

PSEUDO-VIDEO, LIES, AND CARLY FIORINA

By general consensus, the winner of Wednesday’s Republican debate on CNN was Carly Fiorina. She not only got Donald Trump to swallow his sneer at her face, which he now fawningly calls “beautiful.” She also wowed the Republican base with comments like this one on the videos made to prove that Planned Parenthood harvests aborted fetuses for profit:

“I dare Hillary Clinton to watch these tapes. Watch a fully formed fetus on the table, its heart beating, its legs kicking, while someone says we have to keep it alive to harvest its brain.”

If this were a true picture of what was actually done and said within a Planned Parenthood clinic, it would indeed be disturbing. But the word-picture that Carly Fiorina draws is itself based on a pseudo-video—a manipulative mix of image and word.

First of all, neither the videotape nor any other shred of evidence so far produced by David Daleiden and his Center for Medical Progress, which made the video, supports his claim that “Planned Parenthood routinely profits from the sale of baby parts.” In the video, a doctor named Deborah Nucatola, Senior Director of Medical Services at Planned Parenthood, says that when a patient wishes to donate fetal tissue for medical research, its clinics charge from \$30 to \$100 for a specimen. But the heavily edited video excludes a crucial point: during the two-and-a-half lunch at which her comments were secretly recorded, Dr. Nucatola said *ten times* that the charges were made not for profit but for expenses, which is perfectly legal. That fact alone tells you how Daleiden works: again and again and again he tries to get the doctor to say that PP harvests fetal tissue for profit, and even though he failed every time, he keeps making the accusation.

Secondly, while the video includes brief footage of a fetus lying on an examination table and slightly moving its legs, neither the video itself nor the Center for Medical Progress has told us anything about where or how this footage was shot, whether it has anything to do with a Planned Parenthood clinic, or even if the fetus shown was the product of an abortion—as distinct from a premature birth or miscarriage.

Nevertheless, footage of this fetus is made to “illustrate” an interview

with Holly O'Donnell, a former procurement technician for a biomedical company called StemExpress, which previously worked with Planned Parenthood to collect tissue for medical research. During her time at a Planned Parenthood clinic in California, O'Donnell recalls, she was once asked to remove tissue from a fully formed aborted fetus whose heart was still beating, and she was understandably reluctant to do so. But no one on the video ever says of the fetus, "we have to keep it alive to harvest its brain," and the fetus described by O'Donnell has nothing to do with the fetus shown on the video.

For this reason, Politifact rightly calls Fiorina's incendiary comment "mostly false" (<http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/sep/17/carly-fiorina/cnn-debate-carly-fiorina-urges-others-watch-planne/>).

Yet because of this pseudo-video, the Republicans who dominate both Congress and the Senate have vowed to shut down the government unless Planned Parenthood is defunded.

Before making that move, any responsible lawmaker would consider the following FACTS about Planned Parenthood

(http://r.search.yahoo.com/_ylt=A0LEV7p6T_xVmEwAFmAnnIlQ;_ylu=X3oDMTE0bjU4ZmdlBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDRkZYVUk0MV8xBHNiYwNzcg--

/RV=2/RE=1442627578/RO=10/RU=http%3a%2f%2fwww.plannedparenthood.org%2ffiles%2f9313%2f9611%2f7194%2fPlanned_Parenthood_By_The_Numbers.pdf/RK=0/RS=X.bsomdzfUbZhmO0ozEzf9gtf1U-):

Just 3% of its services involve abortion, which is legal (remember?), and by federal law, not one dime of federal aid can fund abortion.

By spending 35% of its resources on family planning and contraception, which three quarters of its clients come for, PP estimates that it prevents over 500,000 unintended pregnancies each year *and thereby averts over 200,000 abortions*.

PP spends 61% of its resources on women's health, such as screening and testing for sexually transmitted diseases, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer.

Each year, PP serves nearly *three million women* in this country, and almost 80% of them are poor.

Is there any other organization in this country that is ready, willing, and able to take over nearly half of PP's services, which is what government funding now supports?

Unless the answer is yes, a vote to defund Planned Parenthood is a vote to gut the health of American women—and *increase* abortion.

Is that what Republicans really want?