

FRAGILE PROMISE OF CHOICE (FILM 3 OF THE TRILOGY: CHOICE THEN AND NOW)

Time	Speaker	Text
0:00:04	Narrator	When abortion was illegal in the United States, women resorted to drastic measures and deaths from back-alley abortions were common. In 1973, when the Supreme Court reached its landmark decision in the case of Roe versus Wade, casualties declined dramatically. In recent years, those opposed to abortion have been working to make it illegal once again. The result is a return to the fear and danger of the back-alleys.
0:00:37	Kate	We're hearing about knitting needles again. We're hearing about bleach douches again. And they might not be reporting it to their physician or to the judge that they end up talking to or to the clinic worker at the hospital, but there are girls out there doing that.
0:00:53	Leila	I hope that my daughter never has to worry about something like this, that the battle was won and fought by her mom to preserve a right for her to make those own decisions for herself, and nobody tells her what she has to do.
0:01:13	Rev. Castuera	If Roe v. Wade is undone, women will still go and look for abortions whether they are legal or not...so what, what we are going to see is the same number of abortions but with an increase in the fatalities for women of childbearing age.
0:01:29	Narrator	The majority of Americans support choice. Through the efforts of a vocal anti-choice minority, access to abortion in the United States is being eroded. Spurred by religious conviction, opponents of abortion carry out their mission on two fronts. One is through legislation, where state by state, laws are being passed that create barriers for women seeking abortions. The other is through clinic protests, where some of the most vehement attacks are being carried out.
0:02:16	Woman	Please don't let them hurt you. They killed a woman.
0:02:22	Man	You're going to stand before almighty God for murder, young lady. Murder of a baby.

0:02:29	Woman	Right now you're the mother of a live baby; when you leave here you will be the mother of a dead baby.
0:02:38	Man	I tell you that every one of you will be responsible before a righteous God at the throne of judgment.
0:02:48	Angela Parker	When I went for the abortion the thing that frightened me was this one woman and she was saying, you know, "The blood's still on your fingers, turn back now." They were just really cruel, they were just, I don't know, they were, "This is murder" and "How can you do a thing like this?" But I don't know but, I don't think they realized what I was going through and...I mean they were pushing me and when I was trying to get in the doors and everything. It was awful. It was really awful.
0:03:15	Angie	When I left the clinic and walked outside, I got real sick, and there were protesters out on the sidewalk. And said-- One guy was carrying a sign that says "Mommy please don't kill me" and I can still remember that. It was a long time ago, but I'll still remember that sign I'll probably never forget.
0:03:36	Narrator	The tactics of those protesting abortion have been escalating, from sidewalk picketing to a reign of terror.
0:03:48	Newscaster	Violence at an abortion clinic in Florida.
0:03:52	Man	He just went up, chased the doctor down and just shot him, point blank.
0:03:57	Newscaster	Dr. David Gunn was shot and killed outside a Pensacola clinic on his way to work.
0:04:04	Newscaster	Tiller, one of the few doctors to perform late-term abortions was shot in both arms last night as he got into his car outside of his Wichita abortion clinic.

0:04:15	Newscaster	It took just two minutes for Paul Hill to fire off more than six rounds and kill two people.
0:04:22	Newscaster	A Canadian gynecologist who performs abortions was shot in his home this morning. Police say Garson Romalis was sitting at his breakfast table when he was shot by an assailant armed with an assault rifle.
0:04:38	Newscaster	A man burst into a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic and opened fire with a rifle. Minutes later, an identical attack occurred at a second clinic a mile and a half away.
0:04:53	Woman	He was right behind me. He had a shotgun. I jumped over the wall... he was shooting everybody.
0:05:07	Narrator	The murders, which stunned most of the country, were condoned as "justifiable homicide" by a handful of religious extremists.
0:05:19	Priest	God wants us to do what is right and, killing abortion doctors, may be for some people, what is right.
0:05:25	Narrator	Dr. George Tiller, whose practice included late term abortions, had faced threats of violence for decades.
0:05:31	Dr. Tiller	My office has been blown up. In 1993, I survived an assassination attempt.
0:05:38	Narrator	Dr. Tiller was shot and killed on Sunday, May 31st, 2009.
0:05:42	Reporter	A local abortion doctor praised by some, controversial to others, gunned down inside his Wichita church.
0:05:47	Narrator	The media worked to report news of Dr. Tiller's murder without taking a position.

0:05:51	Reporter	The ringing of that single gunshot shattered the calm, of course, of the reformation Lutheran church, turning what was supposed to be a time of worship and prayer into anguish for those in attendance.
0:05:59	Man	Wichita's better than this. Some of us are pro-choice, some of us are pro-life but we're all pro-community.
0:06:06	Rachel Maddow	Are you afraid that Dr. Tiller's murder is going to spark more violence?
0:06:09	Vicki Saporta	This is the 8th murder, the 17th attempted murder, there have been 41 bombings, 175 arsons and the list goes on and on.
0:06:17	Narrator	Dr. Warren Hern is one of only two doctors in the United States who still perform late term abortions.
0:06:22	Dr. Hern	The assassination of Dr. Tiller was not the act of a lone deranged gunman. This is the result of 35 years of anti-abortion harassment.
0:06:32	Rachel Maddow	Violence as a political strategy is working to make abortion so unsafe for doctors that they are unwilling to bear the risks of performing it so women can't actually get one, regardless of whether or not it's legal.
0:06:43	Narrator	The recent wave of terrorism has left abortion providers across the nation facing the difficult decision of whether or not to continue. This doctor lives with his wife and their child, in a small New England village. Their life, however, has been far from quiet. Like so many other providers throughout the country, this physician has been the target of picketers for years.
0:07:12	Dr. Luck	We went away over Christmas and came back to find a uh, letter in my mailbox, uh that said, "You better check your baby killing facility," and then, "Any questions?" with a big question mark. And underneath it, it showed a picture of a 357 Magnum, pointing directly out of the page, being held by a hand.

0:07:42	Lori	I came to work with my husband every day, and when the picketers started coming, they would be outside, lined up on the street, and that feeling of dread as we drove towards work would always be there. So, you're working under enormous pressure, of people outside harassing women you're trying to help. Women that are there because they need or want to be there. That feeling of dread just carried over when we'd come home. Will there be a phone call? Will there be another piece of hate mail? What's next?
0:08:34	Dr. Luck	Well, approximately nine months before I closed my practice, there was a bullet fired into the waiting room of my office. As time progressed from that shooting, and we found that the law enforcement agencies, and there were many involved, really were not putting much effort into trying to solve this case, it became apparent to me that we were in real danger.
0:09:02	Lori	They know where we live. We could move. They could find us again. What kind of harm is out there for my child?
0:09:20	Narrator	Throughout the country, abortion clinics face threats and harassment on a regular basis. Since 1977, there have more than 150,000 documented incidents of violence and disruption. Those facilities which offer services in this atmosphere have had to learn to cope.

0:09:58	Rachel Atkins	<p>What you take on when you provide abortion services is all the anti-choice protesting, picketing. We have had bomb threats throughout our history. Then we had a long period of time where there'd be a car parked in the driveway, and men would have locked their necks to the chassis of the car from underneath. And the police and the rescue would have to come to remove the protesters. Another time we came and three of them were locked together at the front door of the Health Center with a huge lock system that was encased in cement. And then they had destroyed the lock, so that the police would not be able to get them apart. And this was one of the most creative responses I think on the Burlington Police Department's part. They came and picked the three individuals who were locked together up, walked them across the street, and left them on the front lawn of the Catholic diocese, who had been allowing them to park there, and supporting their activity and we found them at 8:00 in the morning. They couldn't get themselves apart until midnight that night.</p>
0:11:33	Rachel Atkins	<p>We weathered the period of blockades and invasions. At times we were in tears, at times we found humor to carry ourselves through. And I think what's really been unfortunate in the media is that everything is so polarized, and they represent the women in this society, women in this country as two groups of women. Women who have abortions, and women who have babies. And when you provide all those services, you recognize that we're the same women at different times in our life.</p>
0:12:16	Narrator	<p>More than 175 fires of suspicious origin have struck women's health centers, sometimes the same location more than once. The staff of one California clinic has weathered a series of arsons.</p>
0:12:31	Kitty	<p>The first fire that I recall was a fire that started. We were told it was started by a cigarette. And we were told that the cigarette traveled about 20 feet down the cement walkway and around a cement guard rail and up a ten inch cement lip and down underneath the house and then it somehow gathered debris and started a fire. And that was our first fire and we, you know, were very suspicious, and I think we were more surprised that the local powers-that-be weren't suspicious.</p>

0:13:12	Narrator	Over the next five years this clinic suffered three more arsons. After one of these, the facility had to close for eight months, and women were forced to travel an additional 100 miles to the nearest provider.
0:13:26	Kitty	It is very difficult to have this happen four times, all of them unsolved.
0:13:34	Jeri	And we put it on speaker phone, so the police heard his voice and what kind of threats was he making at the time.
0:13:42	Narrator	The day before we arrived to film at this Minnesota clinic, they received a series of threatening phone calls.
0:13:50	Man on phone	There's a bomb; stop killing little babies. There's a bomb; stop killing little babies.
0:13:56	Jeri	He called back about thirty different times. He talked to one of the nurses. He told her that he had a high powered rifle with a scope and that he was going to kill her when she went out to get her car. The police came, and we said put a trace on it and they still wouldn't do anything.
0:14:14	Narrator	Many clinics report that law enforcement agents do not respond sufficiently to threats. As a result, staff members feel they must always be on guard.
0:14:25	Dr. Boyd	There's probably not a day that goes by that I don't think of my own safety or the safety of my family when it comes to abortion and the risks that are involved, the political fallout that you have seen taking place every day. My children are 10 and 12 years of age, and my 10-year-old daughter, when she sees my bulletproof vest, will say, "Well, Daddy, I hope no one kills you or wants to kill you." And that's what makes it real for me.
0:14:55	protestors	-- You going to kill our babies -- Lord burns your hands off -- filthy murderer --

0:15:09	Narrator	In this embattled environment, fewer and fewer doctors are willing to provide abortion services. 87 percent of all counties in the United States have no local providers. Many clinics, especially those in rural areas, fly doctors in from out of state. This physician travels hundreds of miles every week.
0:15:28	Dr. Steir	I never intended to be a full-time abortion doctor. I provided abortion services because they were, doctors were needed. I was told, that before Dr. Tiller got shot in the hand up in Wichita, Kansas, that I was an alternative target. Shortly after that that we were approached by the F.B.I. and the US Marshals Service. And it was their decision to provide me with protection. If everybody dropped out of doing this because they were being intimidated there would be no abortion providers. And uh, perhaps I'd feel different if I was in my 40's, a young doctor, but I'm 64 years old, I'm going to be retiring soon, and I'm not going to quit what I'm doing.
0:16:11	Narrator	This clinic is 100 miles from Pensacola, Florida where two doctors and an escort were killed.
0:16:18	Pat	We've really experienced some horror at the clinics in the nearby area. We've experienced some pretty scary things here with people who are opposed to women having safe and legal choice.
0:16:28	Narrator	Individuals who continue to work in this climate are often motivated by personal memories of the back-alley days.
0:16:34	Pat	This all began, for me, in the mid-sixties, and I had a good friend and she was pregnant and couldn't take care of any more children. And kept asking the doctor to help her, and he knew exactly what she meant. And he couldn't. And I got a phone call. And she had been taken to the hospital, hemorrhaging, and she bled to death.

0:16:58	Pat	And I went back to where she worked and told her boss and she said, "Come back here." And we went into the restroom, and there was blood everywhere. And we started cleaning it up because we didn't know if the police would be involved. We just didn't know what was going on. And I found a screwdriver behind the commode that had blood all over it. She did it to herself.
0:17:26	Narrator	Before abortion was legal, many women died from self-induced abortions. Now, once again, hospital emergency rooms report treating women who resort to unsafe methods. Kris was a Sociology major in her senior year at a state university when she discovered she was pregnant. Like many young women her age, she was not ready to have a child. She obtained an abortion at a clinic during a wave of protests. Her friends describe what they remember.
0:18:01	Patti	We went down with her, and we waited in the waiting room for I don't know how long. And, And there's people outside marching around and then we're inside and there's all sorts of like kind of weird tension in the waiting room. She had a really bad experience there.
0:18:18	Denise	I think she didn't understand why she felt so ashamed of herself.
0:18:20	Patti	Exactly, totally.
0:18:23	Denise	You know and I think it took her years to figure out that it was that it had something to do with that experience but I don't think she knew exactly what, I think it was that she didn't feel that she should feel that ashamed.
0:18:38	Narrator	Kris became pregnant again after her birth control failed. She did not want to go back to a clinic, because her first experience had been so disturbing.
0:18:47	Protest woman	Please consider the life that you're carrying. Don't snuff it out. You'll never forget this. This day will go down in the rest of your life. You'll never get over it.

0:19:04	Narrator	Kris had been studying natural medicine and decided to use herbs as an abortifacient. Soon afterwards, she began to cramp.
0:19:13	Denise	When the cramping got really bad she thought she was aborting and so she didn't, she didn't go to a doctor, she didn't go to see anyone. Um, she...the night, the 12th of August, I got a call at four o'clock in the morning, and she had gone into convulsions in the bathtub. She was taken to the hospital and she'd had cardiac arrest. And then they'd had found out that she had had an ectopic pregnancy and that the cramping that she was feeling was that she had been hemorrhaging, probably for two weeks, because they said that there was dried blood in and around her fallopian tubes and in her uterus, and that that's what killed her. I think that she really wanted to go to somebody. If she, I mean we talked about it, you know she didn't, she didn't want to, to be in charge and take all this responsibility. I think if there'd been somebody for her to go to that she would still be alive.
0:20:50	Narrator	To abortion rights advocates, who fought to save women's lives by changing the laws, history seems to be repeating itself.
0:21:06	Leila	I can remember the last time we had a march, and walking down the street and thinking...you know..."I thought that we wouldn't have to do this anymore." You know, and I think what happened is that when the Supreme Court decision was won we all went, "That's it, we won." And we relaxed. But at the same time you had these groups that were organizing to repeal it, and what they did was chip away, a little bit at a time, over the years because then Medicaid funding wasn't allowed for poor women, and then you couldn't provide services to unmarried minors, without parental notification or parental consent. So there's been a lot of chipping away at the decision, which I think is unfortunate. But it means that you can never relax.
0:22:13	Narrator	As new restrictions are being enacted throughout the country, a generation that does not remember the history, is becoming aware of the current threat to reproductive rights.

0:22:27	Nessim	I vividly remember the moment that I became an abortion activist and that was the evening of July 3rd, 1989 when I was watching the news and heard of the Webster decision. States could now restrict abortion rights on a case by case basis. And what happened directly after that was that some 500 anti-choice measures and bills were introduced so it had a tremendous impact, it was a gateway to anti-choice legislation.
0:23:08	Narrator	Bills inspired or drafted by anti-abortion politicians are now pending or have passed in almost every state. In Kentucky, as in 34 other states, abortion funding is only available in cases of rape, incest or life endangerment. This young woman faced serious obstacles when she applied for subsidized medical care after learning she had an abnormal pregnancy.
0:23:42	Angela Parker	YoWe went for the ultrasound. And then she lifted down the cover and she said, "You need to go over to Dr. White's office." And I said, "Why, is there something wrong?" She said, "You just need to go over there." Well she was, Dr. White was telling me how some babies are born without a kidney, some babies were born without a heart, or arm, or, you know, an organ. And then she, she said, "Well, your baby was without a brain tissue." So, that was that was the hardest thing I ever heard in my life.
0:24:07	Dr. White	And it was obvious that the baby was anencephalic, which, an anencephalic baby is a baby that, when the neural tube or the spinal cord brain segment begins to develop, there is no development at the top of the spinal cord. So you have up to the brain stem, which is the base of the brain back here that controls breathing, the heart rate, but nothing above it. So about through the ears and the eyebrows up, there is nothing, there is no brain.
0:24:36	Pam Parker	Well, Angela just cried and cried and cried because we wanted this baby so much. And I asked the doctor, I says, "What do we do now?" You know. And she said she can carry the baby for nine months and take a risk on Angela's life and knowing that the baby had no chance. Or, we could go and take the baby now and just do it this way because of Angela's life.

0:25:03	Angela Parker	If I continued the pregnancy, the child would not, the child would not, you know, survive. Not even a minute. So she said that, that the dangers were that the placenta...there would be a chance where I could hemorrhage to death if I just went ahead and did that. And so I said, "No, I don't see what, why would I want to go through the whole nine months, giving birth to a baby that wasn't going to be alive."
0:25:27	Narrator	To spare Angela the medical risk of carrying to term, and the trauma of giving birth to a baby with no chance of survival, the family decided to end the pregnancy. They soon discovered that the several thousand dollar cost of the operation would not be covered by Medicaid.
0:25:46	Dr. White	It was not an option for them to pay for this out of pocket. They would have had to stay within the Medical Card system, would have gone through the pregnancy, would have gone through the delivery, and then would have gone through the loss.
0:25:57	Angela Parker	And so Dr. White was telling me about this organization, where they're trying to pass a law that people on Medicaid could, shouldn't have to do it. Because they know we didn't have the money. And the baby wouldn't survive. And my life was in danger.
0:26:12	Narrator	The ACLU took up this case, to bring attention to the injustice of a law that does not take dangerous "high risk" pregnancies into account.
0:26:25	Dr. White	I think there's a very passionate group in the state who are against abortion for any reason at all, ever, period, never. There's nothing in this world that's that black and white. And you're dealing with people who are not involved with a medical situation trying to make blanket decisions. If you've ever looked into a woman's eyes when you just told her that her baby is doomed. It's -- if they could see that, they would know why this has to be kept safe and legal, and why we don't need more barriers for these women.

0:27:09	Pam Parker	Before we went through with this, I was against abortion. But when the situation comes up as much as this. There has got to be somebody to help these people, mothers that is going through this. I don't care what anybody says. You know, how could you do this? They are not in my shoes. They weren't in Angela's shoes.
0:27:30	Narrator	If a poor woman has an unplanned pregnancy, her options are limited. Medicaid restrictions on abortion funding combined with cuts in family planning and reduced welfare allocations place a heavy burden on low-income families. This nurse and midwife works in a county hospital. Many of her patients are women on assistance.
0:28:01	Arisika Razak	Poor women are used to struggling. You know, struggling to have enough food. Struggling to take care of the other children. They don't think immediately, "I don't have enough resources," because they don't have enough resources for their life. So that first they think about what do I want to do and the first thing is I want to have a baby and then harsher reality sets in and they begin to think, I've got three other kids, it's so hard. I'm struggling to make ends meet, I'm struggling and you know, 15th and the check comes and there's not enough money for the last five days for food or transportation. And they begin to think, no, this is too much. When women in that situation say no more. When they say one more child is too much. When that woman says, "I can't!" This is not said lightly. This is real. It means that they truly are at the end of their resources. The next barrier that comes up is getting to a place if they want an abortion to have it. And like if they go to a clinic it could be three hundred dollars. That's a lot of money. That may be close to what her check is, you know? And so she doesn't have that, so then she begins to think... she goes to the County Hospital. That's where I work. She calls the county to make an appointment because you can't just walk in. It can take two to three weeks to get an appointment. Then, in terms of scheduling it, it can be three to four weeks before we can schedule her in because of the press of other surgery. So that we are talking about women who are being pushed into second trimester abortion.
0:30:06	Narrator	While some laws impact low-income families, others are specifically aimed at young women. In a series of decisions, starting in 1976, the Supreme Court ruled that states could require a minor to inform her parents, before getting an abortion. Parental involvement laws are on the books, and strictly enforced in 35 states. In 7 others they are in place and could be activated at any time.

0:30:36	Kate	One of the major problems that I see in educating teenagers about their rights in terms of abstinence or contraceptives or their right to abortion or to give up for adoption is the fact that there is legislation that specifically prohibits a teenager from making those choices on their own in many states. Especially when it comes to abortion we present them with this maze of laws. You must go before a judge here in Minnesota if you don't wish to tell both of your biological parents. That's assuming a functioning nuclear family, and we know that's not a reality. These kids are being frightened away from asking for help.
0:31:18	Narrator	States that have parental involvement laws are required to provide the option of a waiver, such as a judicial bypass. Meanwhile, anti-abortion forces are working to make these laws stricter, placing an additional burden on teens with difficult home situations.

0:31:40	Pat	There certainly are some young women who, for a variety of reasons, and unfortunately physical abuse is one of them, that absolutely can not tell their parents. And we talk to them then about judicial bypass. There are some counties in this state that have judges that are just absolutely opposed to abortion, no matter what the circumstances, and when a young woman comes to them seeking the judicial bypass, they're put off. And it drives some young women to either go to an incompetent abortion provider, an illegal provider, and they're still out there, or to try to do a home remedy. And there's still plenty of that going on in Alabama. The one that really comes to my mind first when I think back about this was a 15-year-old girl and someone told her that if she would douche with bleach, that she would abort on her own. So that's what she'd been doing for about a week when she came to us. The vaginal tissue had caustic burns that were just phenomenal. Her vagina was just blistered to the point that it had swollen shut all the way. She couldn't be examined. The desperation level is already here. It's the young women, it's the poor women, it's the women who feel like they can't tell anybody, who feel so socially ostracized because of the dilemma that they find themselves in, in the first place. As the states pass more and more restrictive laws that make it harder and harder, that shrink access more and more, we see those numbers growing.
0:33:18	Speaker at rally	Our honorary marshall, the man whose idea this rally
0:33:22	Narrator	Over the past 35 years, religious activists have been working to elect anti-choice candidates to local, state and federal positions. Based on their moral convictions, these officials then propose legislation which restricts access.
0:33:39	Bunnie	The idea that life begins at conception is a particular theological idea. It's a belief. We have states that are passing into their laws, that theological, that religious belief that life begins at conception. That means that the Catholic church or the fundamentalist churches now have their religious beliefs passed into civil law. For me, for other Protestants, for Jews, for Unitarians, for Atheists, for Buddhists, for Muslims and for all the wide variety of religious beliefs we have in this country, now we have an infringement, an infraction of the idea of freedom of and from religion.

0:34:28	Narrator	Among the most influential forces behind these new laws is the Catholic Hierarchy. Within Church membership, however, there is a clear split. According to a gallop survey, 80% think that most abortion services should remain legal. Some of those who disagree with the Vatican's position formed Catholics for a Free Choice.
0:34:50	Frances	There is such a residual respect for religion in the country and such a, and a belief that religious leaders don't lie, religious leaders don't play politics. And over the past 10 years, as the bishops saw that the abortion issue would move from the federal arena to the state arena, the bishops established and, in cases where they already existed, beefed up statewide lobbying offices in 28 states in the United States. So I always had this profound sense of sadness at the way in which the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church has invested so much of its power and authority on this issue in the political world, that it has denied itself the opportunity to speak from a pastoral perspective.
0:35:52	Narrator	Another way in which the Catholic Church exerts its influence is by using punitive measures against people with whom it disagrees. This woman was the chief administrator of a women's health clinic in Texas which provided a full range of services including adoption and abortion. She was threatened with excommunication from the Catholic Church when she refused to abandon her position on this issue.
0:36:33	Rachel Vargas	I came into focus with the media, and speaking the pro-choice side, and defending our clinic, and defending the patients and their right to choose, and their right to have access to these services. In one of those interviews I was asked what religion I practiced, and I, of course, said that I was a pro-choice Catholic. This special interest group petitioned the Bishop and said you cannot allow this woman to publicly state that she's a pro-choice Catholic, that just can't be done. And sure enough, two months down the road I received my first letter of warning saying that I was in jeopardy of excommunicating myself automatically, and that as my Bishop, that he was warning me and giving me information regarding the evils of abortion.
0:37:45	Bishop	All involved in the deliberate and successful effort to eject an unviable fetus from the mother's womb incur excommunication.

0:37:54	Rachel Vargas	The most frightening thing about my excommunication was that had it been another time, I would have been burned at the stake. I wouldn't have had a piece of paper to tell me you are no longer a Catholic, and you can no longer be buried in the Catholic Church, or you can no longer receive Communion. But I would have been burned at the stake. But it's not going to silence me. And I'm going to continue to speak. And I want to be that force, and I want to be that person that says, "But we are affected by this!" Women come to clinics like Reproductive Services and clinics, other abortion providers across this country with the most incredible circumstances, and we treat them with respect, and we give them the quality medical care that they deserve.
0:39:02	Narrator	Over the last decade, a religious minority has promoted a concept that equates being religious with being anti-abortion. In truth, people of many faiths support a woman's right to choose. This United Methodist minister works in the Los Angeles area. He grew up in Mexico where he saw women die from illegal abortions.
0:39:26	Rev. Castuera	There are some religious people that oversimplify the issue, and they seem to claim the high moral ground and say that the rest of us who disagree with them are not moral. The more you narrow the options, the less moral you are. I just think freedom is absolutely essential for moral and ethical decisions to be made. I believe in a loving God. And I believe that all of the religions of the world primarily have as a task to convey the idea that God is loving. That we have a loving, caring forgiving God that will understand better than any one of us the specific reasons why a woman finally decides to go and have an abortion.
0:40:14	Narrator	In this synagogue, people from many faiths have gathered to honor those who suffered before legal abortions were available.
0:40:24	Rabbi Littman	To those who were taken blindfolded to a hotel room or a deserted warehouse, to those that could not afford a legal abortion, to those whose doctors were prevented by law to counseling them, to those who ended up in an emergency room hemorrhaging, to those that ended up sterile.

0:40:42	Rabbi Littman	Part of why I got involved in this particular service and even I think the larger issue of the religious statement, is religion serves as a vehicle for memory. We argue these political issues or even the theological issues of abortion, without remembering that real people are involved and not just the real people in the present, but also the real people of the past, of hundreds and thousands of women. When I was in rabbinical school, each of us had an opportunity to give a sermon, and uh I gave my sermon on abortion rights, on reproductive rights. And afterwards other rabbinical students came to me and told me that they had had abortions and that they had felt that this was something that they could never, never talk about there. That it could never be mentioned. And so by mentioning it, by speaking it -- every place that we speak it, we make a little safer for women to speak the truths of their lives.
0:41:40	Rabbi Littman	To all the women who lie silent in the dust, to all the women who lived to tell their stories, to all those who died, and those who survived.
0:41:49	Narrator	The constitutional right to an abortion was guaranteed by the Supreme Court with their decision in the case of Roe Versus Wade. The struggle to protect that right is ongoing. Some local governments are enacting counter legislation to protect doctors and clinic workers. Efforts have resulted in buffer zones, restraining orders and injunctions.
0:42:19	Cop	I'm also ordering you to leave the property. If you do not you will be subject to arrest.
0:42:25	Narrator	In 1994, the Federal Government enacted the FACE law, which protects Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances. Despite these gains, the onslaught continues.
0:42:42	Woman	We are in fact the majority --
0:42:46	Narrator	Individuals unwilling to yield to pressure from anti-abortion forces are stepping forward and speaking out.

0:42:54	Black Male Speaker	We've come too far, we've marched too long, we've prayed too hard, we've wept too bitterly, we've bled too profusely, and we've died too young, to let Jesse Helms or Jerry Falwell or any legislature turn back the clock on our march toward freedom.
0:43:22	Woman	As former co-chair of the Republican National Committee, I'm proud to stand here and say that 68% of my party is pro-choice.
0:43:33	Woman	We will lift our voices from this day henceforth from coast to coast from sea to shining sea, America the beautiful stands for choice.
0:43:56	Narrator	A group of medical students in California took a stand when they realized that abortion procedures were not being taught in most medical schools.
0:44:06	Jody	We looked into our medical education and said, "We're not learning about abortion." It has not been mentioned. There had been a few places where it should have been mentioned and it hadn't. We started talking to medical students who were second, third and fourth years and just asked them the simple question, "Have you heard about abortion?" And they all said that they hadn't.
0:44:23	Diana	When I got into medical school in my second year in 1993, Dr. Gunn was shot in Florida and a deep, deep sadness just went through my heart. I really...And I think people throughout the nation were absolutely shocked, and I felt that deep sadness. And at that point I decided that I would like to learn to do the procedure. The chief of the department found out that I was doing this and called me into his office. It was a late afternoon and I was in the middle of assisting a twin delivery. I was incredibly excited and, and we were waiting for the second twin and I was called down to his office. I walked in and he had me sit down and immediately he started screaming at me. He told me that he was very much against abortion and this is a quote, he said, "Who do you think you are as a third year medical student, deciding what your education should be?" I felt like saying back to him, "Who you think you are to let your religious views and your personal views interfere with my education?"

0:45:29	Narrator	A cartoon book of crude jokes about abortion doctors was mailed anonymously to more than 3,000 medical students across the country. Refusing to be intimidated, a group of them formed Medical Students for Choice, an organization committed to increasing the availability of abortion training.
0:45:56	Jody	We were going around the country to all these different meetings of other organizations where we knew students would be. At one place we had to use ironing boards. I had to haul my ironing board to the hotel and set up with tablecloths over it to have a space. We just had to put a few things down, put our petitions, sign-up sheets. All the other booths were kind of, not much was going on, but students were swarming around our booth, around our ironing boards.
0:46:26	Narrator	Grass roots efforts are succeeding, and have led to more than 100 chapters, nationwide.
0:46:33	Jody	As medical students we demand this training. We absolutely think that it would be irresponsible medicine to not include abortion training in obstetrics and gynecology programs.
0:46:43	Narrator	After meeting the challenge of getting their medical training, these young doctors join the ranks of those who face hardships every day. In Mississippi, one of the few in-state providers is battling a barrage of legislation aimed at forcing him to quit his practice. He continues, however, because of what he saw when abortion was illegal.
0:47:08	Dr. Booker	I was in medical school before Roe vs. Wade. I saw women come through the emergency room who had had back alley abortions, botched abortions, with gas gangrene, perforations of the uterus, sepsis. And once you see one picture like that, it remains in your mind forever. And I promised myself that if I could ever get the opportunity to change that, and make abortions safer, that I would.
0:47:31	Narrator	Mississippi passed a law requiring physicians to tell their patients about a highly disputed study that links abortion with breast cancer. This doctor would rather risk arrest than obey a law based on inconclusive evidence.

0:47:49	Dr. Booker	I'm not giving my patients misinformation. And if everyone gets that kind of conviction, and we get people to wake up and see what's going on. How government is intruding into women's lives and doctors' lives, maybe something can be done in this country.
0:48:02	Narrator	In Montana, this physician's assistant was confronted with a new law which would take away her right to provide abortions. For almost two decades, she's been working with the same doctor, serving people of all ages in their family practice.
0:48:21	Susan Cahill	This last legislative session in Montana, there was a bill brought to the legislature that basically prevented physicians' assistants from doing abortions. And I am a physician assistant, and the only one in Montana who does abortions. This legislation was brought to the government by the right to life organization and passed. So, as of October first, I can no longer do perform the abortions that I've been doing for 18 years.
0:48:56	Susan Cahill	So what we need to do is set you up for a time. Your mom came with you today. She's welcome to come back with you and be with you throughout the procedure.
0:49:08	Patient	And you'll be in here also with the Doctor.
0:49:10	Susan Cahill	Right. I'll be here...the whole..whatever you want.
0:49:14	Patient	No chance of you doing it with him.
0:49:17	Susan Cahill	I can't...I'm not allowed to do it right now. But, I won't leave you. Okay?
0:49:23	Patient	Okay.
0:49:25	Narrator	Prior to the law passing, their office was set on fire. Despite these setbacks, she's not lost courage. Represented by the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, she is appealing her case to the federal courts.

0:49:43	Susan Cahill	After the fire-bombing in our office, uh our whole office and my family went through a lot of struggle about whether I should continue to do that. And, for me, it was a combination of making my own decisions about my life. And also having to make them because I am not alone. I have a family who I have to be sensitive to. Their emotions and their feeling are very important to me, and my child's-- I, I also do not want him to live in fear. I don't want him to become paranoid. He's a very happy person, but yet I wanted him to understand that there are people in our lives that can harm us, and we need to be sensitive to that. And my husband worried a lot. Did not want me to continue, and we had to talk. And he came around, interestingly enough, to the same thing that I came around...Which is that if you don't live by what you believe, what are you living for?
0:50:36	Narrator	The domestic terrorism that has plagued the nation comes as a particular shock when it occurs in a small town where people know each other. After the fire gutted their office, the doctor spoke out against the principles which he felt had been violated.
0:50:54	Dr. Armstrong	It's, ah, disrespect for society, and for laws, for religious freedom, democracy, for the things that we stand for in our country.
0:51:08	Narrator	The members of this community rose above their differences to take a stand against the violence.

0:51:17	Dorothea	People on all sides of the issue of abortion telephoned our daughter and said, "You know, isn't there something we can do? I mean, this is our community too. There must be something." And after I don't know how many such telephone calls, our daughter organized a meeting. And called ourselves the Flathead Safeplace Project. Their first major event was a rally, uh speakers from the medical society, our mayor, police chief, fire chief, school teachers, school superintendent, plain people such as we are, spoke saying that in our community there are certain values which we hold. They are the glue for us as a community. We may have different styles of religious practice, or no religious practice at all. We may hold different beliefs, very strongly, about any number of issues, and we may differ in our minds almost vehemently. But no matter that, as a community we will have discourse in a civil manner, and that as the Flathead Safeplace Project mission statement says, "A crime against one of us is a crime against us all."
0:52:52	Narrator	The first step toward healing is understanding. Few people understand the full impact of anti-abortion activities. Harassment that targets providers and their families.
0:53:13	Narrator	Aggressive picketing that hinders access to safe abortions. Funding restrictions that burden people with low incomes. Religious leaders who punish individuals with dissident views. Laws that limit the rights of trained providers. Violence that threatens and endangers doctors and clinic workers. With understanding come the seeds of compassion.
0:54:02	Pat	All providers are on the battle lines, on the front lines. I've worked with most of the doctors who've been killed, I knew them personally. When those horrible things happened, and we were feeling so isolated, and so alone, and so vulnerable, and I lock the door, and walk out at night, and think, "Maybe I just won't go back tomorrow. It's just not worth it. Maybe I just won't go back." And then I drive home. And it never fails. The face of my friend who died from a self-induced abortion comes to me, and it won't go away. And I know, if I don't come back the next day, there will be another one. We still have it going on, even as hard as we try, it's still going on.
0:55:06	Dr. Carhart	The biggest omission so far is to not identify anti-abortion terrorism as hate crimes. Certainly murdering a Doctor in his church is a hate crime.

0:55:18	Dr. Luck	The picketers fail to realize that the number of abortions is not going to change. These women will either travel to other clinics, as fewer and fewer clinics become available, then it's going to go back to the back-alley days. They all seem to have forgotten about what this whole issue is about. This is about keeping women from dying. Again.