

# Pregnant or not, women given abortion



' [Bickham] doesn't ever want the patients to find out pregnancy-test results. He does [abortions on] everybody.'

## THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

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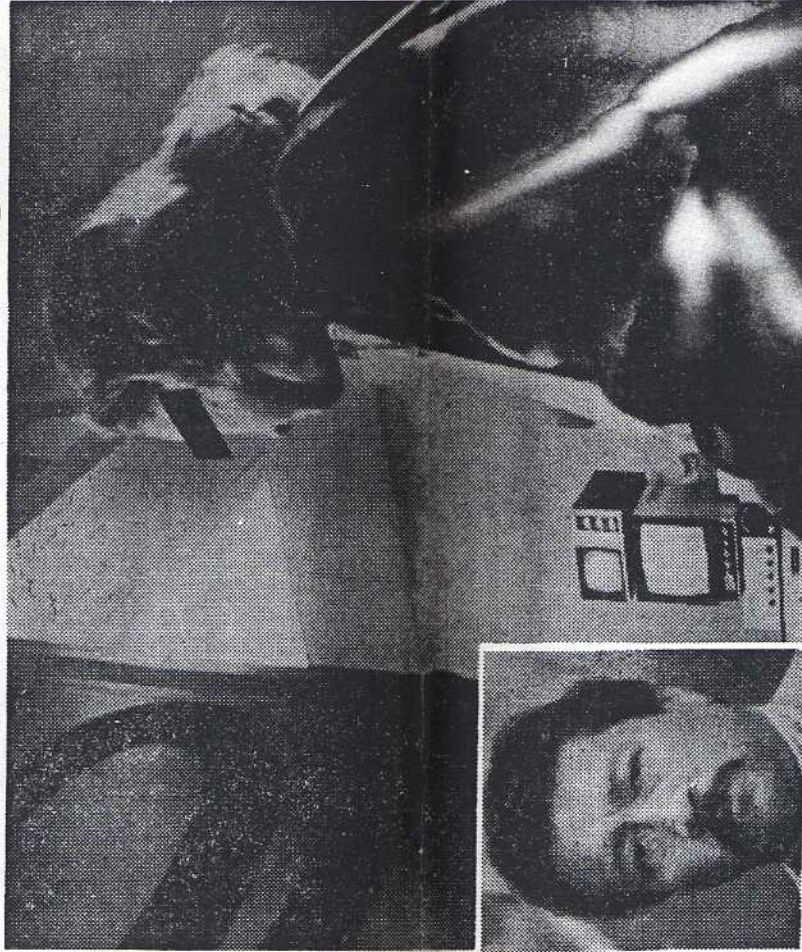
Nine out of 10 times, a simple urine test accurately diagnoses pregnancy. And, unless there is other proof of pregnancy, medical experts say, women with negative tests are not candidates for abortions.

But working undercover at the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, BGA investigator Mindy Trossman counted 81 abortion procedures performed on women with negative pregnancy tests. That was 12 per cent of all the women who received abortions during the two months Trossman worked there.

"Those numbers are very incriminating," said Dr. Louis Keith, professor of gynecology at Northwestern University Medical School and a practicing physician. "If that was my clinic and I had 81 women come in with negative pregnancy tests, then 81 women would have gone home."

AT BIOGENETICS LTD., 520 N. Michigan, we also found that women with negative urine tests were sold abortion procedures.

During a five-month investigation of Chicago's abortion business by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., we witnessed some of these painfully needless abortions and saw the aftermath. Women innocently underwent abortions they didn't need and, as a result, suffered massive infections, bruises, wrenching cramps, severe bleeding. Not only does Water Tower Reproductive



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AT BIOGENETICS LTD., 520 N. Michigan, patients may be sold painful menstrual extractions by medical director Dr. Carlos Baldoceca (inset, above) instead of abortions when their pregnancy tests turn up negative. Pathological reports on five women from one day's operations at Biogenetics revealed none was pregnant. At Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham (left), BGA undercover investigator Mindy Trossman found that 81—or 12 per cent—of the abortions during the two months she worked there were performed on women whose pregnancy tests were negative.

"Am I pregnant?" the patient asked. Bickham ignored her question. "Let me examine you," he said. After a brief exami-

## Tenth in a series

walk. I got scared and went to a doctor. The doctor there said I had a severe infection and sent me back to the clinic that I came from. This is to me." The patient still doesn't know she really was pregnant.

ANOTHER PATIENT with a negative pregnancy test said a nurse tried to abort her from the procedure.

"The nurse in the room suggested I get a blood test to make sure I was pregnant and to wait another week before the patient said, 'the doctor hushes me.' He said, 'No, let's get this over with now.' A pathological report on matter from her womb indicated the patient had been pregnant.

On one day, Biogenetics doctor performed at least five operations on women who apparently didn't need them. Medical reports on the tissue removed from women's wombs that day indicated they were pregnant.

At Biogenetics, investigator Young discovered women may not be able to rely on their laboratory tests alone their doctors.

One morning, she heard the lab technician who runs pregnancy tests complain. "I was at a gas station one night," he told Young. "I was drinking and smoking dope and didn't have to eat. I've never felt so bad in my life." The mistakes he made in his studies at least two patients feel even worse.

THERE WAS A GREAT commotion outside the recovery room. Young was investigating. "He [the lab technician] was looking up all the pregnancy tests," a nurse said. "They are all turning out positive. Young looked into the recovery room and was surprised to see Dr. David Bickham bending over a patient still groggy from an operation. Such attention was unusual.

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