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CAPTIVATING DOCUMENTARY EXPLORING ASSISTED DYING, “LIFE AFTER,” PREMIERES ON INDEPENDENT LENS ON NOVEMBER 3

*Sundance Special Jury Prize-Winning Investigative Documentary
Explores the Complexities of the Quality of Life for People
with Disabilities and the “Right to Die”*

(San Francisco, CA) September 15, 2025—A gripping investigative documentary, “Life After,” coalesces the missing voices of the disabled community in the contemporary debate around assisted dying. Premiering on November 3, 2025, on INDEPENDENT LENS, the feature documentary is an essential and thought-provoking film that uncovers abuses of power while amplifying the voices of the disability community fighting for justice and dignity in an unfolding matter of life and death.

Award-winning disabled filmmaker Reid Davenport (“I Didn’t See You There”) trenchantly probes the legacy of Elizabeth Bouvia—a disabled California woman who, at the age of 26, sought “the right to die.” Her 1983 case provoked a national debate about the value of disabled lives, and Davenport sees echoes in chilling contemporary cases of disabled people dying prematurely—at their own hands and from a broken health care system. Through moving and modern interviews and rich archival material, “Life After” looks critically at where progressive values of bodily autonomy collide with the devaluing and fear of disabled lives.

“Reid challenges our assumptions about disability and autonomy. He shares what it means to be truly heard, and to have your life seen as worth living and valued by society,” said Lois Vossen, INDEPENDENT LENS executive producer. “‘Life After’ confronts one of the most urgent ethical questions of our time—not with answers, but with empathy, investigation, and lived experience.”

Disabled people continue to face premature death—whether through the case of Michael Hickson, who was left to die by a Texas hospital, or the choice of Jerika Bolen, a Wisconsin teen who received support from her community to end her life. Davenport’s exploration takes him to Canada, where regulations surrounding medical aid in dying (MAID) have been

expanded to allow disabled individuals unprecedented access—even when their deaths are not reasonably foreseeable. In Ontario, Canada, Davenport meets Michal Kaliszan, a disabled computer programmer who once considered MAID as his only option to avoid entering an institution.

In a society where ableism and inadequate healthcare often limit true choices, “Life After” exposes the tangled web of moral dilemmas and profit motives surrounding assisted dying. The film challenges the notion that assisted dying always represents a free choice, revealing how it can sometimes be perceived as the only option.

This documentary was made possible, in part, through funding received via ITVS’s Open Call initiative. “Life After” premieres on PBS’s INDEPENDENT LENS on November 3, 2025, at 7 p.m. ([check local listings](#)). The film will also be available to stream on the [PBS app](#) and [PBS YouTube](#).

Visit the “[Life After](#)” page on INDEPENDENT LENS to learn more about the film.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Reid Davenport, Director

Reid Davenport makes documentary films from a disability rights perspective. Davenport’s film, “I Didn’t See You There,” won the Directing Award for U.S. Documentary at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival and the Truer Than Fiction Award at the 2023 Independent Spirit Awards.

Colleen Cassingham, Producer

Colleen Cassingham is a producer at Multitude Films, focused on politically committed, artful nonfiction. She produced the IDA Awards-nominated shorts collection “Queer Futures” (CPH:DOX 2023) which launched on Criterion Channel. She is a 2023-2024 Sundance Institute Producers Lab Fellow and Impact Partners Documentary Producers Fellow.

Jessica Devaney, Executive Producer

Jess Devaney is a producer and the founder and president of Multitude Films. Their latest films include the Netflix Original “Power,” Oscar-shortlisted “How We Get Free,” the Indigo Girls film “It’s Only Life After All,” Emmy® Award-winning “Lowndes County and the Road to Black Power,” “Pray Away,” “Always in Season,” and “The Feeling of Being Watched,” among others.

Director	Reid Davenport
Producer	Colleen Cassingham
Executive Producers	Carrie Lozano Lois Vossen Jess Devaney Anya Rous Ruth Ann Harnisch Dawn Bonder Daniel J. Chalfen Marci Wiseman James Costa Meryl Metni Sheri Sobrato

ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS

Independent Lens is an award-winning documentary series that fosters understanding, seeks to build empathy, and encourages a more united society. Produced by ITVS, *Independent Lens* documentaries have premiered on PBS for 25 years and streamed on YouTube, helping Americans foster deeper connections between communities and themselves. From the Oscar-nominated *I Am Not Your Negro* to the Peabody-acclaimed docuseries *Philly D.A.* and the Emmy® award-winning *The Invisible War*, *Independent Lens* provides viewers with in-depth, nuanced storytelling reflecting the experiences of people from a variety of voices and communities.

Independent Lens is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting: a private corporation funded by the American People, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Acton Family Giving, Park Foundation, and Wyncote Foundation. Stream anytime on the PBS app or YouTube. Learn more at pbs.org/independentlens

ABOUT ITVS

Independent Television Service (ITVS) is the largest co-producer of independent documentaries in the United States. For more than 30 years the San Francisco nonprofit has funded and partnered with documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning titles and premieres them on our Emmy



Award-winning PBS series, INDEPENDENT LENS. ITVS titles appear on PBS, WORLD, NETA, and can be streamed on various digital platforms including the PBS app. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Park Foundation, and Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit itvs.org

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