



<http://realchoice.0catch.com/library/weekly/aa102000a.htm>

The Death of Catherine Pierce

October 10, 1989, 27-year-old Catherine Pierce died in a nursing home in Tennessee from abortion complications that had left her comatose since March 11. She left an 11-year-old daughter motherless. The abortion was performed at Atlanta Surgi-Center, which had at one time also done business as "Northside Women's Clinic," and was performed by Daniel McBrayer.

Catherine had gone into cardiac arrest while left unattended in recovery after her abortion. State officials alleged "serious problems" after Peirce was injured. They cited this [National Abortion Federation](#) facility for administering "the same anesthesia dosages" to patients whose weights ranges from 107 to 167 pounds, inadequate record keeping, and inadequate supervision of patients. (*Atlanta Constitution* 5-12-89, AP 5-12-89)

What Is a NAF Clinic?

NAF is the professional association of abortion providers in North America. Our member clinics care for more than half the women who choose abortion each year in the United States. In order to become a member, a clinic must complete a rigorous application process. Member clinics have agreed to comply with our standards for quality and care, updated annually in our *Clinical Policy Guidelines*, which set the evidence-based standards for abortion care in North America. NAF periodically conducts site visits to confirm that our clinics are in compliance with our guidelines.

Screen capture of assurance of safe, quality care on National Abortion Federation web site. It reads:

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State investigators indicated that they'd been turned away the first time they'd tried to inspect the facility, and were forced to stage a raid in order to obtain the records needed to investigate the mishap that later killed Catherine. The clinic complained that they'd only turned the state investigators away because they'd failed to display badges and a subpoena. They also complained to the press that the raid was "political harassment" due to the fact that an anti-abortion activist had complained to the state about the facility.

Among the patient care problems cited, the investigators also said that they found discrepancies between the number of fetuses sent to the disposal lab and the number of abortions performed. In

1989 Atlanta Surgi-Center had logged 1,748 abortions, but had only sent 155 fetuses for disposal. In 1988 they had logged 2,774 abortions, but only sent 155 fetuses for disposal. In 1987 they logged 1,104 abortions but only sent 306 fetuses for disposal. The investigation into fetus disposal was prompted by local proliferators reporting that they had seen hundreds of fetuses in the clinic's dumpsters. Dr. Gay, the clinic director, denied the allegations. (AP 9-20-89, 9-22-89; Atlanta Constitution 9-21-89)

It is possible that Atlanta Surgi-Center is the same facility as the "Atlanta Northside" facility where [Geneva Calton](#) had undergone her fatal abortion in 1979.