

Your help is needed to support a documentary in development...

TITLE: THE POLITICS OF BIRTH (working title)

GENRE: DOCUMENTARY

DURATION: 1x 52 mins (or 3 x 30min series)

FORMAT: XD CAM

LOG: Homebirth: where the personal gets very political.

## SYNOPSIS

In the Netherlands, one woman in three chooses to birth at home. In Australia this option is about to become unlawful...

Why? Is the choice to birth at home irresponsible and unsafe? Or does it represent a basic human right – the right of a woman to choose where and with whom she conducts one of the most profound and intimate experiences of her life?

The Politics of Birth is a one-hour documentary intended for the mainstream Australian free-to-air, TV audience. Against the backdrop of the impending regulation of childbirth in Australia, we seek to examine the political, the professional and the personal stories behind what is at stake for women and their babies, and whether or not we all should care.

The film will record and chart the current fight to save homebirth, following Justine Caines as she battles against the July 2010 deadline. It will background and interview maternity professionals as they give insights into whether institutional birthing creates choices for mothers or efficiencies for hospitals. It will present the data and both sides of the arguments surrounding homebirth. And finally it will tell the journeys of five contemporary women who choose to birth at home – asking the question: if birth at home is a viable and defensible option for women, why do so few choose it?

We live in an age where views on childbirth are polarized. Fear of childbirth has sent Caesarean rates skyrocketing. Increasing numbers of women are emerging from birth with mental illnesses such as post-natal depression and posttraumatic stress disorder. By contrast, women who choose to birth at home, with one-to-one, midwifery-lead care, represent a joyous sorority who speak glowingly about birth. Are they a bunch of irrelevant hippies, unconcerned about the safety of their babies, or a growing minority of informed women who understand, and can remind us all, how empowering birth can really be? The Politics of Birth seeks to find the answer.