

Gosnell Abortion Trial: Doctor Cuts Necks of Babies Born Breathing

A clinic worker testified on Thursday a Philadelphia abortion doctor cut the necks of babies born breathing, including one the physician described as “big enough to walk me to the bus stop.”

The prosecution rested its murder case against Dr. Kermit Gosnell, 72, after calling its final witness, Kareema Cross, who worked at his Women’s Medical Society clinic in urban West Philadelphia.

Gosnell is charged with eight counts of murder in the deaths of a female patient and seven infants who prosecutors say lived through abortion procedures but had their spinal cords severed by Gosnell. He faces the death penalty if convicted.

Cross told the jury at Common Pleas Court in Philadelphia that she saw babies born breathing, moving and making sounds at the clinic.

One woman delivered the biggest infant Cross had ever seen at the clinic, and Gosnell followed his standard practice of snipping the spinal cord, she testified.

“The baby was big,” Cross, a \$10-per-hour medical assistant, said of the July 2008 incident. She quoted Gosnell as saying, “The baby was big enough to walk me to the bus stop.”

Gosnell has been in jail since he was charged in January 2011 after a grand jury probe. He is on trial on 26 charges, including the eight counts of murder.

The case has rekindled the debate in the United States about late-term abortions. Under Pennsylvania law, abortions can be

performed up to 24 weeks.

Cross said she took photos of the baby after the abortion, which were displayed in the courtroom on a large screen. The infant moved its arms after being placed by Gosnell in what she called a shoe-box size plastic container.

She testified that Gosnell would tell his staff that the bodies were not live and moving, but showing reflex responses.

"The baby moved, he cut the neck, and the baby kept moving," she told the jury.

Cross also testified about another infant, born in a toilet bowl at the West Philadelphia clinic.

"The mother was sitting on the toilet and the baby came out," she said. "The baby was moving, trying to get out of the water."

She said she could not see if that infant was breathing.

Cross told the jury that she had seen about 10 other aborted babies breathing when they were delivered at the clinic.

On another occasion, she said, she heard a newborn make a sound.

"It was not a real cry, it was like a whine," she said.

The defense was expected to open its case when the trial resumes on Monday. Defense attorney Jack McMahon declined to say whether Gosnell will testify.

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