

Where Does Donald Trump Really Stand on Abortion?

Since 2011, Donald Trump has identified himself as pro-life. But in 1999, when he ran for president, he was an abortion-rights advocate, and even defended partial-birth abortion. So what changed him?

On Oct. 24, 1999, Trump told *Meet the Press* host Tim Russert, "I'm very pro-choice." When pressed whether he would oppose a ban on partial-birth abortion, he said, "I would—I am pro-choice in every respect, as far as it goes." Yet less than three months later, Trump was on record saying he would support a ban on partial-birth abortion. He actually made the switch immediately following the show.

On Jan. 16, 2000, Trump's new book was published, *The America We Deserve*. He discussed why he flipped on partial-birth abortion. Here is what he said: "When Tim Russert asked me on *Meet the Press* if I would ban partial-birth abortion if I were president, my pro-choice instincts led me to say no. After the show, I consulted with two doctors I respect and, upon learning more about this procedure, I have concluded that I would indeed support a ban."

Someone in Trump's campaign obviously pushed the alarm button after watching the interview, and then got to his publisher in time to reflect his new position. Until he was educated by two doctors—right after he walked off the set—he was apparently clueless about this "procedure." He did not know, he says, that partial-birth abortion entails crushing the skull of a baby who is 80 percent born. What did he think it meant?

I'm not buying it. Even if I did, what does that make Trump? New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and New York City Mayor Ed Koch supported abortion rights, but they drew the

line at partial-birth: they properly called it "infanticide." They didn't need doctors to tell them that this was a monstrous act.

Trump needs to explain his lightning fast flip flop, and why we should believe him now.