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<https://vtiff.org/events/our-bodies-our-doctors/>

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**A Pioneering Documentary on the World of Abortion Providers
Screens at 2019 Vermont International Film Festival**

Burlington, October 7th, 2019 After sold-out screenings at a number of film festivals on the West Coast, *OUR BODIES OUR DOCTORS* has its New England premiere at the 2019 Vermont International Film Festival. The film screens Friday, October 25th at 7:00 PM at the Main Street Landing Film House in Burlington, followed by a panel discussion with the director Jan Haaken; Dr. Sarah Prager who is featured in the film; Selene Coburn, co-founder of Vermont Access Reproductive Freedom; Melinda Moulton, Board member of Planned Parenthood Northern New England; and Dr. Lauren K. MacAffee, gynecologist and obstetrician at UVM Medical Center. The screening is sponsored by the Caroline Fund for Women in Need, Sue Burton and Jan Schultz.

Winner of the audience award for “Best Documentary Feature” at the 2019 Portland International Film Festival and Best of SIFF at the 2019 Seattle International Film Festival, the documentary has been described as “bold and brave” and “nothing short of revolutionary” in the depth of its portrayals.

This powerful film shines a light on new, unexplored aspects of the timely issue of abortion rights in America. The film introduces the audience to a new generation of female doctors who are putting themselves in danger in order to offer women reproductive choice. In one enthralling scene, the filmmakers follow the doctors to a medical school, where they answer questions from students about the dangers of performing abortions in America. The filmmakers were able to capture the true vulnerability of these young medical students and the fear inherent in their choice of whether or not to perform abortions. The film also brings to light the new reality of non-religious hospitals combining with religious institutions, and the real consequences of those mergers. There have been many recent films about the changing access to abortions in the American South, but this film shows that the threat is real for all of America, no matter what the laws say. – JS, VTIFF Programmers

*"When I took on this documentary project, I was struck by how little people knew—even those that are pro-choice—about what's actually involved in abortion care. What I found in making **OUR BODIES OUR DOCTORS** was a quiet rebellion in the field of medicine led by a new generation of progressive physicians fighting religious control over healthcare. The providers in*

the film take up difficult questions: How do they deal with the emotional and political aspects of abortion? What makes second term abortions medically and emotionally challenging, for the providers themselves and for their women patients? These are areas where pro-choice films have previously not ventured. But the providers featured in this film—and many of their patients--are bold and brave enough to take us there.” - Jan Haaken, Director

Nearly 1 in 4 American women have an abortion during their lifetime, yet the doctors who perform this commonplace procedure are rarely talked about or seen. **OUR BODIES OUR DOCTORS** follows these doctors behind the scenes and into the procedure room, showing their strength and compassion for women. It's a journey into their work and their world, and why they continue to do this work even in the face of stigma within their own profession and intensified political efforts to criminalize abortion.

About the Filmmaker

Jan Haaken is professor emeritus of psychology at Portland State University, a clinical psychologist, and documentary filmmaker. Her films include *Our Bodies Our Doctors* (2019), *Milk Men: The Life and Times of Dairy Farmers* (2016), *Kuwepo* (2016), *Mind Zone: Therapists Behind the Front Lines* (2014), *Guilty Except for Insanity* (2009), *Queens of Heart: Community Therapists in Drag* (2007), and the upcoming film: *Necessity: Oil, Water, and Climate Resistance* (in post-production).

Here is what's being said about the film

"'Our Bodies Our Doctors' is bold and brave, not only for how the featured providers care for women but in the willingness of these professionals and many of their patients to bring the truth of abortion procedures onto the screen. Everyone should see this unique and inspiring film."

-- Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, Washington State 7th District

"This film beautifully conveys the commitment and compassion of abortion providers who find deep meaning in their work, even as they face obstacles no other health professionals would endure."

-- Carole Joffe, Professor, Bixby Center, University of California San Francisco

"This is a film that truly SHOWS truth to power, exposing the daily realities of performing procedures from providers POV and why they fight for reproductive justice."

-- Gloria Steinem, writer and activist

"Our Bodies Our Doctors is the rare film that honestly and accurately portrays the lives of abortion providers in the United States. The film shines a light on the compassion of these health care providers and the important service they provide to their patients every day."

-- Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood, 2006-2018

"This film feels nothing short of revolutionary. The experiences of abortion providers have for too long been left out of the pro-choice vs. pro-life debate, and presenting these doctors with honesty and compassion will have a profound impact on the discourse around abortion in this country."

-- Grayson Dempsey, Executive Director, NARAL ProChoice Oregon.

High resolution stills: <https://vtiff.org/press>

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