



Written by [Lisa Shaw](#) on November 5, 2018

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## Abortion and Murder

The new film *Gosnell: The Trial of America's Biggest Serial Killer* was successful in its opening weekend, making \$1.2 million, despite being largely ignored by the media and only opening at 673 theaters.

After four years of roadblocks and red tape, the horrific true story of Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell has finally made its debut. The independent film, having raised \$2.3 million through crowdfunding on Indiegogo, hits the mark as it brings to the screen believable characters with quality production.



The PG-13 movie tells the chilling story of the monstrosities that took place in the clinic that became known as Gosnell's "house of horrors"; however, it was very tastefully done. Though images of babies' feet that Gosnell kept in jars are briefly shown, revealing the perverseness of the man, the audience is spared the graphic images of the victims that those present in the courtroom couldn't avoid. But even without showing the graphic evidence, the producers and actors brilliantly managed to open the minds of viewers to what was being discussed.

Gosnell, who had owned and operated abortion facilities in Philadelphia since the 1970s, became known as a "late-term" abortionist, notorious for aborting babies past the "legal" limit of 24 weeks. He was charged with first-degree murder for killing babies born alive after failed abortions. His clinic, the Women's Medical Society, was raided by authorities on February 18, 2010, owing to suspicion of illegally prescribing drugs, after an investigation that had lasted months. The investigation brought to light the suspicious death of one of his patients, and the raid revealed much more than the illegal drug use already suspected.

On screen we see the responses of law-enforcement officers as they raid the clinic. Their faces show confusion, shock, and disgust as they make their way through the building, taking in the horrific sights and smells. We see the remains of tiny victims discovered in various places throughout the clinic, including in plastic bags that lined the halls and in milk jugs in the refrigerator. The clinic itself was squalid, with filthy furniture and unsanitary, outdated, and broken medical equipment. Overly sedated patients awaited "procedures," which were often performed by unlicensed workers. These shocking scenes were not exaggerated, but were taken directly from the report of the grand jury:

When the team members entered the clinic, they were appalled, describing it to the Grand Jury as "filthy," "deplorable," "disgusting," "very unsanitary, very outdated, horrendous," and "by far, the worst" that these experienced investigators had ever encountered. There was blood on the floor. A stench of urine filled the air. A flea-infested cat was wandering through the facility, and there were cat feces on the stairs. Semi-conscious women scheduled for abortions were moaning in the waiting room or the recovery room, where they sat on dirty recliners covered with blood-stained blankets. All the women had been sedated by unlicensed staff — long before Gosnell arrived at the clinic — and staff



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members could not accurately state what medications or dosages they had administered to the waiting patients. Many of the medications in inventory were past their expiration dates.... The two surgical procedure rooms were filthy and unsanitary — [DEA] Agent [Stephen] Dougherty described them as resembling “a bad gas station restroom.” Instruments were not sterile. Equipment was rusty and outdated. Oxygen equipment was covered with dust, and had not been inspected. The same corroded suction tubing used for abortions was the only tubing available for oral airways if assistance for breathing was needed....

Fetal remains [were] haphazardly stored throughout the clinic — in bags, milk jugs, orange juice cartons, and even in cat-food containers.

Staying true to the facts and even using real footage at times, the movie engagingly portrays the trial and the events surrounding it. Gosnell, a danger to babies and their mothers, seemed to have but one motive, to end the life of every pre-born baby that came through the doors of his clinic, regardless of how far along the pregnancy was or what method he had to use. This was to be done with as little cost to him as possible, financially or physically. Gosnell specialized in late-term pregnancies and had many women and girls referred to him when no one else would take them. He had personally “trained” his staff to perform ultrasounds and taught them how to get false readings about the development of the baby in order to record a lesser age of the baby. Unlicensed workers would administer sedatives and prescribe pain medicines, as it wasn’t out of the ordinary for Gosnell to be absent while his clinic continued to function.

The tactics Gosnell employed were not much different than other abortionists, except that he had no qualms in performing the murder after the baby was born. He “snipped” the backs of the babies’ necks and taught his workers to do the same in his absence.

Addressing the clinic’s rampant criminal activity, the grand jury report claims, “Illegality was so integral to the operation of the Women’s Medical Society that the business itself was a corrupt organization.”

Husband and wife producers Phelim McAleer and Anne McElhinney, who are also journalists, found themselves drawn to the story that the major media seemed repelled by.

In an interview with EWTN, McAleer recounts, “I walked into that trial in Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, and in front of me were the most horrific pictures that I had ever seen. I listened to the evidence, I couldn’t believe it, but behind me was the most shocking thing of all. No press, just a couple of local journalists, no national press. And this guy has killed hundreds, if not thousands, of people in a 30-year killing spree.”

In the movie, a young female blogger known as Mollie Mullaney considerably impacted the case by taking a picture of the empty seats in the courtroom reserved for the press and published it on social media, where it drew substantial attention. Then, and only then, did the national press decide to notice the case.

That character was, in fact, a composite of real-life columnist JD Mullane, a “grizzled newspaperman,” as he describes himself in *The Intelligencer*, and Mollie Z. Hemingway, senior editor at *The Federalist*. Mullane took the picture of the empty seats and uploaded it to Twitter, where it went viral. Hemingway was the first to respond to the picture and went on to draw attention to the major media journalists for being “MIA.”



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Mullane states, "The big media were shamed into coming to Philly, though many, such as the *New York Times*, bailed after a few days."

Believing Gosnell to be the most protected mass murderer in American history, and the case to be a coverup, McElhinney claims, "It's a story that needs to be told fairly and we've done just that," going on to say, "The coverup stops here."

Fighting this coverup, and overcoming these obstacles, however, proved to be an arduous job for the Irish husband and wife team, as they were met with many obstacles from those who would prefer the truth not be told. McAleer revealed in an interview with *The Federalist*, "Kickstarter refused to let us crowdfund to fund the film and NPR have just rejected us from advertising the movie on the taxpayer funded station. Now Facebook is trying to censor the movie by preventing its creators from advertising on Facebook. They really, really don't want this story told."

Yet another difficulty was presented when the judge who presided over the Gosnell case, Judge Jeffrey Minehart, filed a lawsuit against the couple, as well as their film production company, accusing them of defamation. Still, the filmmakers persisted in their endeavor to bring this travesty into the public eye.

McAleer told Breitbart News, "The most shocking thing I found was how many people knew." He went on to disclose:

Health officials, doctors in emergency rooms who were seeing and fixing the results of his butchery — even the Philadelphia homicide department was notified. The National Abortion Federation was notified; there were trained nurses passing through his house of horrors; the coroner's office saw the bodies of the women and babies — and they all said nothing.

Of this negligence the grand jury report states:

The Pennsylvania Department of State ... could have stopped Gosnell single-handedly. While the Department of Health regulates facilities, the Department of State, through its Board of Medicine, licenses and oversees individual physicians. Like their colleagues at Health, however, Department of State officials were repeatedly confronted with evidence about Gosnell, and repeatedly chose to do nothing.

Indeed, in many ways State had more damning information than anyone else. Almost a decade ago, a former employee of Gosnell presented the Board of Medicine with a complaint that laid out the whole scope of his operation: the unclean, unsterile conditions; the unlicensed workers; the unsupervised sedation; the underage abortion patients; even the over-prescribing of pain pills with high resale value on the street. The department assigned an investigator, whose investigation consisted primarily of an offsite interview with Gosnell. The investigator never inspected the facility, questioned other employees, or reviewed any records. Department attorneys chose to accept this incomplete investigation, and dismissed the complaint as unconfirmed.

Not only were authorities guilty of not speaking out, but they were guilty of committing actions that helped aid in the abuses and murders. For 17 years Gosnell's clinic had no real inspections. The administration under Governor Tom Ridge, a pro-abortion Republican, stopped inspections of all abortion clinics in the state.

According to the grand jury report:

The Pennsylvania Department of Health abruptly decided, for political reasons, to stop inspecting



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abortion clinics at all. The politics in question were not anti-abortion, but pro. With the change of administration from Governor Casey to Governor Ridge, officials concluded that inspections would be “putting a barrier up to women” seeking abortions.

One might infer from this decision that abortion, even in dangerous environments, is preferable to no abortion at all.

These decisions to elevate abortion above the law led to unspeakable evils. On January 19, 2011, Gosnell was arrested and charged with eight counts of murder — seven babies whom he was charged with killing after their live births, and Karnamaya Mongar, a 41-year-old refugee who died from lethal doses of anesthesia and painkillers at the hands of Gosnell and his employees.

Mongar, who had come to the United States from a resettlement camp in Nepal, was given unmonitored and multiple injections of Demerol, a sedative preferred by Gosnell because it was cheap. The film takes the audience through the grief of Mongar’s daughter on the witness stand as she recounts the distressing events surrounding her mother’s death and the fear she felt as she waited alone in the dark clinic.

Abortion is consistently tied to women’s rights and women’s health, yet situations such as this show how unconnected these things really are. The “rights” and “health” of the women who were mutilated and murdered by Gosnell and his staff weren’t being protected, or even thought of. Their rights disappeared with their consciousness after having been overly sedated, and their health was disregarded as their wombs were perforated by negligence and they contracted venereal diseases due to the unsanitary instruments that were used.

The grand jury report states:

A doctor from Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia hand-delivered a complaint, advising the department that numerous patients he had referred for abortions came back from Gosnell with the same venereal disease.

This statement holds more than one mind-numbing fact. Not only were patients contracting venereal diseases at Gosnell’s clinic, but these patients were from the “*Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia*.” These patients were teenage girls being sent to Gosnell, and we see that they were being referred by a doctor at the hospital. This doctor, two years later, went on to become the head of the city’s health department.

Recognizing the inevitable controversy of his film, McAleer notes, “Abortion is like a religious belief.” His statement rings true, as it seems abortion stands alone; it is the sacred cow that can’t be touched. Rights and health can, and will, be sacrificed at the altar of abortion, but abortion will not be sacrificed for rights or health. Murder cannot be justified without philosophical reasoning, and abortion could never advance without the facade of the abstract aids of women’s rights and women’s health.

At the start of their journey in producing this film, McAleer and McElhinney considered themselves “neutral” on abortion. However, the more they viewed the evidence, the more their views changed. “I’ve seen the photographs,” said McElhinney, regarding the bodies of the murdered babies. They are “unimpeachable.” McElhinney was raised Catholic and had left the faith for a time, but acknowledges, “This story brought me back to prayer.”

The movie shows the testimony of a female abortionist who wanted to testify in order to “exonerate”



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other women's clinics in light of the discovery of Gosnell's clinic. She is questioned by Gosnell's attorney regarding her abortion practices and, in a line of questioning, slowly finds herself describing similar techniques used on the pre-born babies in the second trimester in her clinic as Gosnell used on the babies delivered at his clinic. She tries to justify the procedures based on the fact that the babies aren't outside of the womb, but begins to falter as it is clear that there is no real difference.

Gosnell was not put on trial for performing abortions, which is "legal" in Philadelphia and elsewhere in the United States. For this reason, both the police investigation and the trial of Gosnell, in real life as well as in the movie depiction, are not about abortion. Yet anyone who examines the facts — or for that matter, watches the movie — should be able to connect the dots between illegally killing babies after being born alive via botched abortions, and legally killing babies while they are still in the womb. After all, the physical location of the baby — inside or outside the mother's womb — does not change the nature of the baby.

As the trial progresses in the film, we see the jury struggling to decide on such a volatile subject. The breaking point came when a picture of "Baby Boy A" was shown.

Baby Boy A was born to a 17-year-old mother, and was recorded at 29.4 weeks, or approximately 7.5 months. The mother was heavily sedated for more than 13 hours, and eventually gave birth. Some of the workers "took photographs because they knew this was a baby that could and should have lived," according to the grand jury report.

The report goes on to state, "Gosnell simply noted the baby boy's size by joking, as he often did after delivering a large baby... 'This baby is big enough to walk around with me or walk me to the bus stop.'" Gosnell charged \$2,500 for the abortion.

As the picture was passed around for the jury to see, the movie clearly shows the various and realistic emotions felt by the jurors.\* No amount of rhetoric or misplaced justification could erase what they had seen with their own eyes: a fully formed human being capable of sustained life before his throat was slit.

In May of 2013, after four counts of murder had been dropped from the charges, Gosnell was convicted of three counts of murder and one count of involuntary manslaughter, along with a multitude of lesser counts. After reaching a deal with the prosecutors, he was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

*Gosnell* divulges the truth of a madman employing extraordinarily barbaric tactics in an industry already conceived in death and fraught with gruesome procedures. In the process, this truth naturally shines a light into the dark areas that need to be covered up if abortion is to be regarded as "humane" and "compassionate." Without pretense, this film lays out the ugly, gruesome facts about abortion, legal and illegal, erasing the boundaries between the two, and leaving the viewer with the information needed to make a sound judgment.

As English politician William Wilberforce stated in his fight to end the trade of the slaves, also not considered human: "You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know."



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