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## Antiabortion group releases Md. abortion provider's comments on woman's death



Katherine Frey/The Washington Post - LeRoy Carhart travels between Nebraska and Germantown, where he performs abortions. He's photographed at a hotel in Gaithersburg in this 2011 photo.

By Lena H. Sun, [E-mail the writer](#)

A 29-year-old woman who [died in February](#) after a late-term abortion at a Germantown clinic had an "allergic reaction" to her pregnancy that was unrelated to the procedure, according to the doctor who performed the abortion. The baby also had severe deformities, he said.

The remarks by [LeRoy Carhart](#) were captured by an antiabortion advocacy group during two secret videotapings at Carhart's Nebraska clinic. Carhart was talking to undercover operatives who were pregnant and pretending to seek abortions.

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#### Antiabortion group releases videos of clinic workers discussing live births

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#### Medical examiner finds woman died of natural causes after Md. abortion

They appear to be his first reported comments on the New York woman's death Feb. 7 at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in Rockville after he performed an abortion days earlier at the Germantown clinic.

His brief description of what caused her death dovetails with an [initial finding](#) by the Maryland medical examiner's office, which

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The 29-year-old suffered a rare complication related to childbirth, according to the medical examiner.

## Abortion provider discusses practice's future

□ Lena H. Sun  
LeRoy Carhart, who travels from Nebraska to perform late-pregnancy abortions at a Maryland clinic, has become the focus of protesters.

said the woman died of natural causes and suffered a rare complication that occurs during delivery. Experts said that by describing it as an “allergic reaction,” Carhart was using layman’s terms to describe the medical complications.

Carhart and the family of the New York woman have declined to comment publicly on the case. Abortion opponents have said

she was 33 weeks pregnant at the time, an assertion supported by an online gift registry the woman and her husband appeared to have set up for the baby.

The advocacy group, Live Action, is releasing [edited video and transcripts](#) Wednesday of the operatives’ encounters with Carhart at his Bellevue, Neb., clinic. One took place in December and the second in March. The group is conducting a [national campaign](#) against abortions performed late in pregnancy.

Live Action has released three videos, including one about a D.C. doctor, that raise questions about what might happen to a baby as a result of an unsuccessful abortion. It claims that the videos show that abortion providers are willing to kill babies in violation of the federal Born-Alive Infants Protection Act of 2002, which requires them to try to save a child born during a failed abortion using the same measures used in miscarriages or pre-term births at the same stage of pregnancy.

The group is seeking to show that infanticidal practices alleged at the Philadelphia [murder trial of Kermit Gosnell](#) are more common nationwide than thought.

Live Action’s edited video of Carhart does not show him addressing this issue, according to a transcript the group provided to The Washington Post. In fact, on extended transcripts provided to The Post, Carhart says repeatedly that he would follow the law and do everything to help a baby.

“Well if it comes out alive, I have to send it to the hospital,” he tells the operative, who was 26 weeks pregnant, during the March conversation. “There’s just absolutely no option.”

In the extended transcripts, he also offers the women alternatives, including keeping the baby, adoption and foster care.

He also describes the late-term procedure, which he says is legally permitted after 26 weeks only in Maryland, Colorado and New Mexico. The procedure takes several days. The fetus receives an injection and dies shortly after. Two to three days later, after the woman’s cervix is dilated, she receives medication to induce labor.

On the edited video, the operative asks whether carrying the dead baby for three days will trigger decay. Carhart replies: “No, it’s like putting meat in a Crock-Pot, OK?”

The medical examiner’s office said the New York woman’s complication was an amniotic fluid embolism, which occurs when amniotic fluid is pushed into a woman’s bloodstream. That in turn triggered another listed cause of death, “disseminated intravascular coagulation,” in which the body produces so many thousands of tiny blood clots that they get used up, resulting in the counterintuitive effect of impairing the body’s ability to clot blood.

The medical examiner also listed “fetal abnormalities” as a cause of death.

An amniotic fluid embolism is rare and can happen during abortions, natural deliveries or Caesarean sections. Its cause is uncertain. Many of its characteristics are similar to a severe allergic reaction, experts said — an explanation for why Carhart described it as an allergic reaction in the recording.

Some medical journals even refer to amniotic fluid embolism as an “anaphylactoid syndrome of pregnancy,” said Steven H. Eisinger, an obstetrician and clinical professor at the University of Rochester’s medical school, who has testified in medical malpractice cases.

“The doctor was paraphrasing and converting into lay terms this anaphylactoid syndrome of pregnancy,” he said.

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