



Written by [Lisa Shaw](#) on November 23, 2015

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## Planned Parenthood, Past and Present

On the morning of April 6, 1977, a baby girl, like many others, took her first breath. Unlike many of those others, however, this little one's entrance was not one filled with loving, eager smiles and warm, welcoming arms, but a cold, impersonal one with shock and horror at her arrival. At two pounds, this tiny, helpless being was hurriedly transported to a nearby hospital, given very little hope of survival, and placed in an incubator where she would remain for three months.



AP Images

In what dismal place and bizarre set of circumstances would someone welcome something so natural as new life with surprise and bewilderment, instead of expectancy? This specific situation takes us to a Planned Parenthood Clinic in Los Angeles, California, where the all-too-common expectation was death, instead of life.

Gianna Jessen's biological mother was 17 years old and seven and a half months pregnant when she was counseled by the clinic to abort Gianna through saline instillation. This method of abortion requires a saline solution to be injected through the mother's abdomen and into the amniotic sac, where the baby swallows it. Over the next 12 to 48 hours, the baby suffers immense pain as the result of being poisoned and burned. The ultimate goal of the procedure is the death of the unborn child. The cervix is dilated before the injection, allowing the solution to cause uterine contractions, eventually leading to delivery of the baby, otherwise known as "expulsion of the fetus."

In this case, however, after spending 18 hours in the poison that was supposed to have killed her, Gianna was born very much alive. "I am told this was a hysterical moment," Gianna says, referring not only to her mother's reaction, but to the reactions of the other young girls at the clinic who were also awaiting the deaths of their babies. The doctor had gone home for the night and would not be back until 9:00 a.m. The nurse on call at the clinic made the ultimate decision to transfer Gianna to the hospital, where she continued to thrive.

Living in foster care during the early years of her life, Gianna was adopted at three and a half years old, overcoming many obstacles along the way. As a result of the "botched" abortion, she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, but she does not allow this to keep her from spreading her pro-life message wherever she can and educating people on the realities of abortion and the truth about Planned Parenthood.

The International Committee on Planned Parenthood, which would evolve into the Planned Parenthood we know today, found its place in society in 1946. However, the organization proudly traces its roots back to 1916 when its founder, Margaret Sanger, opened the nation's first birth-control clinic in Brooklyn, New York. To know the truth about Planned Parenthood, a look at its founder is important, for in much the same way children are the products of their parents, organizations are the products of their founders.



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## Mother, of a Sort

Born Margaret Higgins in 1879 in Cor-ning, New York, to parents of Irish decent, Sanger was the sixth of 11 children. Despite the closeness of her family and the fond memories they built together, Sanger developed a very dreary perspective of large families.

In her autobiography, *Pioneering Advocate for Birth Control*, Sanger wrote of the struggles her family and the others around her endured. Growing up, she found herself relating these hardships to large families and happiness to small ones. "Large families were associated with poverty, toil, unemployment, drunkenness, cruelty, fighting, jails; the small ones with cleanliness, leisure, freedom, light, space, sunshine," she remembered. This limited perspective gained in childhood, instead of expanding with adulthood to view life in all its truths and complexities, remained small and biased and grew the germs that only the stagnant mind-set can offer.

Margaret began working as a nurse in 1900 at White Plains Hospital in New York. Her time as a nurse helped to intensify her disdain for large families, due to the pain and suffering she saw in childbirth.

In 1902, she married William Sanger, an architect and socialist. This marriage placed Margaret amidst the radicals of her day. She wrote, "Our living room became a gathering place where liberals, anarchists, Socialists, and I.W.W.'s [Industrial Workers of the World] could meet." Caught up in a movement detrimental to the nation, she fondly reminisces, "A religion without a name was spreading over the country. The converts were liberals, Socialists, anarchists, revolutionists of all shades. They were as fixed in their faith in the coming revolution as ever any Primitive Christian in the immediate establishment of the Kingdom of God."

Margaret, more bohemian in her views, did not consider herself a socialist at the time. However, she saw an avenue to actively pursue her goal, as she states, "My own personal feelings drew me towards the individualist, anarchist philosophy ... but it seemed to me necessary to approach the ideal by way of Socialism." Sanger's pursuit, it must be known, was to rid the world of what she considered "the most immoral practice of the day," according to her manifesto *Woman and the New Race*. This immoral practice, Sanger believed, was the "breeding" of too many children. She asserted, "The immorality of large families lies not only in their injury to the members of those families but in their injury to society," claiming that not only was the large family the greatest evil of the day, but also the cause of other evils, including prostitution, oppressed labor, and war.

Sanger sought the available avenues for propagating her ideas, beginning with joining the Socialist Party. She began to see her plans take shape as she gave talks on women's health. These talks turned into articles entitled "What Every Girl Should Know." Due to their intimate nature, these writings were banned under the Comstock Law. However, Sanger refused to be governed. Declaring it a woman's duty "To look the world in the face with a go-to-hell look in the eyes; to have an idea; to speak and act in defiance of convention," she continued in her pursuit.

## When First Practicing to Deceive

Margaret was aware that, already, her ideas were looked upon with ridicule, not just by men, but by the women she claimed were so burdened. With that being the case, it only stood to reason that an honest presentation of these ideas would cause further disdain, continuing to alienate her from her goal. Her solution was to shape the female mind: "They had to be made aware of how they were being shackled,



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and roused to mutiny." She went on in her admission of this provocation, "Before gathering friends around me for that help which I must have in stirring women to sedition, before asking them to believe, I had to chart my own course." Sanger's was a brazen determination to coerce the public, focusing on women, to accept her doctrine by presenting it as a message of liberty. She believed that "any great concept must be present in the mass of consciousness before any one figure can tap it and set it free on its irresistible way," even if that concept had to be underhandedly masked from a moral society.

It seems that Sanger's bias did not end with the number of children in society. She began to envision something larger, as she stated, "A new movement was starting, and the baby had to have a name. It did not belong to Socialism nor was it in the labor field, and it had much more to it than just the prevention of conception." Of the discussion that took place to decide a name for this new concept she said:

The word control was good, but I did not like limitation — that was too limiting. I was not advocating a one-child or two-child system as in France, nor did I wholeheartedly agree with the English Neo-Malthusians whose concern was almost entirely with limitation for economic reasons. My idea of control was bigger and freer. I wanted family in it, yet family control did not sound right. We tried population control, race control, and birth rate control. Then someone suggested, "Drop the rate." Birth control was the answer; we knew we had it. Our work for that day was done and everybody picked up his hat and went home. The baby was named.

This same year, 1914, Sanger published the first issue of the *Woman Rebel*, a magazine dedicated to the interests of working women. Much like her articles "What Every Girl Should Know," the *Woman Rebel* was also banned for indecency. And as before, Sanger refused to answer to an authority higher than herself. This would have led to her indictment and to her probable conviction, had she shown up to court. Instead, in less than 24 hours, Sanger left all that she knew, including her three children, and fled the country for England.

The next year found Sanger in the company of those who, like herself, refused to be confined to the normalcies of societal convention. One example was Havelock Ellis, with whom Sanger spent much time and for whom she had great admiration. Ellis, who was in an "open" relationship with his wife, Edith — a practicing lesbian — wrote the first medical book on homosexuality, entitled *Sexual Inversion*. This writing, which was deemed obscene and illegal by the British government, revealed Ellis' belief that same-sex attraction went beyond age and gender taboos. Of Ellis, Sanger wrote, "He, beyond any other person, has been able to clarify the question of sex, and free it from the smudginess connected with it from the beginning of Christianity, raise it from the dark cellar, set it on a higher plane."



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**Margaret Sanger with sons, Grant and Stuart:** Sanger promoted birth control to not only limit family size, but also to “weed out the unfit” and “prevent the birth of defectives.”

Upon her return home in September of 1915, Sanger was reunited with her children, but would lose her daughter to pneumonia a short time after. The previous charges were eventually dropped against Margaret, and she continued her course, supported by figures such as famous writer and Fabian Socialist H.G. Wells.

In 1916, she illegally opened the nation’s first birth-control clinic in Brownsville, a poor, predominantly Jewish community in Brooklyn. The clinic was shut down after nine days, and Margaret was sentenced to 30 days in prison. The publicity surrounding her conviction gained her a much wider audience for her subversive message.

In 1921, Sanger would begin the American Birth Control League with the goal of altering public opinion. Among her co-founders were like-minded dissidents of influence. Two such figures were Juliet Barrett Rublee, longtime sister-in-arms of Sanger and wife of well-known lawyer George Rublee, and Katharine Martha Houghton Hepburn, socialist sympathizer and mother to famous actress Katharine Hepburn.

Two years later, in 1923, Sanger began the Clinical Research Bureau. This was the first legal birth-control clinic in America. A large portion of the funding for this clinic came from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who continued to support other causes for Sanger. It is not surprising that Rockefeller — a strong proponent of population control — would fund her efforts.

Over the years, Sanger worked tirelessly to promote her birth-control agenda. Her stated reasons for the necessity of “birth control” shifted, depending on the venue and her audience. Beginning with the idea of inhibiting the number of children, she eventually began including the prevention of children based on the worth and race of the child. She claimed that “birth control itself, often denounced as a violation of natural law, is nothing more or less than the facilitation of the process of weeding out the unfit, of preventing the birth of defectives or of those who will become defectives.”

What criteria did Sanger consider in deciding who was either “unfit” or “defective”? Sickness and poverty were certainly factors. Race was another. In *Woman, Morality and Birth Control*, Sanger wrote, “Birth control must lead ultimately to a cleaner race.”



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In the mid 1920s, Sanger accepted an invitation to speak at the women's branch of the Ku Klux Klan in Silver Lake, New Jersey. Of this experience she writes, "Never before had I looked into a sea of faces like these. I was sure that if I uttered one word, such as abortion, outside the usual vocabulary of these women they would go off into hysteria." She went on to say, "In the end, through simple illustrations I believed I had accomplished my purpose." According to her purpose, Sanger would continue to work to bring about this "cleaner race" that she envisioned.

In the winter of 1939, Sanger wrote a letter to Clarence Gamble, president of the American Eugenics Research Association and grandson of James Gamble, co-founder of Procter & Gamble. In the letter, she expressed her fear that "the Negro population" was catching on to the plan to "exterminate" them. She wrote:

We should hire three or four colored ministers, preferably with social-service backgrounds, and with engaging personalities. The most successful educational approach to the Negro is through a religious appeal. We don't want the word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of their more rebellious members.

Sanger, it seems, had grown quite comfortable in her manipulation and deceit. These tactics would become a normal way of propagating her ideas.

## **An Adversary**

As Sanger's speeches and ideals moved throughout the country, stirring strife and confusion, and undermining the foundation of morality, she found herself faced with the most formidable adversary she would encounter. In a 1957 interview with media personality Mike Wallace, Sanger would state, "Our main opposition is from the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church."

One notable encounter with the Catholic Church occurred in 1940 in Holyoke, Massachusetts, during a five-day speaking tour. Sanger was visiting 11 cities throughout the state to rally support for amending its laws regarding birth control and finding little resistance. In the predominately Catholic city of Holyoke, however, she met with much opposition. Sanger arrived to discover that she had no venue and little help, until a last-minute opening of office rooms in the Textile Workers Union was offered. According to the Margaret Sanger Papers Project, in her eventual speech to the citizens of the town she remarked that it had been "like old times" for her. "She is both surprised and invigorated by the bold and enterprising opposition in Holyoke, reminiscent of the kind of powerful counter-force she went up against repeatedly in the 1920s and occasionally in the 1930s, now largely subdued by the overwhelming acceptance of birth control."

One of the confrontations Sanger faced during the 1920s was that of Archbishop Patrick Hayes of New York. He successfully canceled the last meeting of The First National Birth Control Conference, stating in an open letter that he did so "for the benefit of the morals and health of the community." The archbishop went on to address the issue of birth control in his Christmas pastoral letter, writing,

Even though some little angels in the flesh through moral, mental, or physical deformity of parents may appear to human eyes hideous, misshapen, a blot on civilized society, we must





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not lose sight of this Christian thought that under and within such visible malformation there lives an immortal soul to be saved and glorified for all eternity among the blessed in Heaven.

Sanger considered the archbishop's view to be opposed to progressive thinking. She wrote in her autobiography that it was "a monstrous doctrine and one abhorrent to every civilized instinct, that children, misshapen, deformed, hideous to the eye, either mentally or constitutionally unequipped for life, should continue to be born."

To gain ground, Sanger tried to bring division between Protestants and Catholics. According to *Touchstone Magazine*, Sanger wrote in the *Birth Control Review*, "All who resent this sinister Church Control of life and conduct ... must now choose between Church Control and Birth Control." She continued, "You must make a declaration of independence, of self-reliance, or submit to the dictatorship of the Roman Catholic hierarchy."

To her frustration, Sanger never overcame her strongest opponent. She did, however, succeed in her divisive tactics as she prepared a foundation for future acceptance of her machinations.

## **Bloody Legacy**

Unfortunately, the seeds that Margaret Sanger planted more than a hundred years ago have taken root in her cleverly cultivated soil, and the world is left with the bitter fruit. Planned Parenthood has strategically placed clinics throughout the country, enticing women with the same deceitful message of freedom touted by its founder. Now, however, as more ground has been gained, the boundaries have been moved. The mission has gone beyond prevention of life into termination of life, as women are counseled and assured that abortion is the most responsible decision they can make, not only for themselves, but for the whole of society.

What they are not being told is that they are murdering their unborn children and that the process is life-threatening for them, as well. In keeping with Sanger's methods, the truth is attractively disguised.

A former director of Planned Parenthood, Abby Johnson, had many experiences with the organization, not just as an employee, but as a client. Having had one abortion already, Johnson believed it to be the solution, again, to her eight-week pregnancy, as she was in college and going through a divorce. Instead of a surgical abortion, she chose a medication abortion — accomplished entirely with pills — which she thought would be more "natural." She had been told to expect no symptoms worse than a heavy menstrual cycle, and that she would be back to normal in a couple of days. She describes her experience and the betrayal she felt: "I started to feel pain in my abdomen unlike anything I had ever experienced. Then the blood came. It was gushing out of me.... My bathwater was bright red. It looked like I was sitting in the middle of a crime scene. And I guess it was.... I had murdered my child." She went on to say, "It was around midnight and I had been in the bathroom for a good 12 hours. I knew I couldn't leave yet. I didn't want to lay in the bed.... The bleeding was too heavy. This couldn't be normal. Planned Parenthood didn't ever tell me this could happen. This must be atypical. I decided that I would call them in the morning ... if I didn't die before then."

Johnson called the clinic as she had planned the next morning and was told that her symptoms were not abnormal. She would continue experiencing these symptoms for eight weeks. After returning to work,



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Johnson questioned why women weren't made aware of the severity of the symptoms. She was told by her supervisor, "Well, we don't want to scare them."

After holding a director's position at her clinic in Southeast Texas, and being pressured to perform more abortions in order to increase profits, Johnson confidently claims, "Here's the truth.... Planned Parenthood is not worried about women being 'scared.'... Planned Parenthood is scared. They are scared women will walk out the door if they get accurate and thorough information. Every woman that walks out is lost revenue.... That is Planned Parenthood's biggest fear."

Many sordid practices of this industry have been discovered through the years, including the killing of the babies born after failed abortion attempts. One notable story from 1999 tells of "Baby Hope," who was born alive during the process of a partial-birth abortion, and given no treatment to survive. She was left, like refuse, to be thrown away until one nurse decided to act within the limitations provided her.

As LifeSiteNews recounts the story, "Abortionist Dr. Martin Haskell was performing a partial-birth abortion on a young woman. In a partial-birth abortion, just like in the more commonly used D&E abortion, the woman's cervix is dilated with laminaria, which are small sticks that gradually expand. She is then sent home. The actual killing and removal of the baby is usually done a day or two after the insertion of the laminaria, after they have been given time to work."

In this case, however, the woman decided to go to the emergency room, as she was beginning to experience cramps. At Bethesda North Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, she delivered a baby girl who was fully alive.

LifeSiteNews continues its account, "According to an article in *The Southeast Missourian*, the baby was put into a dish and set aside to be disposed of. Nurse Shelly Lowe witnessed the baby gasping and moving after she was told to take 'it' to the lab. She reportedly said, 'I don't think I can do that.... This baby is alive.'"

The baby, estimated to be about 22 weeks old, died three hours and eight minutes after her birth in the arms of Nurse Lowe. In an April 20 news conference, Lowe remembered, "I sat and held her. I felt no one should die alone. We had her baptized. I named her Hope because I'd hoped she would make it."

Stories such as these and the latest reports of the barbarous actions of selling body parts — made widely known and undeniable by a series of viral videos created by the Center for Medical Progress — cast Planned Parenthood in a much different light than Sanger ever intended. In reality, however, this organization is the embodiment of its mother's philosophy and disregard for the sanctity of life.



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