

ONE GOOD REASON



Roey Thorpe (left) in 1986 at a vigil outside the Center for Choice in Toledo, Ohio, which was bombed by anti-abortion terrorists

WHY DYKES SHOULD FIGHT FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

by Meg Daly

"Have a blast!" read the buttons on protesters' lapels, each with a picture of a bomb.

It was May 1986 in Toledo, Ohio, and Roey Thorpe was just out of college, working at the Center for Choice. It was, like many abortion clinics across the nation, the target of increased protesting by abortion opponents.

On the evening of May 20, the center was bombed. No one was hurt physically, but the bomber left a lasting impression.

"The next morning, going into the clinic was devastating," says Thorpe. "Everything was black and melted, and huge pieces of equipment and furniture were just blown into millions of tiny shards. The force of it was so scary. It made me realize that they would stop at nothing, even violence. Up until that point I didn't really understand how far they'd go."

Readers know 41-year-old Thorpe as the director of Basic Rights Oregon, but the powerhouse activist got her start fighting for women's reproductive rights. Why would a lesbian, who is presumably at low risk for unplanned pregnancy, put her own well-being on the line to keep abortion safe and legal for other women?

The answer lies in the battle being waged over who will control the wombs and bedrooms of U.S. citizens. A common enemy has waged war upon the basic physical privacy of individuals. And each time women and queers push forward, a backlash ensues.

As feminists around the country gear up for the national March for Women's Lives on April 25 in Washington, D.C., *Just Out* checked in with several Portland women who work in both queer and pro-choice arenas and asked why lesbians and bi women have a vital stake in fighting for reproductive rights.