

DIRECTED + PRODUCED BY ASHA DAHYA  
CO-PRODUCED BY SARAH MOSHMAN EDITED BY PRAKSHI MALIK  
ANIMATED BY MARCITA POSTER ART + DESIGN BY NAN CAO



## Three Women, Three Decisions, One Hostile Landscape...

A short documentary directed and produced by Asha Dahya

*Three women share their experiences navigating a hostile landscape and the barriers they faced along the way to getting a later abortion.*

*This is a personal storytelling film created as a way to foster empathy & dismantle stigma, in a post-Roe America.*

[Watch The Trailer](#)



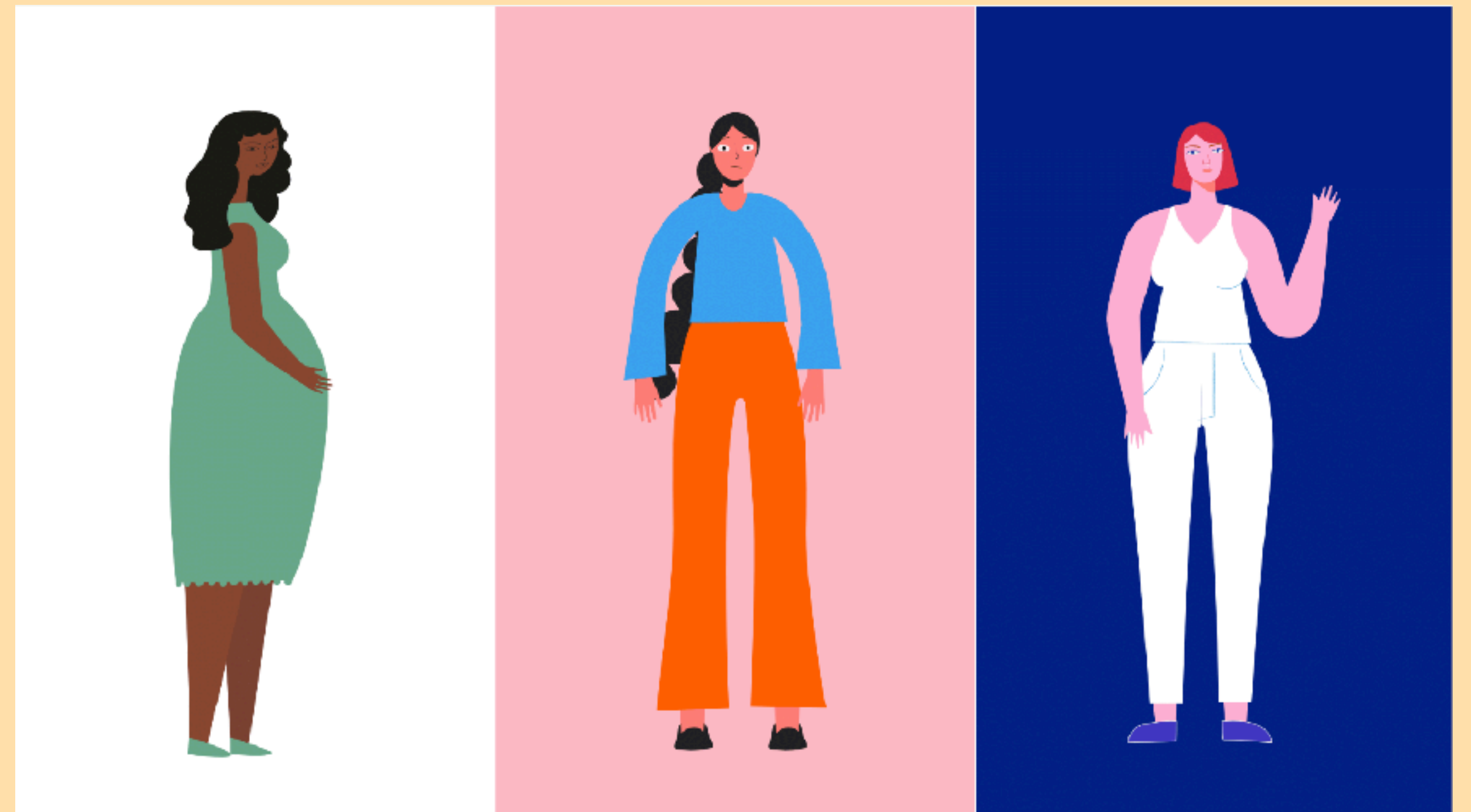
## THE STORY

Today in America, approximately 1 in 4 women will have an abortion before the age of 45. Trans men and nonbinary people have abortions too, though their experiences are rarely reflected in statistics. There are no abortion services in at least 90% of U.S. counties. Only a handful of states offer abortion services after the first trimester, and now with Roe v Wade overturned, the barriers to getting an abortion will only get worse.

Later abortion patients often become the target of political misinformation and attacks and bear the bulk of harassment.

In 'Someone You Know', we meet 3 women - Mindy Swank, Valerie Peterson and Sharon Lagos - who have had abortions later in their pregnancies.

Making the decision to use their real names and faces, each of the women share their complex, heartbreaking and frustrating stories of having to overcome numerous barriers to get the care they needed, at a time in America when reproductive freedom is being rolled back at an alarming pace.



*Someone  
you know*

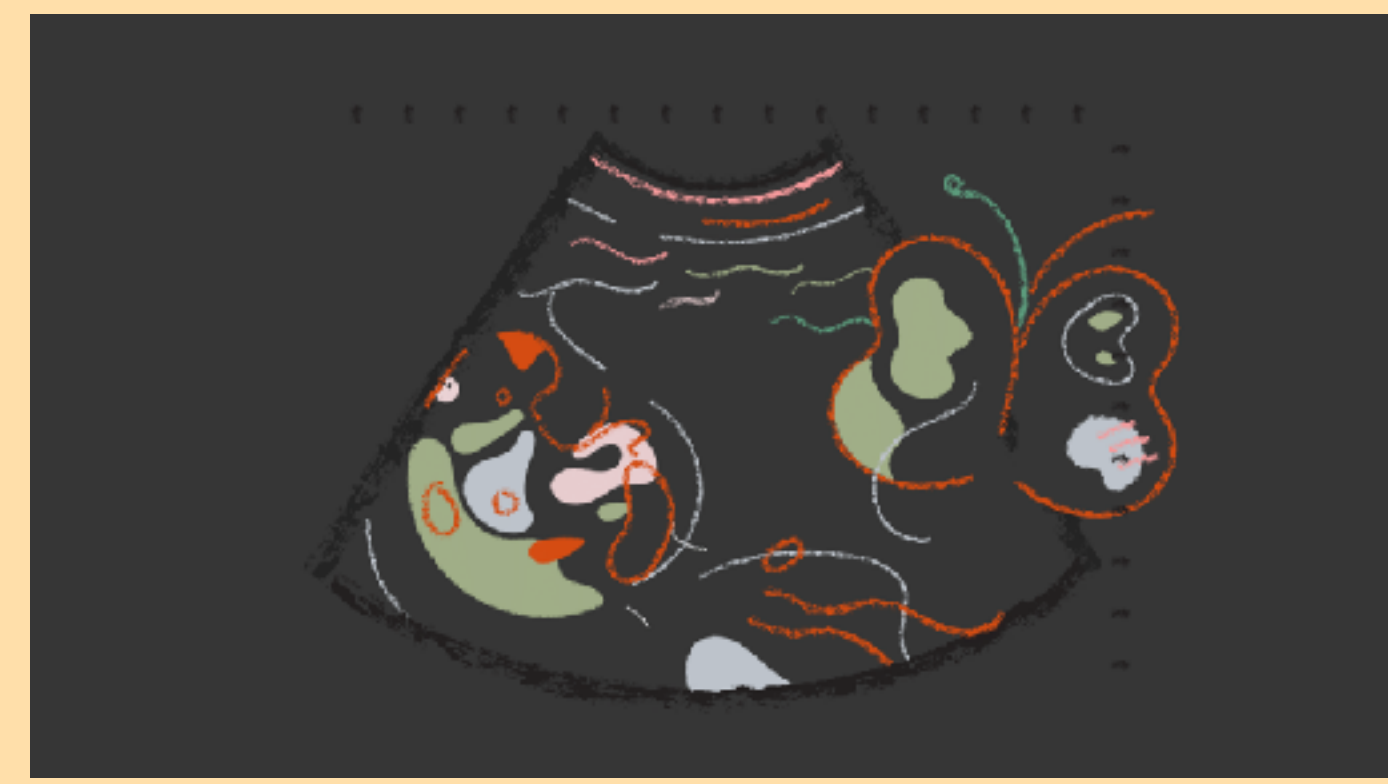
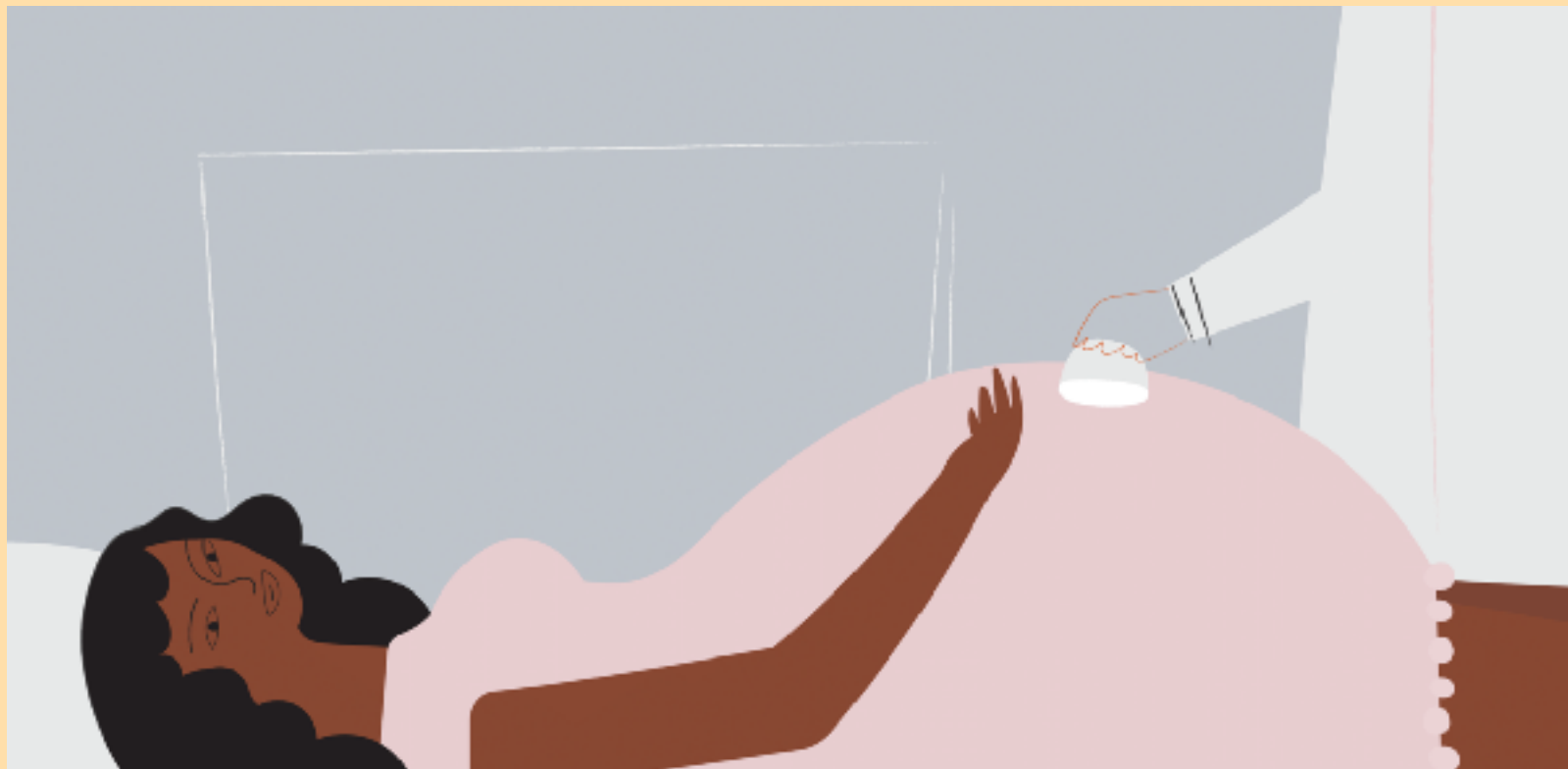
## HOW THE FILM STARTED

This film project originally began with the intent to be a tool for advocacy in the lead-up to the 2020 Presidential election, hoping to sway primarily pro-choice voters by educating them on what later abortion is. All the interviews were shot on an iPhone during the height of COVID, in June 2020. The producers sent each of the participants an iPhone 11 with a small ring light to set up in their home or office, and interviewed them remotely via Zoom. However, due to budget restrictions and other extenuating factors, production was paused indefinitely by September. While it was disappointing for the production team not to be able to finish this in time for the election, the hiatus made for serendipitous timing, given what was happening with abortion rights across the country in the following years.

When Roe v Wade was overturned in June 2022, through the Dobbs v Jackson U.S. Supreme Court decision, all of a sudden this film and its message became more important than ever. The extra time gave the production team a chance to develop the stories thoroughly, and think about creative ways to ensure the film had a maximum impact. In 2021 editor Prakshi Malik and animation director Marcia “Marcita” Leite came on board. The use of animation to retell each of the stories would enable more creative freedom without being exploitative toward each of the storytellers. Animation also allowed for more cohesiveness for the overall film.

With financial support from The Harnisch Foundation’s Awesome Without Borders grant in 2021, Studio IX’s Mother Project grant in 2022, The Creative Power Award in 2022, Dr. Nancy O’Reilly’s Women Connect4Good Foundation in 2023, and a successful Kickstarter campaign in October 2022, ‘Someone You Know’ was able to be completed by the Fall of 2023.

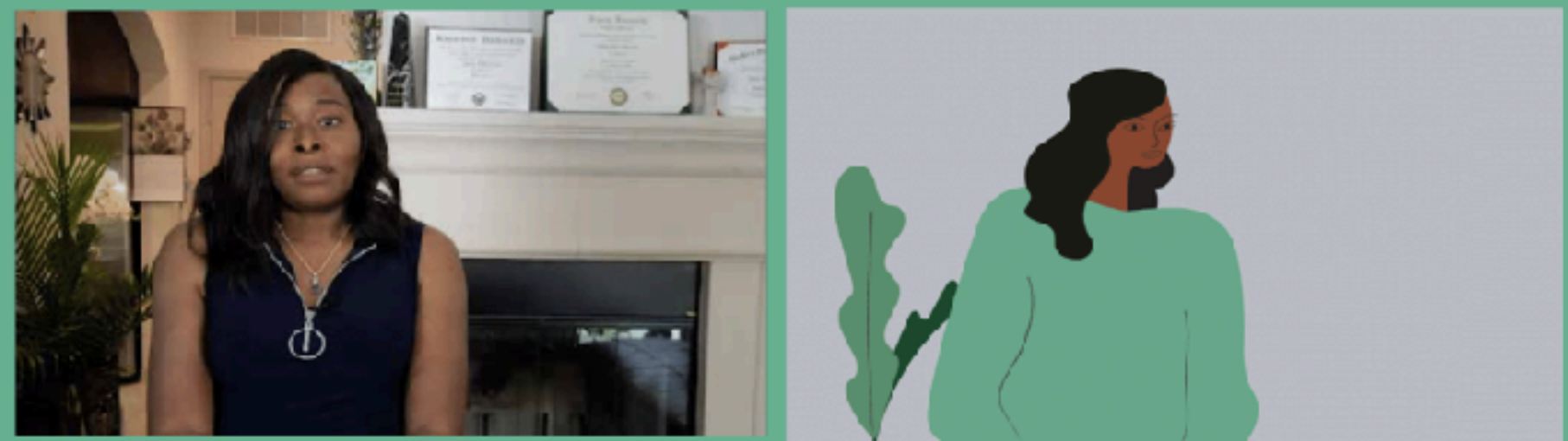
This film was made to help amplify the voices and lived experiences of abortion storytellers, in the hope it will generate empathy and challenge our perspectives. It is not a political film. It is a portrait of what it looks like to be an abortion seeker in America today, having to navigate numerous barriers to get the care they need. The production team hopes this short documentary will remind audiences that everybody loves someone who has had an abortion, and despite what the ugly political and divisive media rhetoric will tell you, the person getting a later abortion is likely someone you know.





## MEET THE CHARACTERS

Valerie Peterson



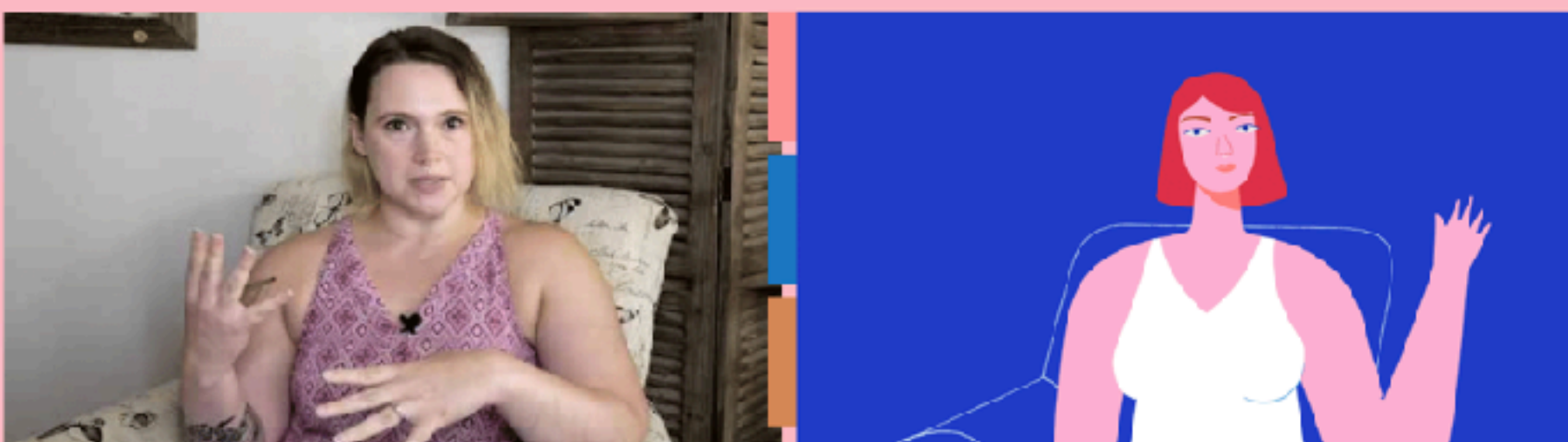
**Valerie Peterson** is an African-American mom of two, a corporate professional living in Texas, born and raised on the Southside of Chicago in a Pentecostal family. Valerie unexpectedly got pregnant for a third time after her two daughters were grown. But at 15 weeks everything started to go wrong. Valerie had to make a hard decision – fast. Living in Texas meant she was up against the clock. By the time she decided to terminate, it was too late and she had to leave the state to get the care she needed in time. Valerie had to take extensive time out of work, which meant telling her boss what was going on. Valerie took all the anger and frustration she felt and has been an outspoken advocate for abortion rights ever since.

Sharon Lagos



**Sharon Lagos** is a Latina woman from Honduras, who came to the U.S. to study. While back in Honduras on a summer break, she became pregnant by her boyfriend at the time. She was not in a position to have a baby and took a Plan B pill. Since abortion is banned in Honduras, Sharon had to get the pill on the black market. But after returning to school in the US, she discovered she was still pregnant and freaked out. She called her boyfriend who told her that she should “deal with it”. Not having a support system around her, Sharon tried to find an abortion clinic. She stumbled upon a crisis pregnancy center, also known commonly as a “fake clinic”. Sharon was forced to watch propaganda videos about abortion and told lies about how far along she was in her pregnancy. Sharon left in tears but eventually she found a real abortion clinic. By this time, she was past the first trimester which meant she had to travel out of state to get the procedure, as well as raise thousands of dollars. Her experience was stressful and lonely. Sharon became an abortion storyteller as a way of regaining her power.

Mindy Swank



**Mindy Swank** is a mother of three from Illinois, who grew up as a conservative Baptist. When she became pregnant for the second time, she was heartbroken to get a diagnosis that meant her pregnancy would not viable. Mindy assumed her hospital would allow her to terminate, considering the fatal diagnosis. Unfortunately, she was in a Catholic hospital system which refused to help her, because they were bound by the laws of the Catholic Church. As the weeks progressed, Mindy began miscarrying, yet the hospital system still refused to offer her an abortion because they detected a heartbeat and she was not bleeding “enough”. At 27 weeks, after a lot of blood loss, she went into labor. It was a traumatic experience that still haunts her to this day. All the laws and religious barriers that stood in her way meant she wasn’t able to make the right decision for her, early in her pregnancy.



## FEATURED EXPERTS



Dr. Meera Shah is a family medicine physician currently serving as the chief medical officer of Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic in New York. Shah is a strong advocate for increasing sexual and reproductive health access in underserved areas and to underserved communities.

A Fellow with the Physicians for Reproductive Health, Shah is dedicated to calling out the injustices that keep people from exercising their autonomy. She is also the author of 'You're The Only One I've Told: The Stories Behind Abortion'.



Renee Bracey Sherman is a reproductive justice activist, abortion storyteller, strategist, and writer. She is the founder and executive director of We Testify, an organization dedicated to the leadership and representation of people who have abortions and share their stories at the intersection of race, class, and gender identity.

She is also an executive producer of Ours to Tell, an award-winning documentary elevating the voices of people who've had abortions.





## MEET THE FILM TEAM



**Director/Producer  
Asha Dahya**

Asha Dahya is a producer/writer, TEDx speaker and founder of GirlTalkHQ.com. Asha was born in the UK, raised in Australia, and now resides in Los Angeles, California. She has spent the last 16 years creating, producing and hosting content for networks such as MTV, MSN.com, Disney, ABC, Nickelodeon, Fox, Nine Network Australia and more.

Through her work, Asha focuses on reproductive rights, gender equality, and the representation of women in media. She is currently in post-production on her first short documentary about later abortion, titled "Someone You Know", and developing an audio documentary series about the Green Wave Movement in Latin America.

Asha is the author of 'Today's Wonder Women: Everyday Superheroes Who Are Changing The World'. She is the producer and host of the ReproFilm.org podcast series, and is the Board Chair of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC.org).

You can see more of her work at [AshaDahya.com](https://AshaDahya.com).



**Co-Producer  
Sarah Moshman**

Sarah Moshman is an Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker and TEDx speaker whose work has been featured on Upworthy, Marie Claire, CNN, and Good Morning America. She is the director of the feature documentaries 'The Empowerment Project: Ordinary Women Doing Extraordinary Things' (2014), 'Losing Sight of Shore' (2017), and 'NEVERTHELESS' (2018). Most recently Sarah brought her talents to the narrative realm and directed an award-winning short fiction film entitled 'UNBOUND' about the first mother to go to space starring Lauren Lapkus, and 'A Mother Is Born', released on Mother's Day 2023.

She also directs branded content for EllenTube, Tastemade, Mattel, AT&T, Samsung, Stayfree, SPANX, and more. Sarah is an inspiring public speaker, author, and an adjunct professor in documentary film, passionate about empowering the next generation of storytellers. Sarah is dedicated to telling stories that uplift, inform and inspire as well as showcase strong female role models on screen.

You can see more of her work at [SarahMoshman.com](https://SarahMoshman.com).



## MEET THE FILM TEAM



**Editor  
Prakshi Malik**

Prakshi Malik is an award-winning filmmaker and dancer working creatively and collaboratively to make films that sway our collective imaginations. She grew up in Delhi, India and is currently based in Minneapolis.

Her work has been supported by Austin Film Society, City of Minneapolis, St Paul Neighborhood Network and a community of friends. Prakshi's films have screened internationally at festivals like New Orleans Film Festival, PBS Short Film Festival, Jaipur International Film Festival, Tasveer South Asian Film Festival among others. She has edited a narrative feature; short documentaries, narratives and experimental dance films; branded content and an educational dance series.

Prakshi is a member of Brown Girls Doc Mafia, Asian American Documentary Network and Alliance of Documentary Editors.

You can see more of her work at [PrakshiMalik.com](http://PrakshiMalik.com).



**Animation Director  
Marcita**

With over a decade of experience under her belt, Marcia Leite, aka Marcita, is a creative director for animation and illustration projects based in São Paulo, Brazil. Her main work themes have centered around human rights, culture, science, the environment, gender equality, and social change.

Marcita has worked for clients such as Google, Facebook, UK Government, Netherlands Government, IPAS.org, WWF and more.

Her animation work has been featured on the New York Times.

You can see more of her work at [marcita.com](http://marcita.com).



## MEET THE FILM TEAM



Garnet Henderson is the Senior Multiplatform Reporter at Rewire News Group. Prior to joining RNG, she spent a decade as a freelancer reporting on the intersections of health and culture with a particular focus on reproductive health and abortion access.

Her work has been published in Cosmopolitan, ELLE, Scientific American, Marie Claire, VICE, Guardian US, WIRED, Glamour, Quartz, The Atlantic, and other publications. Garnet is also the host, creator, and producer of ACCESS: A Podcast About Abortion.

In 2022, she became one of the inaugural grantees of the International Women's Media Foundation's Reproductive Rights Reporting Fund for a project that was co-published in The Nation and on ACCESS. Her guide to abortion care in the U.S. was part of the Tonic "Guide to Healthcare," which won a 2018 Deadline Club Award.

You can see more of her work at [GarnetHenderson.com](https://GarnetHenderson.com).



Nan Cao is a New York City based Illustrator. Her work is inspired by surreal imagery and her daily life in the big city. When she is not drawing, Nan loves to hang out in the park, daydream under the sun or get lost in her book collection.

She has worked with clients such as Abrams, School of Visual Arts, Johns Hopkins Magazine, Anorak Magazine, Link NYC, Bulletin Magazine, Spectrum, Washingtonian Magazine, to name a few.

Nan holds an MFA in Illustration as Visual Essay from the School of Visual Arts. Her work has been recognized by American Illustration, Society of Illustrators, Communication Arts, Association of Illustrators, 3x3 and Creative Quarterly.

You can see more of her work at [NanCaoArt.com](https://NanCaoArt.com).



## MEET THE FILM TEAM

### Sound + Music

#### Primalhouse Sound



Primalhouse is the post-production sound company who are working on all music, sound effects, sound mixing and sound design of 'Someone You Know'. Jane Burke is the music supervisor, and Melanie Mullen is the director of operations for all sound mixing.

You can see more of Primalhouse's work at: [www.primalhousesound.com](http://www.primalhousesound.com) and [www.primalhousemusic.com](http://www.primalhousemusic.com)

### Color + Titles

#### Axiom Post Production



Jamil Jones was the colorist on both the 'Someone You Know' trailer and full documentary.

You can see more of Axiom's work at: [www.axiompostproductions.com](http://www.axiompostproductions.com)



## FEATURED MUSIC FROM INDEPENDENT ARTIST KAYLA THOMPSON

Kayla Thompson is an interdisciplinary artist making waves across the entertainment industry. She was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and later moved to North Carolina where she currently lives with her family. While she only began seriously pursuing music in 2015, being raised in generations of singers, songwriters, and musicians, made music a fundamental building block of her life.

Kayla is known for her ethereal vocals, masterfully crafted pop melodies, and hypnotic guitar playing. She has been featured on multiple Spotify editorial playlists in 2022. The fan favorite, "Younger," gained more streams than any other single in the first week alone, and launched the artist full force into a year filled with more releases, like "The Remains," and set her up for a series of mesmerizing live shows from North Carolina, to Nashville, to LA. Kayla hosts the pop culture podcast 'All The Right Reasons.'

Kayla's track 'Deep Breath' is featured in 'Someone You Know'. [CLICK HERE](#) to hear it on Spotify.





**Killed by abortion laws: five women whose stories we must never forget**

**WHY NOW?**

Two friends were denied care after Florida banned abortion. One almost died.

**'Torture': Texas abortion law means woman has to continue pregnancy despite fatal anomaly**

States with the toughest abortion laws have the weakest maternal supports, data shows

**How abortion bans will likely lead to more deadly infections**

**Texas woman nearly died from infection because doctors could not perform legal abortion**

**States with more abortion restrictions have higher maternal and infant mortality, report**

**A Mother in Jail for Helping Her Daughter Have an Abortion**

Idaho hospital to stop delivering babies as doctors flee over abortion ban

**How total abortion ban puts maternal health at risk**

South Carolina woman arrested for allegedly using pills to end pregnancy

**Austin woman trying for baby says Texas abortion law nearly caused her death**

**Abortion Bans Will Result in More Women Dying**

10-year-old rape victim forced to travel from Ohio to Indiana for abortion

*With Roe Set to End, Many Women Worry About High-Risk Pregnancies*

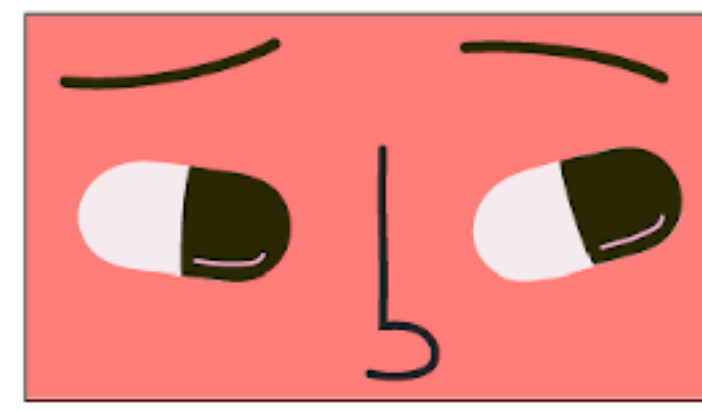
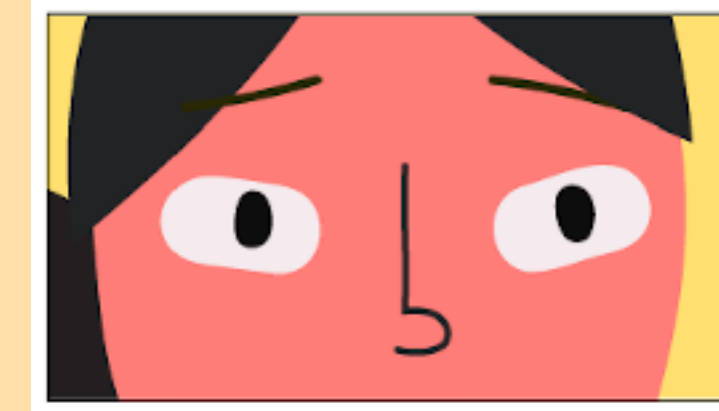


## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*"As a storyteller and filmmaker, my goal is human connection. How can I take deep, complex and even divisive issues, and present them in a way that shifts our thinking? I believe personal storytelling is the magical ingredient to enabling people from all different backgrounds to understand one another and find empathy.*

*As someone who left a conservative Evangelical church and saw the first-hand impact of creating an environment based on fear and misinformation around abortion despite women secretly having abortions, and as a filmmaker who has seen the way industry executives shy away from this topic despite many of them personally going through the experience, I know there is so much more to explore in this topic than what has been presented in news media and politics.*

*My goal is to humanize this issue through the storytelling of the women featured. It is not a political film. It is an invitation to hear a different perspective and challenge pre-conceived notions about later abortion. As Renee Bracey Sherman beautifully states in the film, I hope people who 'Someone You Know' will understand that everyone love someone who has had an abortion, an they should think about the stigma they are taking in, and how it is impacting the people they love." - Asha Dahya*





# CALL-TO-ACTION

As [WeTestify.org](https://www.wetestify.org) founder Renee Bracey Sherman states in the documentary, “abortion storytelling has changed the conversation”.

There is no one who has more expertise about abortion than the person who has an abortion, and this film not only positions abortion storytellers as the experts, it centers their lived experiences and first-person testimonials as the dominant narrative. For too long, pro choice politicians have allowed the anti-choice opposition to take up all the space in the room, spreading misinformation and dominating the narrative.

This film is targeted toward pro choice viewers - the more than 60% of Americans who believe abortion should remain legal. But we are not the loudest voice in the room, and haven't been for decades as evidenced by the onslaught of anti-choice legislation that successfully wound its way through state legislatures, U.S. Congress, and the Supreme Court.

So what has changed since the June 2022 Supreme Court Dobbs decision overturning Roe v Wade? Abortion storytelling. When an individual speaks up about their experience, they are pushing back on the narrative that this is an uncomfortable or unpopular topic. With 1 in 4 Americans needing this procedure, it is likely that the person getting an abortion is either you, or someone you know.

With this in mind, the call-to-action for ‘Someone You Know’ is to support and donate to WeTestify - the largest abortion storytelling and advocacy organization in the United States, helping storytellers share their experiences in media, on Capitol Hill, in court houses across the country, and in documentaries like this.

We want to empower others to share their experience, and be part of a forward-thinking movement that is enabling change on abortion rights state by state, voice by voice, story by story.

# PARTNERS

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Visit the website for more information about the film.

[someoneyouknowdoc.com](http://someoneyouknowdoc.com)