



# Special Reports

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## DECEPTION OR TRUTH

### “UNDERCOVER” WORK IN THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT

#### Part I

by Douglas R. Scott, Jr.

A relatively new pro-life group has been making headlines by releasing secretly recorded video and audio of Planned Parenthood employees lying, gleefully accepting donations motivated by racism, ignoring the law, and protecting sexual predators. Not surprisingly, Live Action has faced a barrage of criticism from pro-abortion forces. And most pro-life activists have accepted the work of the group without question. Has Live Action distorted the truth and employed extreme tactics in an ungodly effort to discredit Planned Parenthood? Are pro-abortion critics simply motivated by an incessant dedication to the “right” to kill preborn human beings? Are pro-life allies willing to bend the truth “for the cause of life”? What is the truth?

One good thing about YouTube is that it is now possible for the voice of even the most ignored person in the world to be heard. One bad thing about YouTube is that the voice of even the most foolhardy person in the world can be heard. There are no “YouTube police” to check the accuracy of what is being uploaded. The website is essentially a video “free-for-all.”

#### “Moved And Hurt”



Richards on “The Joy Behar Show”

A case in point. Last year pro-life group Live Action posted a video on YouTube after Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) President Cecile Richards falsely suggested her “clinics” do mammograms. The Live Action video made it clear that PPFA facilities do not offer the service. One person posting a response to the video was 20-year-old Louis M. Contaldi. The transcript of his “Deceit in Live Action: Re: ‘Planned Parenthood cheats taxpayers with imaginary mammograms’” video follows:

My name is Louis Contaldi. I come from Parsippany, New Jersey, currently a sophomore studying at the Loyola University of Maryland, a Jesuit Catholic institution. I am a devout Catholic, I am personally against abortions and am a Political Science/Philosophy double major.

This video is in response to “Planned Parenthood cheats taxpayers with imaginary mammograms.” I have never done one of these reactionary videos before but have been so moved and hurt by the accusations of Live Action in this case that I felt I had no choice but to respond.

I am ashamed of the actions being used by the pro-life group, Live Action, in deceitful practices and the twisting of the truth. These alleged “undercover” operations used by them was [sic] no more than the targeting the [sic] select Planned Parenthoods that do not provide Women’s Health Services or solely provide mammogram referrals. Like most medical facilities or healthcare facilities, um, Planned Parenthood is unable to perform all of its health service procedures in every branch, and therefore offers online information to which centers do and do not provide procedures like mammograms and pap smears. This “undercover” operation was no more than finding these said facilities and claiming, um, and claiming that they do not provide them, so therefore no Planned Parenthood provides them.

I invite anyone watching this [video] to click on the links within the description [of the video on YouTube], which are the web pages of health services available at the Planned Parenthoods targeted within the video. I have researched all of them, however out of convenience, um, to me and to you, I will show you the first four being the Georgetown branch, the Midtown branch, the St. Louis branch, and the Perth Amboy branch in New Jersey. Open them, look at the women’s health services within these facilities, if they have women’s health services. What you will find is that Live Action solely targeted these facilities because they did not offer these compared to the other Planned Parenthood facilities which do.

This is nothing but plain and simple rhetoric and trash talking. I understand plenty of reasons and arguments that Planned Parenthood should be defunded, but this is pure manipulation of the facts, and is ultimately going to hurt the pro-life campaign in the long run.

No person who wants to put up a proper defense against abortion should try to use or take credit in this slander. Attack Planned Parenthood for your right reasons, not the manipulation of facts.

Thank you very much for listening, you may comment as you feel. Once again, I am not defending Planned Parenthood’s uh, abortions; I, on a personal level, feel are immoral. However, I am hurt by the actions taken by Live Action, and am attacking their deceitful practice in this alleged “undercover” video.

While quite tempting, I am fighting the desire to address, in detail, Contaldi's ignorance of the word "rhetoric."

## The Unmistakable Small Of Vermin

Thirty-two years of activism in the Pro-Life Movement has given me a great deal of experience with how pro-abortion people think, act and communicate. One thing kept coming to mind as I watched Contaldi's video—"I smell a rat." This was especially true when he became a wee bit overly dramatic by claiming to be personally "hurt" by Live Action's video.



Contaldi taking on Live Action.

Wanting to see if my hunch was right, I contacted Contaldi via Facebook. I wanted to ask some questions and challenge several statements, but not wanting him to feel threatened or belittled I limited my first contact to a request for information. I asked for the name and location of "just one Planned Parenthood 'clinic' that *does* offer mammograms." Despite the seemingly simple question, Contaldi danced around it:

Most Planned Parenthoods offer referrals to where mammograms can and will be performed, based on the income, age, and diagnosis of the person asking. They give mammograms by allowing people with low-incomes to get free mammograms at the facilities paid for by the federal money going to Health Services. No person is ever turned away, regardless of their ability to pay. Therefore they provide mammograms the same way that state services provide food; they will give you free food in the form of food stamps though they do not actually provide the food.

Contaldi must think people are easily fooled. He initially claimed "most" PPFA "clinics" offer "referrals," but now says, "They give mammograms by allowing people with low-incomes to get free mammograms at the facilities paid for by the federal money going to Health Services." Say what? What kind of gibberish is this?

Contaldi attempted to clarify his illogical statement by saying PPFA sites "provide" mammograms by giving a voucher to customers, which makes it possible for them to go elsewhere for the actual procedure. Oh really? If this were true, it would be accurate to say Planned Parenthood "provides *vouchers* for mammograms," but flatly inaccurate and wholly misleading to say it "*provides* (does, performs, offers, etc.) mammograms."

The young man continued:

I do not support the abortion policy of Planned Parenthood, however I feel that taking aim at an aspect that just distorts and manipulates the truth is deceitful and will overwhelmingly hurt the cause. The stands we should take is [sic] on moral grounds, not the distortion of the

truth...All PP do this [sic], however if you want a specific link[,] ask. It should take some easy googling [sic] though.

Contaldi claimed he does not support PPFA's "abortion policy." (Does he even know the policy? What exactly does he find objectionable?) He then said *all* PPFA sites "do this," (refer for mammograms). Contaldi had previously said "most" of them "provide" mammograms, but now it is "all" do so by voucher and/or referral.

## Staying On Topic

Remember, all I had asked for was the name of just *one* PPFA center that offers mammogram services. Contaldi did not address my request until his last sentence. Yet rather than provide the information, he said that if I want a "specific link" to a facility that does mammograms, all I have to do is ask and he will provide it. Ah, was this not already requested? I responded:

Lou, with all due respect, you are guiltier than you claim Live Action to be. You clearly indicated that at least one Planned Parenthood offers mammogram services. Not referrals. It can offer *referrals* for sex change operations (and about a million other things), but they do not offer *the service*. Come on now, Lou, we both know what you said. Take another look at your video if you must. Your words, while carefully chosen, were not completely ambiguous.

I took another look at your video. You claim to be "moved and hurt" about the "deceit" in Live Action's statements. Yet it seems that everything Live Action claimed is true. *No* Planned Parenthood does mammograms. Not even one. Yet the CEO said they do. Live Action did not "manipulate the truth," but one could argue that you have done so.

I see several people have made the point I am making in the comments section of your video on YouTube. For example, a gentleman by the name of Michael wrote:

This is ludicrous. He goes on and on, and on, and on some more, repeating the claim that Live Action intentionally selected Planned Parenthood clinics that do not offer mammograms while ignoring those that do. We are given links to the web pages of those sites that do *not* offer the service. Doesn't it make sense that this guy would give links to and/or identify the Planned Parenthood clinics that *do* provide it? As they say, "Put up or shut up." Show us the proof that even *one* Planned Parenthood does mammograms. This guy claims some do. So, which Planned Parenthood clinics do mammograms???? [sic] The fact that the answer to this *obvious* question is omitted is rather telling.

As Michael pointed out, in the video, you emphasized—repeatedly—that mammograms are done at some Planned Parenthood sites. You claimed that Live Action intentionally placed phone calls only to those they knew do not offer the procedure. (How do you know? You have made an accusation. Please prove it.)

It seemed important that I provide Contaldi with a face-saving way out, but it was disregarded:

Lou, I trust you have intellectual integrity. If you do, I call on you...to do the right thing. You and Planned Parenthood's CEO were simply mistaken. I don't really blame either of you for the error as you have never worked in a local Planned Parenthood facility. You and the CEO made an assumption, but it turned out to be wrong. (Of course, statements by the CEO that Planned Parenthood does mammograms *after* learning she was in error are flat lies with only one goal—misleading the public.)

By the way, saying you are a “devout Catholic” and “personally against abortion” can be misunderstood. While being a devout Catholic means you cannot be “pro-choice,” claiming to be “personally” opposed to abortion can, but does not necessarily, mean you are “pro-choice.” Your choice of words seems to be intentional because you do not want to tell everyone you actually support legal abortion.

### Never Cry “Uncle”

Contaldi could not see—or bring himself to admit—he was defending the indefensible, so he kept trying:

Please do look verbatim into my message! I never said that any do provide mammogram services within their facilities, just that the the [sic] ones targeted clearly offered nothing but referrals. I offered that Planned Parenthood is unable, because of its sheer [sic] size to hold all of its health programs in every branch, one of these health programs including mammogram x-ray machines that both are expensive and require accreditation, [sic] It is clear that Planned Parenthood is not accredited to have the machines and doctors necessary for mammograms in their facility. However, the [sic] still provide mammograms in the very indirect [sic] sense. They provide federal funding and personal funding to low income houses so that they may receive free mammograms at the place where they have been referred. In this way, they are able to provide mammograms like social services provide food; not directly by giving food and mammograms but subsidizing so people can get it for free.

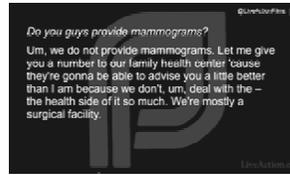


The more he said, the less sense he made.

How can PPFA require that *every* “clinic” do “surgical” abortions, which also necessitate accreditation, qualified personnel and a financial commitment, but not do so for mammograms? PPFA has nearly \$400 million sitting in a savings account. This hefty sum would surely cover it.

Contaldi piled mumbo-jumbo onto his already huge mound of mumbo-jumbo in the hope that it would eventually make some sense—or at least confuse the issue so much that I would stop challenging him. But despite his

best efforts, Contaldi failed—badly. A PPFA unit either does mammograms or it does not.



Live Action's video features phone calls with PPFA “clinics” saying they do *not* do mammograms.

There is no such thing as “providing” a service “indirectly.” Using such logic, a pharmacy that refuses to stock and sell the “morning after pill” *does* stock and sell the “morning after pill” if said pharmacy refers customers to vendors that actually stock and sell the “morning after pill.” It is that simple. This rhetoric is a stretch to say the least. (In his video message, Contaldi had referred to some PPFA sites that “solely” provide mammogram “referrals.”)

Contaldi had more to say:

What we have as a difference between your and my ideas is our definition of “provide”. You believe that since they can not [sic] provide services within their facility, they either must not be doing it or are lying to the American people. I believe that they have never been lying as they have always been willing to provide funding and money that enables people of low income households to get mammograms.

In doing this Live Action has offered a true statement, that no Planned Parenthoods facilitate mammograms. However, the way they created the video and spun the story is that Planned Parenthood does not provide mammograms in any fashion, including subsidy. In this respect Live Action is being irresponsible with its journalism in making overbroad politically charged statements which have tenuous ties to their issue at best. It is fine to make the claim that no Planned Parenthood facilitates mammograms but not that no Planned Parenthood provides them. Do you understand my point?

So it all depends on how the word “provide” is defined. And Contaldi essentially created a brand new definition. However, there is but one true definition and I was relying on its common usage and understanding. If Contaldi was doing otherwise, he was engaging in deceitful verbal engineering. PPFA “clinics” do not do mammograms. They may refer for mammograms but do not provide the service onsite. If a receptionist at a PPFA-affiliated center were to refer a customer to an automobile repair shop that makes donations to the “clinic,” would Contaldi claim Planned Parenthood “fixes cars?”

Contaldi responded to my remarks about “devout” Catholicism:

Onto your other points, I am a devout Catholic and Pro-Life. I believe that life begins at conception and that abortion is murder. However, I also will not condemn the sinner but the sin. I will not support the enabling of the sins

by Planned Parenthood, but will not attack them as long as it is a legal service within the United States...The proper action that should be taken in my opinion is to pass a constitutional amendment making it illegal.

Contaldi will not criticize PPFA for committing what he labels “murder” as long as that killing is a “legal service.” (“Murder” is a “service”?) Carrying this logic forward, he would not have condemned slavery. He would not have condemned the extermination of Jews. There are many other examples in which Contaldi would not condemn those who have done things that were legal, but plainly evil. (Some German civilians used the “but it was legal” excuse for not trying to stop the Holocaust?)

Contaldi is unwilling to chastise PPFA for committing “murder,” but he believes there is something that should be “attacked”—federal funding. “I think government funding should not be given to Planned Parenthood,” he wrote, “unless it is proven that the money is going solely to the various health services.” (All funds from the federal government supposedly go “solely” toward specific “health services.” Contaldi is either grossly ignorant on the subject or he is intentionally trying to mislead.)



Contaldi said that when “working to federally defund Planned Parenthood, it should be done through the morality of the abortion, not by an attack on its legitimate health services.” I offered my thoughts:

Calling anything Planned Parenthood does a “legitimate health service” is a stretch to say the least. Research the reasons why Planned Parenthood was founded. It had nothing whatsoever to do with “health service.” But Planned Parenthood added other programs (including helping kids with homework, etc.) to do two things: 1) facilitate its true business, which is birth control, including abortion; and 2) deflect public criticism from its controversial programs. (“Abortion is only *one* of our services.”) Every program operated by Planned Parenthood that does not directly relate to its founding mission fits into one or both of these categories.

Planned Parenthood is not the only game in town. The good programs will continue to receive government funding. It’s just that Planned Parenthood will not be “providing” them. (Of course, according to your definition, even if Planned Parenthood does not actually perform those services, it could still be “providing” them by making referrals.)

If Planned Parenthood cares about true health care for the poor it will abandon its abortion business and continue to be eligible for federal funding. But we both know that Planned Parenthood is more dedicated to its abortion business (generating some \$135 million per year) than it is to Title X (around \$53 million per year).

“I hope that this has cleared up my opinion to [sic] you and where I am coming from in the video...,” Contaldi wrote as he brought his response to an end.

In an effort to determine how others interpret Contaldi’s message, LDI asked five people—two married couples and one teenage girl—who have nothing whatsoever to do with these issues, to watch the video and tell us what message was being conveyed. Responses follow:

- “He’s protecting Planned Parenthood.”
- “He’s acting like he’s against abortion but he doesn’t really believe in it.”
- “He’s saying that some Planned Parenthood’s do mammograms but the group [Live Action] picked some that don’t on purpose to make them [PPFA] look bad.”
- “He doesn’t know what he’s saying; he’s confusing.”
- “The guy has an axe to grind and he’s not being very honest by acting all unbiased and I wouldn’t be surprised if he works at Planned Parenthood...I wouldn’t buy a car from him.”

Contaldi expressed his appreciation for way in which I had communicated with him. “Thank you for your kind and non-inflammatory approach..., seeing how I have been receiving death threats from Pro-Life fundamentalists (ironic, right? haha).”

Doubting any “threats” had been made, I asked Contaldi to forward them to me. He agreed to do so, but then said he had been threatened by just one person who had sent it several times. (Contaldi previously said he had received threats [plural] by pro-life “fundamentalists” [plural].)

Contaldi was asked if he supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would ban abortion, but he did not respond. In fact, Contaldi did not respond to any subsequent messages. And, needless-to-say, he never forwarded the “threats” he claimed to have received. It was clearly an attempt to make pro-life activists look violent.

There is a moral to this story. People who try to make others believe they are pro-life to give them credibility with pro-life activists while secretly working to bolster the pro-abortion position had better hope no one is there to call them out.

– Douglas R. Scott, Jr. is president of Life Decisions International

**Coming In Part II:** Contaldi is obviously just one of many spreading falsehoods about the work of Live Action. In Part II we look at the role played by pro-abortion “big shots” who have intentionally created an atmosphere that encourages people to lie and mislead when defending the abortion empire.

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