



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on May 23, 2019

## “Unplanned” Effectively Banned in Canada for “Content”

Leftist intolerance is on full display in Canada, where three of the nation’s largest movie distributors — Landmark, Cineplex, and Mongrel Media — have banned the pro-life film *Unplanned*.

*Unplanned* is the true story of Abby Johnson, a volunteer at Planned Parenthood who went on to become a clinic director before she experienced a life-changing epiphany that transformed her into an outspoken pro-life activist. Today, she leads And Then There Were None, a nonprofit that helps abortion workers to leave the industry.



The film has reportedly motivated at least 94 abortion clinic workers to leave the field, and has also inspired women initially seeking abortions to find alternatives, CBN News reports.

Theatrically, the film has been a surprising success, grossing more than \$18 million domestically on a budget of \$6 million, according to the *Washington Times*.

But the film’s success has been in spite of the efforts of saboteurs. And sadly, those efforts are being seen internationally.

During a May 8 Ottawa news conference, *Unplanned*’s producer Lisa Wheeler said, “We have been effectively blocked from distributing the film in Canada.”

According to the *Washington Times*, Landmark and Cineplex told *Unplanned*’s co-writer and co-director Chuck Konzelman that the film’s content prompted them to pass on the movie.

Konzelman told Life Site on Monday that he received “unsatisfactory answers” regarding each company’s vague reasoning. But without distribution, *Unplanned* cannot be shown theatrically under Canadian law. In fact, *Unplanned* cannot even receive a rating by provincial film boards, Konzelman told Life Site.

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“In Canada, Cineplex basically has monopolistic power,” [Konzelman](#) told Life Site. “The National Post mentions them as controlling nearly 80 percent of all movie screens, and from our limited experience, they seem to have many of the most desirable locations, in and near the major metropolitan areas. So rejection by Cineplex basically means we’re not playing in Canada.”

Mongrel Media also rejected the film because of its “content.”

This is not the first time *Unplanned* has encountered obstruction, however. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on the Constitution last month, Konzelman detailed some of the [obstacles](#) the film faced.

“From the outset, making a pro-life film in a pro-choice town [Los Angeles], we knew we would face a number of challenges,” he stated. “Moving past the challenges of production and post-production,



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limiting my comments to the marketing campaign, allow me to highlight some of these: The MPAA saddled us with an “R” rating, which strongly discourages much of the Christian audience, and all of the Church of Latter-day Saints from seeing our film, since they have a general prohibition against seeing “R” rated films. It also precluded us from using the single most effective form of motion picture advertising — paid placement of our theatrical trailer before other films in theaters.”

Konzelman continued:

We also looked to advertise on cable television. But with the exception of Fox News and CBN, we were systematically denied access to the outlets where we sought to advertise — among which were Lifetime, UP TV, Hallmark, HGTV, USA Network, Food Network, The Travel Channel, DIY and the Cooking Channel. In fact, Lifetime, which is owned by A&E Networks, a joint venture of Walt Disney and Hearst Communications, told our buyers that they were refusing due to the “sensitive nature of the film,” but had previously promoted an interview with Scarlett Johansson in which she promoted Planned Parenthood. We consider these blanket refusals highly unusual and highly discriminatory, and have formally petitioned the FCC to look further into the matter.

Google made things extraordinarily difficult, Konzelman recalled.

“Google Ads [formerly known as Google Adwords] blocked the entirety of the Unplanned pre-release banner ads,” Konzelman noted. “When you advertise on the Google Display Network — which has over 2 million sites and reaches over 90% of the people on the internet — your ads can appear across a large collection of websites, mobile apps, and video content.”

“Google cited a policy regarding abortion-related ads,” Konzelman explained. “Just one problem: We weren’t doing abortion related ads. We were marketing a movie.”

Twitter also went through inordinate efforts to sabotage the film’s success hours after the film’s theatrical debut, according to Konzelman.

“In the early morning hours of Saturday, March 30th,” Konzelman recounts, “the film’s Twitter account — technically the account owned by the film’s single purpose marketing entity — was suspended. The reason for the suspension has not — to the best of my knowledge — been made clear, beyond being ‘accidental.’ However when such ‘accidents’ occur within twelve hours of the film’s theatrical debut — and after nine months of ownership, during which time there were zero suspensions — the ‘glitch’ is of course suspect.”

“Later on the same day,” Konzelman noted, “Twitter apparently deleted the vast majority of those listed as ‘followers’ for our account, reducing the number from something on the order of 200,000 to less than 200. A thousand-to-one reduction in our listed followers. And numerous people — including the subject of our film — Abby Johnson — and the star of our film — Ashley Bratcher — found themselves unable to follow their own movie on Twitter.”

Johnson [appeared](#) at Canada’s March for Life in Ottawa on March 9 and encouraged Canadians to speak up and defend the unborn.

“Life is on the line. Children are being killed, dismembered in their mothers’ wombs,” she told supporters. “There is nothing polite about abortion, and it is time for us to stop cowering to the liberal media, to your liberal parliament. Enough is enough.”

Konzelman is hopeful that the Canadian people will demand access to *Unplanned* so that others may have the opportunity to be transformed.





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