



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on January 18, 2016

Planned Parenthood Sues Undercover Video Makers

Planned Parenthood took a major hit in 2015 with the release by the anti-abortion organization the Center for Medical Progress (CMP) of several undercover videos in which officials of the abortion provider discussed with actors hired by CMP the sale of aborted babies' body parts.

Now Planned Parenthood is striking back with a lawsuit against CMP.

Filed in federal district court in San Francisco, the suit charges that officials from CMP — who set up a fake biomedical research company called Biomax Procurement Services to enable actors to pose as buyers of fetal tissue and secretly videotape conversations with Planned Parenthood officials — engaged in a three-year “complex criminal enterprise.”



Many have noted that the selection of the San Francisco district court, well known for its liberal decisions, was no doubt intentional.

In the first undercover video by CMP, Dr. Deborah Nucatola, Planned Parenthood's senior director of medical services, is videotaped stating that Planned Parenthood regularly sells body parts of aborted babies. In a second video, another abortionist is caught discussing the sale of aborted baby body parts. In it, Mary Gatter, medical director of the Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley (California) Planned Parenthood affiliate, is seen in discussion with undercover investigators who posed as officials with the biotech company that was said to serve as a middleman to sell aborted baby parts to universities and other research facilities.

The prices of the body parts are open to negotiation, Gatter explained to the investigators. Among the parts mentioned were liver, head, and heart. She also explained, as did Dr. Nucatola in the first video, that the abortion procedure itself could be modified to save the selected body parts.

Dr. Nucatola had told the actors that obtaining choice body parts could easily be accomplished; she simply needed to know beforehand what specific parts buyers wanted. “We’ve been very good at getting heart, lung, liver, because we know that,” she explained, “so I am not gonna crush that part, I’m gonna crush above, and I’m gonna see if I can get it all intact.”

Facing intense criticism and adverse publicity, and even threats of congressional action, Planned Parenthood officials defended their organization's grisly practices. Cecile Richards, daughter of former Texas Governor Ann Richards and CEO of Planned Parenthood, attempted to mitigate the bad publicity created by the videos, apologizing for the “tone” of Dr. Nucatola, who casually spoke to the undercover investigators of the sale of body parts while sipping wine in a restaurant. Richards then condemned the investigators, claiming the videos were “heavily edited.”



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Labelling the videos “heavily edited” to produce a different impression from the facts became the standard talking point of Planned Parenthood and its defenders in the political world and mainstream media.

Named as defendants in the Planned Parenthood lawsuit are the Center for Medical Progress; its director, David Daleiden (an actor in the videos); Troy Newman, the head of Operation Rescue (who is accused of helping plan the operation); and others who played roles in the fictitious biomedical research company.

“The people behind this fraud lied and broke the law in order to spread malicious lies about Planned Parenthood,” claimed Dawn Laguens, executive vice president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. “We filed the case to hold them accountable.”

Planned Parenthood officials have argued that any transfer of baby parts was done legally, with the permission of the women who had their unborn children aborted.

In a written statement, the CMP called the lawsuit “frivolous,” accusing Planned Parenthood of filing the suit “in retaliation for CMP’s First Amendment investigative journalism that has done nothing more than tell the truth about Planned Parenthood’s lawless operations.”

Planned Parenthood’s lawsuit charges that the defendants claimed to be a company that was a legitimate provider of fetal tissue to researchers, using fake identities, and violating nondisclosure agreements by wearing hidden cameras and recording hundreds of hours of conversations.

Planned Parenthood seeks restitution of actual costs, punitive damages, and triple damages under the civil racketeering laws, for what it asserts are civil violations of conspiracy laws, state privacy laws, and other statutes.

After the release of the videos, several members of Congress threatened to cut off all federal funding to Planned Parenthood. While Congress has not directly funded abortions performed at Planned Parenthood clinics across the country, it has provided federal funds for non-abortion activities (such as breast cancer screenings) at clinics. Many pro-lifers point out that this frees up more Planned Parenthood money to perform abortions.

After the undercover videos were made public, Senator James Lankford (R-Okla.) spoke emotionally on the floor of the Senate, declaring, “That’s a human being we’re talking about. It doesn’t bring any comfort to know that one child is torn apart so maybe they can do research on the child’s organs.”

However, despite such strong rhetoric, Lankford joined with many other Republicans in both houses of Congress for a \$1.1-trillion omnibus budget that still provides taxpayer dollars for Planned Parenthood.

Many Americans have expressed outrage at what they considered the hypocrisy and impotence of the Republican Party on Capitol Hill. As one example, Billy Graham’s son Franklin publicly resigned from the Republican Party and declared himself to now be an Independent, explaining,

After all the appalling facts revealed this year about Planned Parenthood, our representatives in Washington had a chance to put a stop to this, but they didn’t. There’s no question — taxpayers should not be paying for abortions. Abortion is murder in God’s eyes. Seeing and hearing Planned Parenthood talk nonchalantly about selling baby parts from aborted fetuses with utter disregard for human life is reminiscent of Joseph Mengele and the Nazi concentration camps!

But the current controversy should raise another question in the minds of all Americans: If the gruesome practice of selling the body parts of aborted preborn babies is so repulsive that it must not be



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tolerated, why is the practice of abortion itself tolerated? Is it somehow less repugnant to kill innocent human life via abortion than it is to harvest body parts from the aborted babies?

Photo: AP Images

Steve Byas is a professor of history at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College in Moore, Oklahoma. His book, History's Greatest Libels, is a challenge to the unfair attacks upon some of history's greatest heroes, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Christopher Columbus, and Joseph McCarthy.



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