

# **“Gosnell”: The Doctor Who Snuffed Out Babies and His Silencing Accomplices**

“Were you guys at the ‘Gosnell’ showing?” asked the older gentleman at the urinal next to me. “Have you ever been in a theater where nobody speaks as they leave the movie?” Two very unusual events had just occurred: the reaction he mentioned and men talking at the toilet! A men’s room discussion ensued, focusing on the heaviness of the topic: abortion and baby killing.

Despite unseasonable cold and rain, my wife and I had sat with a few others in the local theater late on a weeknight. It was the last chance to see a film that’s been just as shut down as the discussion of its topic: killing of babies born alive by an abortionist so unprincipled that he was foresworn by fellow abortionists and pro-abortion advocates. The perpetrator: Dr. Kermit Gosnell. The film bears his name. It is also subtitled, maybe exaggeratedly, “The Trial of America’s Biggest Serial Killer.” But who cares if a few others killed more humans than he did over 30 years’ time? Gosnell is deservedly serving three life sentences for first degree murder for offing who knows how many newborns as a “service” to poor women.

As we exited the theater, I had nearly commented about the palpable silence, but realized the gravity of the moment and stopped myself. Perhaps it would take a while to process the newly resurrected horror. The alternate thought occurred to me that, even with a likely self-selecting audience of pro-lifers, silence is what got us to the cultural situation we are in regarding abortion. Would anyone even comment?

The “right to choose” has now been superseded by a debate about personhood of fetuses and babies. Christians often

remain silent. Many believe fetal sonogram pictures have dealt a blow to the euphemisms. Turns out, it's a picture that sealed Gosnell's doom.

The story tells itself, so the film simply needed to be believable. The superbly cast "Gosnell" pulls it off, with characters as diverse as inner-city young women employed by the mad doctor to a suburbanite prosecutor and mother of five to the queerly eccentric, self-justified Gosnell himself. (The lead actor is the actual Gosnell's doppelganger!) A well-played Emo blogger may have made the difference in prosecuting the deranged doctor, while the mainstream press was absent without leave. Cable TV-level cursing lends a less religious, more real-to-life tone, but it seemed a bit overdone.

"Gosnell's" biggest strength, unfortunately, is the unraveling of a chamber of horrors haunted by the abortionist's classical piano playing and taste for exotic flowers. It is surreal. This cat- and exotic turtle-loving, soft dictator's demise began as a drug case. In a classic storyline, the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) and FBI encroach on a local police investigation, forcing the investigation down the cul-de-sac of a mere drug bust. As a law unto himself, Gosnell had become a dealer. No one was prepared for the baby body bags and slime of Gosnell's "clinic." That is, the headlines and court case were stranger than fiction—and more disturbing than most. Frankly, the pre-Halloween release seems appropriate. Still, the obvious moral implications and the inevitable appeal to conscience provides a critical reality check for all time, something that cuts through the slogans and euphemisms surrounding abortion.

That tension between the practice no one talks about and the inherent law of right and wrong within human hearts at times splits the screen. The pro-abortion prosecutor subtly rethinks her position as she cuddles her new baby. The most telling scene is the courtroom practice session with the defense lawyer, brilliantly played by Nick Searcy. Here, Gosnell

unequivocally states that he has no respect for laws about training healthcare workers up to code. More chillingly, he declares that his diagnosis of fetal-and live-birth babies' viability is the definitive opinion. In other words, the doctor totally violated the classical "do no harm" doctrine of medicine as aided and abetted by authorities, wantonly violated laws designed to protect women, and played God with babies' lives even beyond the allowance of Roe-liberalized abortion laws. But truth has a way of emerging. And history repeats itself in a way.

How so? The up-to-the-minute story, which smells as fishy as Gosnell's clinic and the cover-up-by-negligence that kept him in grim business for a third of a century, is a tale of viewpoint discrimination. The little-known fight to stanch this movie's release and cancel showings parallels the way that authorities ignored—by decree—the egregious crimes of Gosnell. This week, headlines like [“‘Gosnell’ Filmmakers: Theaters Dropping Movie, Preventing People From Buying Tickets”](#) emerged on Christian news web sites—and nowhere else, apparently. “John Sullivan, the film's producer and marketing director, said, ‘The fact that we've been dropped from theaters where the movie is the number 6 or number 9 movie is just something you don't see. ‘It's hard not to believe it isn't about the content of the movie’.”<sup>{1}</sup> Despite an excellent opening run, Facebook ticket-buyers report refunds from AMC outlets without explanation and in explicable screening cancellations.

It still seems as if there's a conspiracy to shut down knowledge of the facts. The spirit of the grand jury-convening judge who demanded the case not be about abortion lives on. Recently, NPR played the same card, avoiding the hot button term “abortion.” [The Daily Beast reports](#) that “National Public Radio's own past reporting called Kermit Gosnell an ‘abortion doctor.’ But when the makers of a new film [“Gosnell”] wanted to pay to use the phrase on air, no dice.” According to actual

events, which comprise most of the screenplay, health officials had direct orders from the governor's office not to follow up on complaints about the clinic.

Gosnell's "hellhole" of an abortion mill defied imagination. It was a nasty nest of cat filth and biohazards. Turns out, lots of that biological "waste" were the bodies of infants killed both in the womb past legal dates, whom the butcher-doctor "snipped" in the neck after they were delivered. "As liberal commentator Kirsten Powers wrote at USA Today back in 2013, 'Infant beheadings. Severed baby feet in jars. A child screaming after it was delivered alive during an abortion procedure. Haven't heard about these sickening accusations? It's not your fault.' Powers continued, 'Since the murder trial of Pennsylvania abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell began . . . there has been precious little coverage of the case that should be on every news show and front page.'" Years later, the crickets can still be heard. Gosnell's gruesome methods boggled the mind of jurors and moviegoers. Still, the trial was not allowed to "be a case about abortion." Nor the film. Yeah, right.

So, the docudrama about a "prolific serial killer" seems to be merely another extension of the strange silence induced by a biased system and a duped public. On a radio interview, the producer said he had to raise funds himself, as with other such independent conservative films. He has faced astonishing resistance at every turn in the four-year process of creating and releasing "Gosnell." Studios supposedly balk because of controversy, but conservatives know that there is more viewpoint discrimination than anything at work. One would almost think that there are tweaked consciences being defended.

In a monumental scene, the prosecutor shows the gruesome picture of a late-term born-alive baby boy who had been executed by Gosnell. Courtroom fact-finding, arguments, and persuasive appeals gave way to the impact of a picture, worth

many more than a thousand words. May the light of day shine on the awful picture of death-dealing in and out of the womb in the court of public opinion and individual hearts and minds. "Gosnell" provides a revealing and compelling picture that will hopefully live on despite the spotty and embattled theater releases.

#### Note

1. *The Christian Post*, posted Oct. 22, 2018, accessed Oct. 25, 2018.

[www.christianpost.com/news/gosnell-filmmakers-theaters-dropping-movie-preventing-people-from-buying-tickets-228090](http://www.christianpost.com/news/gosnell-filmmakers-theaters-dropping-movie-preventing-people-from-buying-tickets-228090).

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