

## ***REFLECTIONS***

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### **LeRoy Carhart: The Evolution of a Late-Term Abortionist**

In February 2013, Jennifer Morbelli traveled from New York to Germantown, Maryland, to terminate her 33-week pregnancy. She met with LeRoy Carhart, one of only a few doctors in the nation who perform abortions through the third trimester. He administered an injection on Sunday to kill the baby. On Wednesday, after he delivered the dead child, Jennifer went to a nearby hotel to rest. Like Tia Parks, her condition worsened, and that night she was taken to a nearby hospital where she died, having suffered massive internal bleeding. The emergency-room physician had been unable to contact Carhart to learn what had taken place. He had flown to Nebraska where he planned to perform more abortions the following day.

Carhart, who uses terms such as justice, love and respect in his advertising, does not delude himself. He knows that he kills babies for a living. In a 2019 interview with the BBC, he was asked: “And you don’t have a problem with killing a baby?” to which he responded, “Absolutely not. I have no problem if it’s in the mother’s uterus.” How does one develop such callousness toward human life? Consider the career of this abortionist.

LeRoy Carhart received a medical degree while serving in the U.S. Air Force and upon retirement in 1985 opened a family practice in Bellevue, Nebraska. It was not financially successful, so in 1988 he spent several months learning to do abortions, a procedure he was introduced to in medical school. For the next several years, he worked as a “circuit rider,” performing abortions in several states.

Shortly after a fire at his home in 1991, allegedly started by anti-abortion protesters, he decided, “I wasn’t just going to be a provider. I was going to be an activist.” That decision has driven his subsequent life.

In 1998, he began commuting to Wichita, Kansas, to work as an associate physician with George Tiller, a pioneer in late-term abortions. When Nebraska passed a law banning partial-birth abortions, Carhart sued the state, and in 2000 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the statute was unconstitutional. Congress then enacted the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003. Carhart again brought suit, but this time the Supreme Court upheld the ban.

When Tiller was murdered in 2009 by Scott Roeder, an anti-abortion fanatic with a psychiatric history, Carhart promptly announced that he would carry on his legacy by performing later-term abortions in his facility in Bellevue. Nebraska lawmakers, not wanting the state to become an abortion hub, passed a law the following year banning most abortions 20 weeks after conception. Carhart could have moved across the river into Iowa, where abortion regulations were less stringent. “But,” he said, “I wouldn’t give Right to Life the satisfaction of saying they cut the abortion rate in Omaha by a third.”

Rather, in defiance, he set up shop in Maryland, where abortions can be performed in all nine months of pregnancy and became a contract abortionist at a practice in Germantown while continuing his business in Nebraska. Since then, he has flown every few days to perform abortions in both states each week.

From the day Carhart opened his doors in Maryland in December 2010, there has been a year-round vigil of prayer and peaceful public witness near his clinic. Catholic parishes, bishops and priests,

Protestant congregations and pastors, national and local pro-life leaders, and people of all ages have come to pray for an end to the killing.

After almost seven years in Germantown, a pro-life group bought the practice in September 2017 and immediately shut it down. The following month, Carhart relocated to Bethesda, Maryland, where abortions and the weekly prayerful opposition continue.

Carhart engages in his gruesome business with an impassive view of life. In 1997, he testified in a U.S. district court that he sometimes dismembered late-stage infants while they were alive, for he could “see the fetal heartbeat on the ultrasound.”

In the 2019 BBC interview, he said that he “loves his job” and is proud to perform late-term abortions. He fought against the federal partial-birth abortion ban because he saw no moral difference between killing a partially delivered baby and one still in the womb. The point he misses is the immorality of killing an unborn child in the first place.

Carhart presents himself as a specialist in “second- and third-trimester abortion care.” He performs the procedure after 28 weeks, well into the period when an unborn child can feel pain, has a significant chance of survival if delivered, and when most abortionists will not operate.

He advertises “that the care our patients receive is high quality, safe and tailored to their specific health needs.” His practice, however, is not safe. At least two women died, and several dozen others have been rushed to nearby hospitals for emergency treatments after abortions at his facilities.

He speaks of “care” and “compassion.” Yet, in an almost ghoulish fashion, Carhart provides women with an opportunity to bond with their dead infants, as if they died naturally instead of being deliberately killed. He offers his patients a remembrance “of the precious time with (sic) you and your baby had together.” They can hold their aborted children, obtain photographs, footprints and memorial certificates, and request spiritual accommodations before the babies are disposed of as biohazards.

In spite of public opinion, protests, petitions to the state medical board, lawsuits, a congressional investigation into his practices, and being evicted five times because “of a change of heart of the landlord,” 78-year-old Carhart tenaciously continues. He works full time providing abortions, teaching other providers the techniques of first- and second-trimester abortions, and acting as a consultant to abortion facilities nationwide.

While abortion practices are closing throughout the country, Carhart is looking to expand his business. In August 2019, a senior staff member at his Bethesda facility said, “We have patients from all across the country and all across the world.” The staff is preparing to assist even more women, she continued. “If people want to get an abortion, they are going to have an abortion.”

Some may consider the pro-life efforts to be ineffective, but individuals come to pray outside of the facilities even if only to save one life. Grace Morrison, who led the weekly prayer services in Germantown, said, “We do not know God’s plan or the effects of our presence, but we do know that it is our responsibility to be here. If we are not, more babies will die. We have seen that there is an abundance of grace available at this place of great darkness, as we have witnessed many miracle and conversions.” Abortionists may continue to kill babies, but those who are pro-life will pray and stand in opposition.

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