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Film features abortion doctor who treated Jennifer Morbelli

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'After Tiller': Protestors target abortion doctor: A clip from the documentary "After Tiller," about third-term abortions. LeRoy Carhart, shown in this clip, treated Jennifer Morbelli of New Rochelle, who died Feb. 7 after a late-term abortion.

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Written by **Cara Matthews**

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Dr. LeRoy Carhart, who recently provided an abortion to a New Rochelle woman who was 33 weeks' pregnant and subsequently died, is a martyr or a pariah, depending on whom you talk to.

The Nebraska physician is one of a handful of doctors who provide late-term abortions in the country. They are carrying on the work of the late Dr. George Tiller, who was shot and killed in Kansas four years ago by an abortion opponent. The four doctors are featured

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in the film "After Tiller," which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival last month.

 Drs. Susan Robinson and LeRoy Carhart, featured in the documentary 'After Tiller,' pose for a portrait during the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. ZOOM

Drs. Susan Robinson and LeRoy Carhart, featured in the documentary 'After Tiller,' pose for a portrait during the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. / Victoria Will/AP

More than two weeks ago, 29-year-old Jennifer Morbelli traveled to Carhart's clinic in Germantown, Md., for the abortion. The White Plains elementary school teacher died four days later at a local hospital. Authorities in Maryland are investigating her death.

Carhart, who served on the board of directors of the New York City-based Physicians for Reproductive Health from 2001 to 2007, is an "exemplary human being" who is warm and rather shy, said Jodi Magee, the group's president and CEO. He always participated in debates "from a very thoughtful but quiet point of view," she said.

At the same time, Carhart, 71, has the strong backbone anyone would need to handle the kind of attacks he faces, she said.

"He came to this work fairly late in his career, but he chose it with intent and he has stayed with it with intent and he is among the most committed physicians doing abortion work," she said.

The work is dangerous, and he has endured protests, name-calling, destruction of his home, threats against him and his family and violence, Magee said.

"He has no question that the work he is doing is very important for women and their families and that keeps him going through the public efforts to dismantle his reputation or to smear him," she said.

Troy Newman, president of Wichita, Kan.-based Operation Rescue, said Friday that he thinks Carhart is a coward, not a hero.

He called Carhart the "Dr. Kevorkian of the unborn child," referring to the late Dr. Jack Kevorkian, a Michigan physician who helped terminally ill patients end their own lives and was also reviled by some for his actions.


Staff writer Shawn Cohen contributed to this report.

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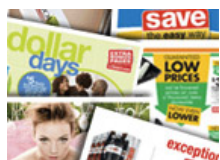
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