

# ABORTION STORIES WOMEN TELL

## Screening Guide

---

### PREMIERES

**April 3rd, 2017 at 8p/7c on HBO**

Also available on **HBO NOW<sup>SM</sup> | HBO GO<sup>®</sup> | HBO ON-DEMAND<sup>®</sup>**

**[www.storieswomentell.com](http://www.storieswomentell.com)**

---

## WHAT'S THE FILM ABOUT?

**Abortion: Stories Women Tell** offers an intimate window into the lives of women living in Missouri under restrictive abortion laws. Some women, on both sides of the issue, find the choice easy to make due to their own circumstances and beliefs, while others simply inform us of the strength and capacity of women to overcome and persevere through complicated and unexpected circumstances. **ABORTION: STORIES WOMEN TELL** presents a candid dialogue about one of the timeliest issues facing America today.

## HOW DO YOU HOST A SCREENING?

**Invite your guests to watch the film together. Here are some tips for hosting a great screening.**

**1. Gather your friends and colleagues.** Use a site like Evite to send out invitations and collect RSVPs. Here's a sample of what your invitation can say.

<HOST NAME> cordially invites you and a guest to a screening and discussion of

### **ABORTION: Stories Women Tell**

**ABORTION: STORIES WOMEN TELL** offers an intimate window into the lives of women living in Missouri under restrictive abortion laws. Some women, on both sides of the issue, find the choice easy to make due to their own circumstances and beliefs, while others simply inform us of the strength and capacity of women to overcome and persevere through complicated and unexpected circumstances. **ABORTION: STORIES WOMEN TELL** presents a candid dialogue about one of the timeliest issues facing America today.

<TIME> WELCOME

<TIME> SCREENING (length 93 minutes)

Please RSVP to <EMAIL address> by <DATE>.

Create a Facebook event as well. Then, promote your screening to potential guests. Tag your tweets with [#AbortionStoriesDoc](#) and [@HBODocs](#) and share both the poster (see the end of the guide) and link to the film's website. Send the link to the trailer as well - [youtu.be/g2ys0pvX1Mg](https://youtu.be/g2ys0pvX1Mg)

**2. Introduce the film.** Ask everyone, "What is the stigma around the topic of abortion? What does it stem from?" Give everyone a chance to write or at least consider his/her responses before the film.

**3. Watch the film.**

**4. Talk about what you saw in the film.** Go over responses, and talk about what surprised people the most. What have they learned? Have their perceptions changed? See below for sample discussion questions.

**5. Consider sharing your story.** Many women choose to seek abortion care. They are grandmothers, mothers, daughters, and sisters. In 2008, one estimate indicated that up to 1 in 3 women would have an abortion in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> If any members of your group would like to share a personal experience with abortion within the privacy of the gathering, give them the opportunity to do so. Viewers can also go to [www.storieswomentell.com](http://www.storieswomentell.com) for more information about how to share stories on the website.

**6. Think about what you or your group can do to get involved.** Invite guests to learn more about abortion laws in your state. Urge people to tell their personal networks about the film and the issues it raises, and share the URL to the website for those who are interested in finding out more – [www.storieswomentell.com](http://www.storieswomentell.com).

**7. Thank your guests.** Send a thank you email the next day, and include follow up comments on the discussion. You can include links to the groups below.

## HOW DO YOU GET THE DISCUSSION GOING?

After the credits roll, turn up the lights and give your group time for silent reflection. Some viewers may want to leave. Some may want to share their story. Some may want to just listen. Once you're ready to begin, encourage everyone to listen respectfully to each other as the conversation gets under way.

Here is some information and discussion prompts to start you off.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jones RK, Finer LB, & Singh S (2010). Characteristics of U.S. Abortion Patients, 2008. New York: Guttmacher Institute.

## Background

In 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade* recognized the right of every woman in the United States to have an abortion. Since 2011, over half the states in the nation have significantly restricted access to abortion. Abortion remains one of the most divisive issues in America today – especially in Missouri, where only one abortion clinic remains open, and both patients and their doctors must navigate a 72-hour waiting period. Each year sees more restrictions.

In June 2016, the Supreme Court ruled in **Whole Women's Health vs. Hellerstedt** that restrictions requiring abortion providers to have hospital or medical center admitting privileges and those that required clinics to meet minimum standards for ambulatory surgical centers were unconstitutional, posing an undue burden on women trying to exercise their right to have an abortion. Although the ruling was an important precedent, it remains unclear how it will impact state laws that impose other types of restrictions on abortion.

## Questions

What are the restrictions on abortion in your state? Does your state have a required waiting period? Are there restrictions related to admitting privileges and ambulatory surgical center requirements? Are there bans on certain types of abortions? What do you think is the purpose of these types of restrictions? What other restrictions in states across the country are you aware of?

For the latest information about the laws in your state, click on [An Overview of Abortion Laws](#) from the Guttmacher Institute. Print out the information about your state and share it with the group.

What are some restrictions on abortion that those who work at the Hope Clinic for Women talk about? How do these restrictions pose a burden on women in poverty?

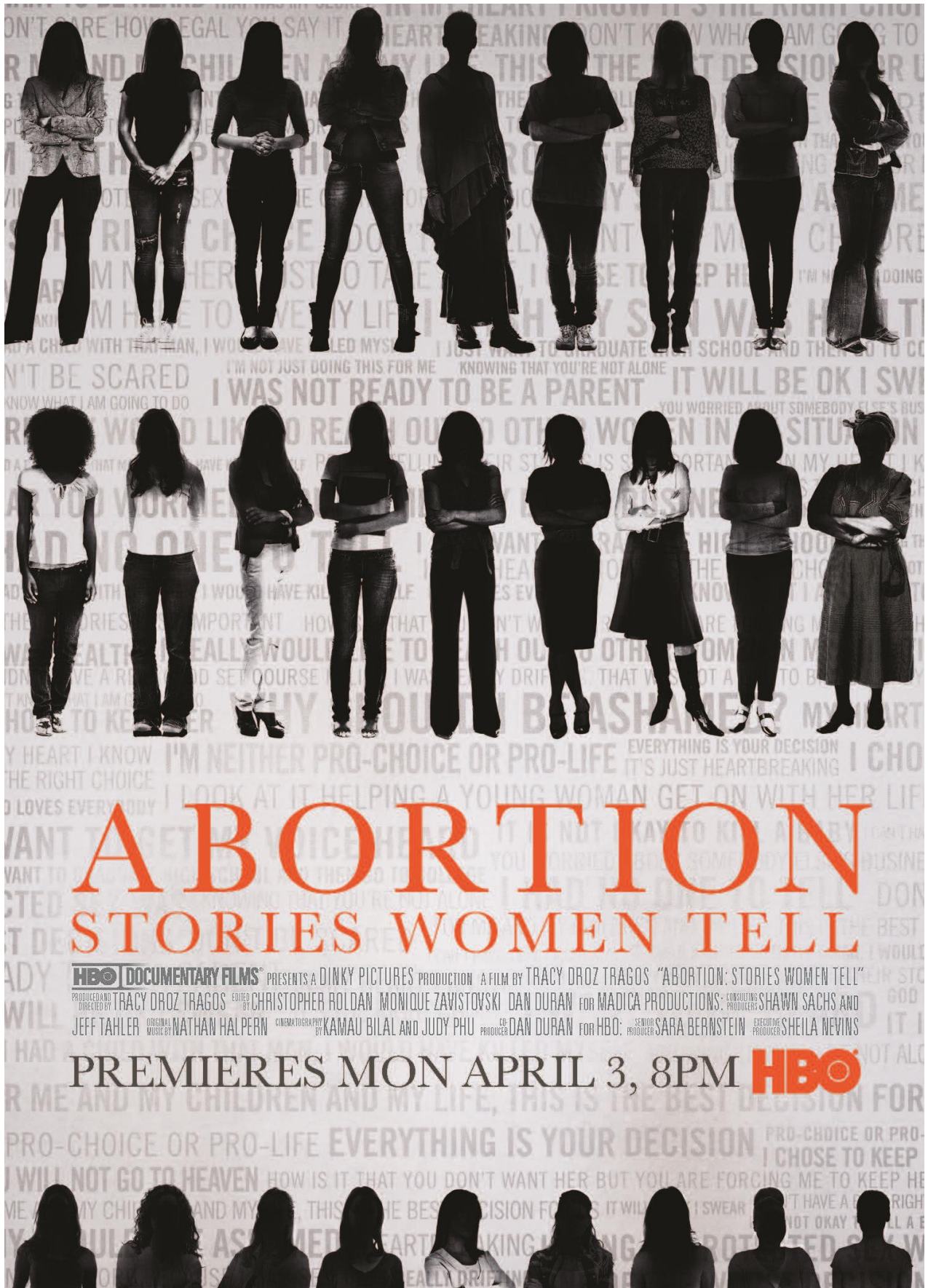
In Missouri, there is currently a 72-hour waiting period after proscribed counselling. What do you think the purpose is of such waiting periods? How does this play out in the film?

The women in the film who had abortions describe their experiences and feelings about their decisions in a range of ways. Which of these experiences or stories did you find moving or informative? Why?

What roles did men play in the film? How do you think men can be further involved with matters relating to sexual health?

Placing a child for adoption is one alternative to abortion discussed in the film - what are the pros and cons? What strategies do those who are against abortion in the film use to stem its use? Do you think these strategies help or hurt their cause? What is the influence of religion?

What did you take away from the film? Would you suggest it to others?



# ABORTION STORIES WOMEN TELL

**HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS** PRESENTS A DINKY PICTURES PRODUCTION A FILM BY TRACY DROZ TRAGOS "ABORTION: STORIES WOMEN TELL"  
PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY TRACY DROZ TRAGOS EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER ROLDAN MONIQUE ZAVISTOVSKI DAN DURAN FOR MADICA PRODUCTIONS: PRODUCERS SHAWN SACHS AND  
JEFF TAHLER ORIGINAL MUSIC BY NATHAN HALPERN CINEMATOGRAPHY BY KAMAU BILAL AND JUDY PHU CO-PRODUCER DAN DURAN FOR HBO: SENIOR PRODUCER SARA BERNSTEIN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SHEILA NEVINS

PREMIERES MON APRIL 3, 8PM **HBO**