

THE DETRACTORS

HOW THREE TEXAS STUDENTS CHANGED
THE WORLD FOR WOMEN





LOGLINE:

Austin, Texas 1966. Three young women fought the FBI, the University of Texas, and the laws of the land to pave the way for Roe v Wade.

How did a twenty-six year old new lawyer get to argue Roe v Wade with the Supreme Court?

Her three radical college friends in Austin, Texas plotted a revolution for Women's Rights under FBI surveillance and threat of felony charges that paved the way to the Supreme Court.

Based on the true historical figures Barbara Hines, Victoria Foe and Judy Smith.

THEY WERE 23 YEARS OLD. THEY COULDN'T SAVE WOMEN ONE AT A TIME ANYMORE. SO THEY CHANGED HISTORY.



In 1968 the women's liberation movement was everywhere—and nowhere. It had no offices, no mailing address. What it did have was attitude.

While many political leaders were looking for reform, Judy, Victoria and Barbara were plotting a revolution.

College student Judy Smith started a consciousness-raising group to unravel how sexism affected their lives. The biggest issue, that unmarried women couldn't get birth control and abortions were illegal, rose to the forefront. Judy, Barbara and Victoria opened a Birth Control Information Center at the college YMCA and borrowed the payphone. Soon it was ringing off the hook and women were begging for information on abortion. With a team of volunteers the Detractors gave safety information and scouted safe doctors to send the women to. Soon they heard the clicking of a tapped phone, personal mail arriving and they were under FBI surveillance.

Undeterred and undaunted, they bravely continued their work to save women.



Can you imagine your job depending on your weight or the softness of your hands?

What if you couldn't open a bank account or get a credit card unless you had a husband to cosign for you?

How about pregnancy being a fireable offense

What if you had the grades to attend an Ivy League like Harvard, but your gender kept you out?

Welcome to 1968



GENRE:

True story, women focused drama

TODAY NEWS



PROJECT OVERVIEW

-six part single season streaming drama

-set in Austin, Texas in 1966

--true, untold history of three daring women and how they paved the way for their friend to take on Roe v Wade

-communicates the power of grassroots activism and can inspire today's generation of ambitious activists.







Soairse Ronan
as Judy Smith

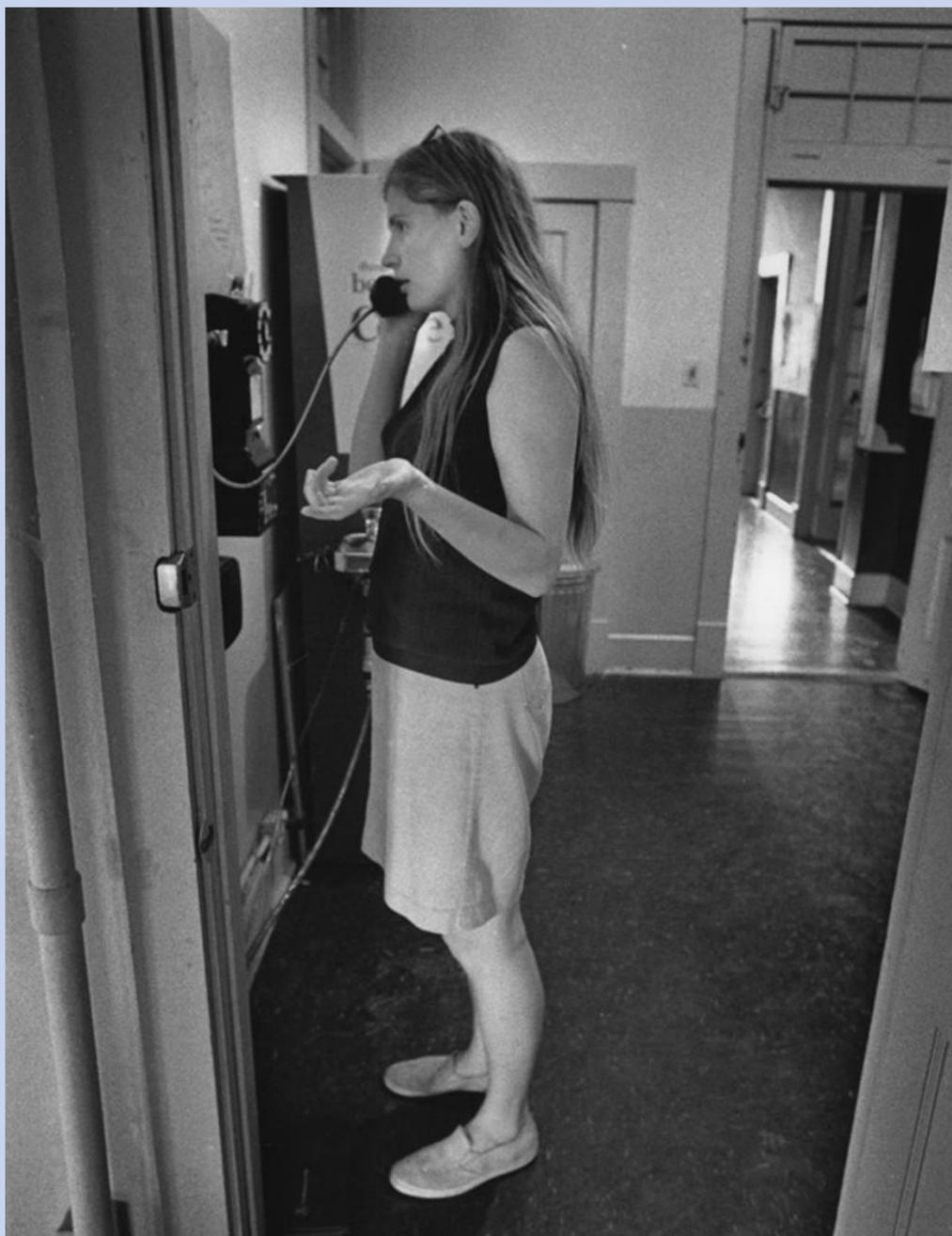


Florence Pugh
as Victoria Foe



Olivia Cooke
as Barbara Hines





Judy Smith answers the women's reproductive rights hotline at the University YMCA, next door to the Rag office, in Austin, Texas, 1970.

Photo by Alan Pogue /The Rag.

Judy Smith

She graduated from Brandeis and served in the Peace Corps in Nigeria before coming to Austin to pursue a doctoral degree in molecular biology at the University of Texas.

“Everyone who was working on The Rag during the emerging feminist period in the late sixties and seventies in Austin describes Judy Smith as the undisputed “moving force” of not just feminist issues, but every other political issue that mattered in The Rag at that time. She was confident and sociable, strong-willed, and smart (Ph.D. student in Chemistry). Judy was also 5’10,” beautiful, blonde, and had been, according to Phil Prim, “captain of the women’s basketball team at Brandeis University where she had a full scholarship and they had an undefeated season,” so she possessed a commanding physical presence as well. Bill Meacham calls her the “Valkyrie Mother.” She preferred to draw the connections between issues rather than separate them, and was politically more interested in doing than in talking.

BARBARA HINES ON JUDY SMITH

I wouldn’t be where I am today— teaching at a major law school— if I hadn’t met her in a philosophy class at UT in 1969. She invited me to the Rag and to a women’s liberation consciousness raising group; my life changed forever. We began the Women’s Birth Control Counselling Center at the University Y, which later connected us with Sarah Weddington, and the ensuing Roe v Wade decision. Judy’s charismatic sense of self and her clear political vision were legendary.

audience engagement and social impact

Conviction that grassroots activism is the key to social change

Judy Smith taught that “any action that you take . . . can build into something.”

Convinced that only collective action could create meaningful change, Judy Smith encouraged young women to get involved. Only if successive generations of women engaged in political activism could feminism be what Smith called “a living tradition.”

The power of grassroots activism and can inspire today's generation of ambitious activists.

producer statements:

We all know the story of Roe v Wade. But when we read that a 26 year old lawyer argued the Roe v Wade case we were shocked. How did it happen? 26 years old? When we investigated further we learned the untold history of three young women that paved the way for Roe v. Wade.

Three radical activists that were only 23 years old. They knew they could be jailed as felons for driving women to Mexico for abortions and they did it anyway. They wrote about birth control in the underground paper and were stopped from selling the paper on the UT Campus. Ann Richards' husband represented them in court and they won on Free Speech.

producer statements:

Judy, Barbara and Victoria.

Their goal was to educate fellow students on birth control
and ended up under
surveillance from the FBI,
with tapped phones
and an informant in their midst.

producer statements:

Based on their legal win for Freedom of Speech and distribution of The Rag newspaper, they approached Sarah Weddington at a garage sale and proposed a lawsuit that became Roe v Wade.

"We can't save women one at a time anymore, " they told Sarah. "What would you charge us to do this lawsuit?"

And Sarah said, 'Oh I'll do it for free.'

'You are our lawyer.'

And that's how Roe v Wade began.

Why we need to tell this story

Women's history often goes untold

Without them, Roe v Wade would not have been argued and won in 1972.

These heroes can inspire a new generation of young women to fight for women's rights.

In 1973, in its controversial ruling on Roe v. Wade, the United States Supreme Court legalized abortion.

In 2021, we are in the same place as Judy, Victoria and Barbara.

We need to rise up and start another revolution.