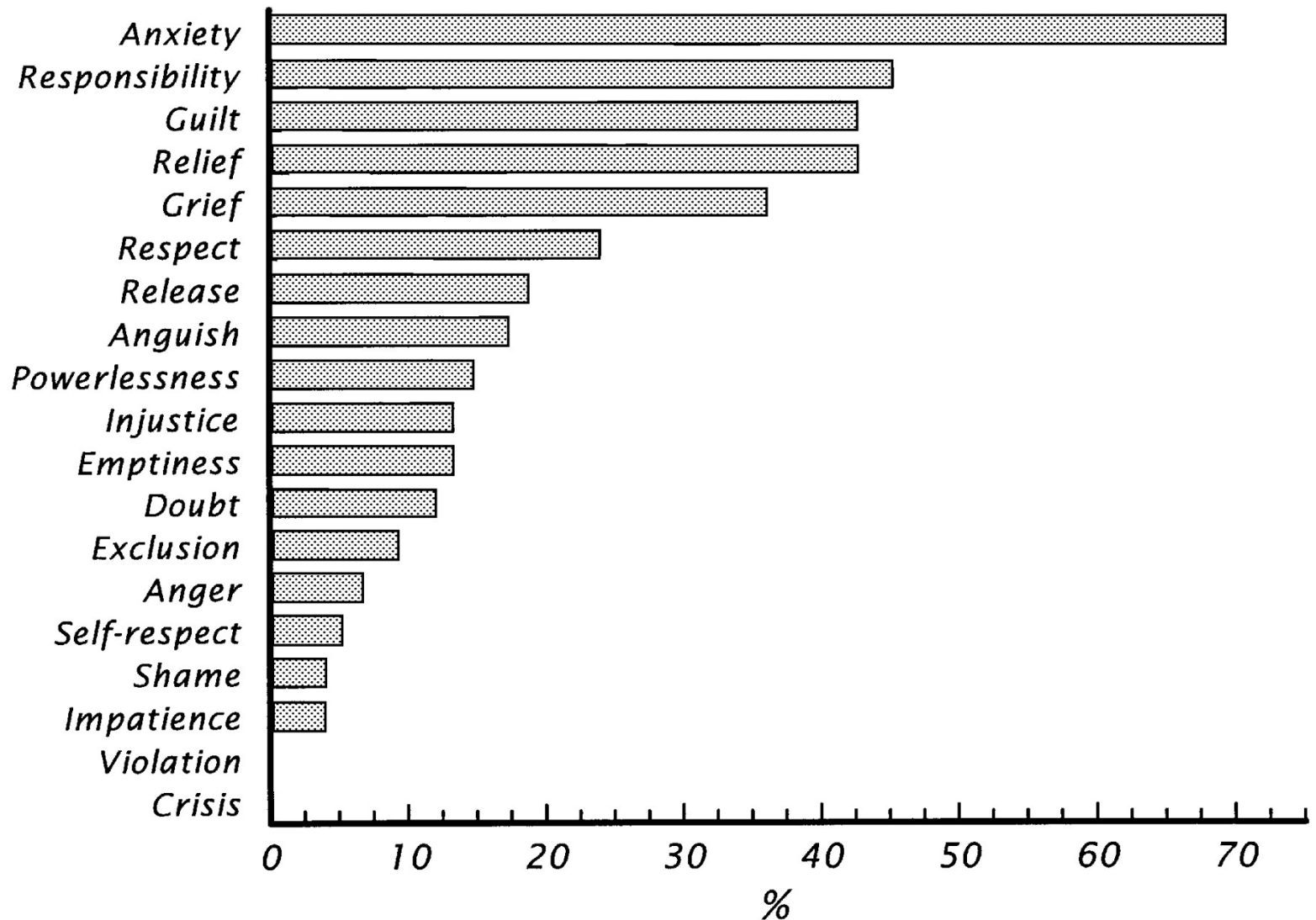


Initial feelings related to the pregnancy

- Almost half used both positive and painful words
- A third chose words which only characterized pain
- A quarter chose only positively charged words

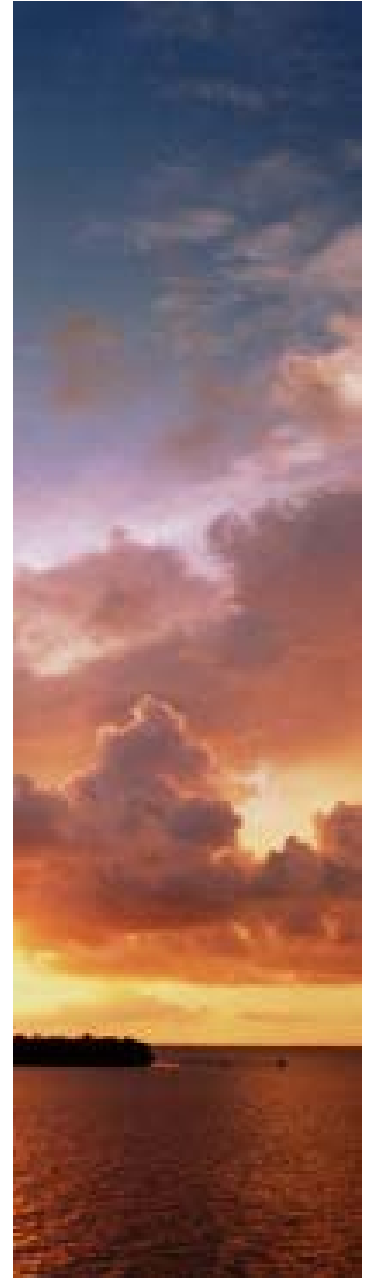


Feelings related to the expected abortion (n=75 men)



Initial feelings related to the expected abortion

- More than half used both positive and painful words (57%)
- Less than a third chose words which only characterized pain (29%)
- Few chose only positively charged words (13%)

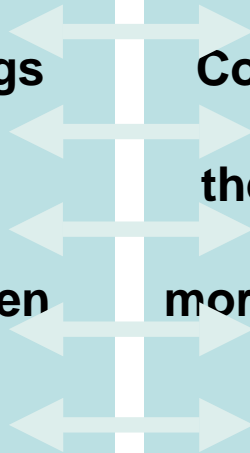


Contradictory feelings



**Contradictory feelings
towards
the pregnancy
appeared among
almost half of the men**

**Contradictory feelings
towards
the expected abortion
appeared among
more than half of the men**



Feelings related to the pregnancy in relation to feelings related to the abortion ($n = 74$)

Feelings related to the pregnancy	Feelings related to the abortion			Total
	Only positive	Both positive and painful	Only painful	
Only positive	5	9	6	20
Both positive and painful	2	21	7	30
Only painful	3	13	8	24
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>				
Total	10	43	21	74

Strongly positive feelings
can be experienced about
the pregnancy -
even if one is mentally
prepared for abortion



33 years, married, three children, both wanted an abortion

“The decision to have an abortion was right. . .

I have experienced that it is possible to take difficult decisions and survive. It is possible to heal and mourn . . .

the crisis has strengthened me.”

22 years, not cohabitant, no children, positive about a child
but the woman wanted an abortion

**“Abortion was probably the best
solution . . .**

**I have faced the seriousness of life,
the first adversity. . . learnt
something.”**

23 years, not cohabitant, no children, both wanted an abortion

“I am a little sad when I think of it, but I do not mourn . . . still I feel it was the right decision.

Everything that is difficult and becomes a trial that you manage makes you mature. My partner and I have been more closely united.”

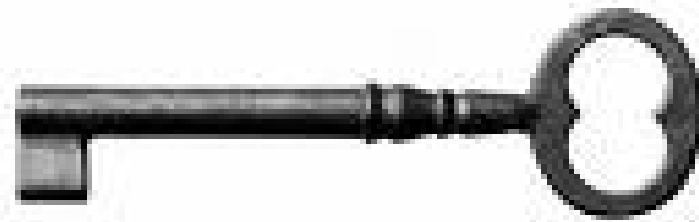
37 years, married, three children, he wanted an abortion
but the woman did not

“ . . . nothing I regret. We did the right thing. We are doing well together ... do not know if the relationship would have survived a fulfilled pregnancy.”

Most men had experienced mental growth, maturity and a deepened self-knowledge as a sequel to the abortion

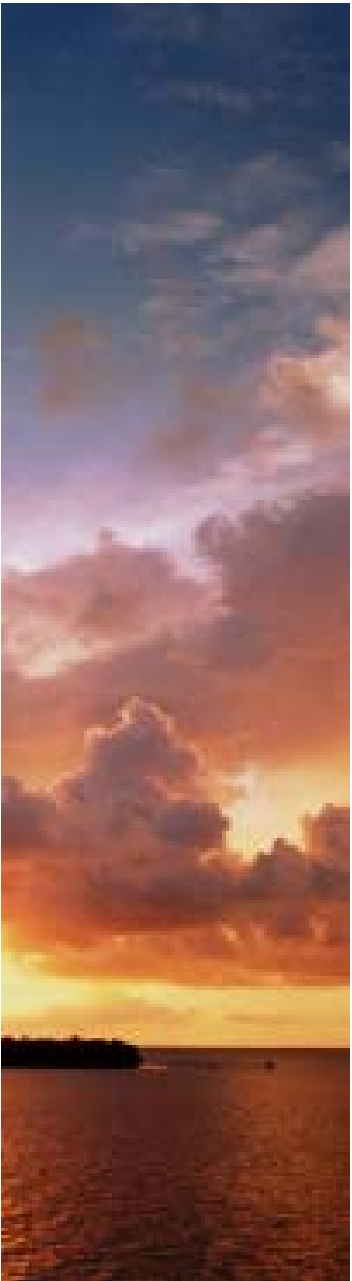


Invisible men → visible !

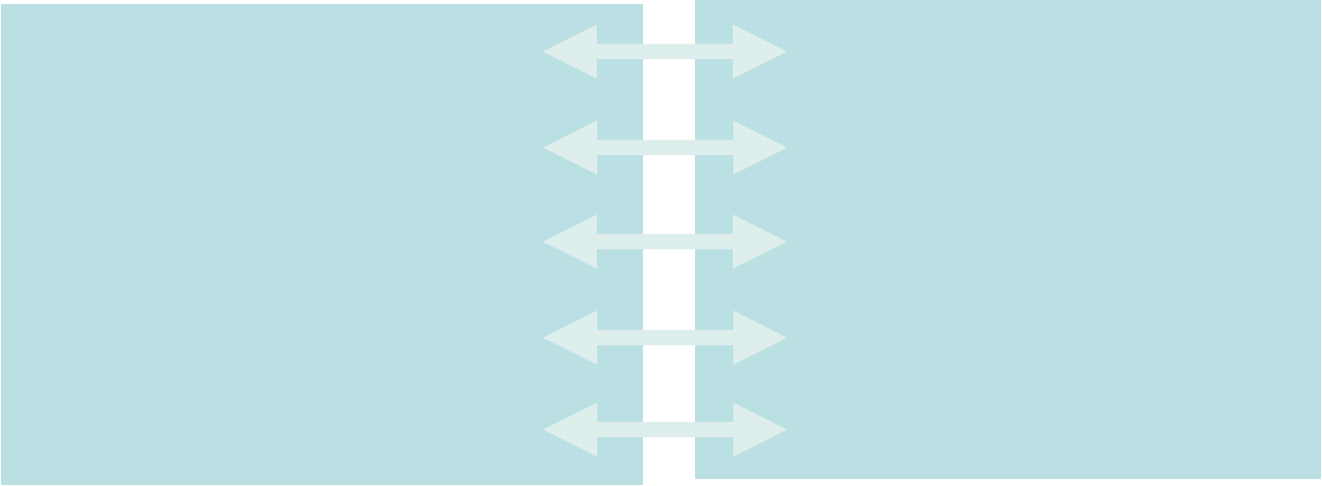


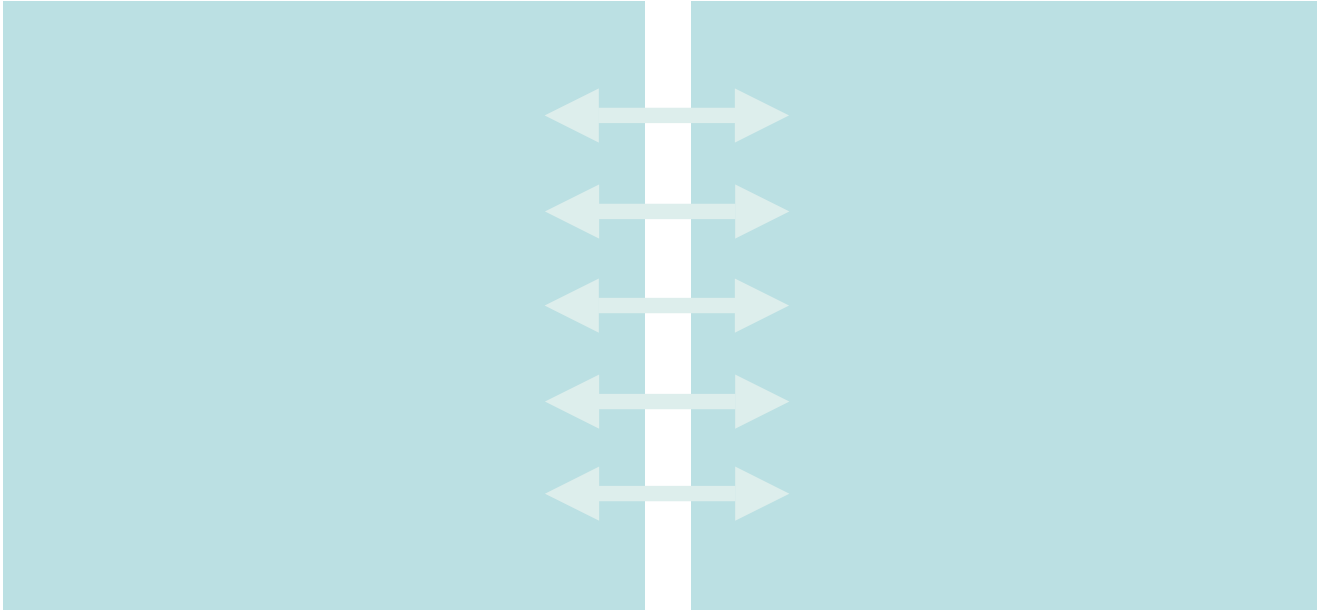
A gender perspective
is of fundamental importance











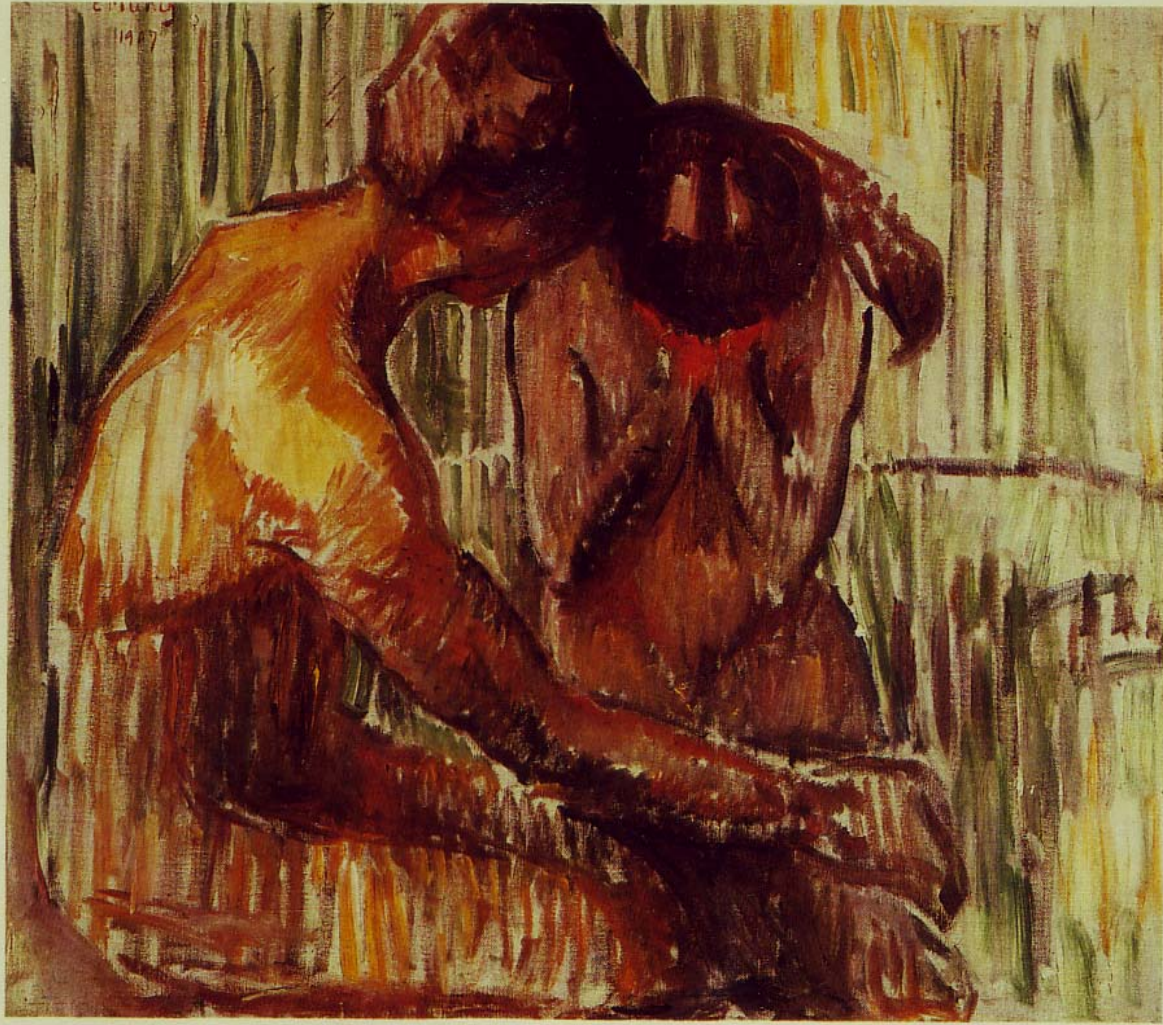




- **Feelings related to the coming abortion**
- Anxiety
- Responsibility
- Guilt
- Relief
- Grief
- Respect
- Release
- Anguish
- Powerlessness
- Injustice
- Emptiness
- Doubt
- Exclusion
- Anger
- Self-respect
- Shame
- Impatience

- **Initial feelings related to the pregnancy**
- Unrealistic
- Wonder
- Joy
- Guilt
- Pride
- Despair
- Happiness
- Panic
- Dread
- Grief
- Shame
- Anger





© MUNCH-MUSEET 1993