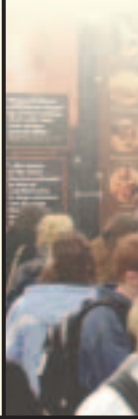


Invading the Camp

by Tom Hess



How do you get ‘pro-choice’ students on public university campuses to talk and think in new ways about abortion? Try shock and awe.

By including the following article, we at Focus on the Family do not imply any position on the usage of graphic photographs in the PRC counseling room. We know there is a divergence of opinion on this topic. Please understand that Justice For All uses graphic photographs in an educational setting and provides ample warnings before viewers come in contact with their display. We do feel that you need to be informed about and prepared for clients that may come through your center due to a JFA event.

You can see it from a quarter-mile away—the bloody remains of an aborted baby. It’s a 20-foot high photograph, nauseating in its detail of torn limbs. And that’s the point, of course, or at least one of the points. The other point is the word printed on the picture—Why?

Many of the students walking toward Bruin Plaza, at the crossroads of the University of

California-Los Angeles (UCLA), are asking “Why?” too, but for different reasons. One is talking into his cell phone, muttering expletives and asking: Why do I have to look at this obscene display? Who let these people on campus?

Over the next six hours, many other students, cell phones in hand, alert their unseen friends to the “sick,” “offensive,” “insensitive” exhibit.

A few bold or angry observers approach the interlocking barricades that form a perimeter around the three-sided display. They’re prepared to argue with the people who’ve spoiled their day. A few passersby start shouting. But the staff of Justice For All (JFA), the nonprofit group that set up the display, hasn’t come just to debate. They’re also here to listen.

“We’re not trying to win an argument,” says Scott Klusendorf, the pro-life author and speaker who helped train the student volunteers at the exhibit. “We’re trying to get



them to think. And it takes time to think it through. The argument is won three weeks later”—at a mundane moment, like “in the drive-thru at Jack in the Box.”

Booked Solid

It's just before 8 a.m. on a Monday in May. A bright red pickup, towing an unmarked aluminum trailer, backs on to the UCLA campus.

The trailer contains the panels and framework of an exhibit JFA has erected on more than a dozen campuses in the past three years. But the first thing an army of volunteers pulls out of the trailer is a string of barricades.

Why barricades?

Setting them up 20 feet from the exhibit “reduces the risk of somebody doing something stupid to it,” says David Lee, founder and president of JFA. “And the exhibit is so tall, it's better to see it from a distance. We're trying to find the right balance, so that it's not so overpowering, but it's something intense enough to spark discussion.”

Before the panels with photos of aborted fetuses are tilted up, Lee tells volunteers to put

“I will not shout”

Justice for All asks volunteers at its exhibit to sign a volunteer agreement that instructs them to be respectful:

1. I will never pressure anyone to look at the exhibit.
2. I may offer approved literature to passersby but will never push it on them.
3. I will always treat people with respect, even if they are angry and/or verbally abusive. I will not shout at people.
4. I will never trespass on private property or disrupt any event at which a JFA exhibit takes place.
5. If passersby threaten JFA property, I will call for law enforcement officers. I will not attempt to physically stop anyone who makes such a threat or attempts to carry it out.
6. If passersby threaten JFA staff, volunteers and/or myself, I will call for law-enforcement officers. I will make reasonable efforts to remove others and myself from the presence of those making threats, but if I am unable to do that, I understand that I am allowed to take lawful steps to protect others and myself from risk of injury.
7. I condemn abortion-related violence in all forms.

“What about the baby?”

College students who support abortion typically offer six reasons for their views. Justice for All’s exhibits rebuts each one.



I’m not ready to be a parent. A baby will ruin my life.

If you have helped to conceive a baby, you are already a parent.

The circumstances of my pregnancy are unfair. I hate the father of this baby.

Do you favor killing a child for the sins of her father?

A fetus is not fully human. It’s not like me.

Should the right to life be based on size, form or function?

It’s best for the baby. Who wants to grow up unwanted?

Is violence ever a good substitute for not being loved?

Abortion is legal. It’s a woman’s choice. Slavery was once a legal choice.

It’s a woman’s body. I don’t want this baby.

Selfishness should not be lawful if it harms another person. What about the baby?

up signs that read “Warning: Genocide Photos Ahead!” The signs are positioned several hundred feet away and anchored with sandbags.

JFA never goes to a campus without an invitation, and it’s on the UCLA campus today at the request of 21-year-old psychology student Charissa Arlen. She’s been a pro-life activist for years, having volunteered at Lifeline Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPC) in Grover Beach, Calif., during the summers of her junior and senior years. The CPC’s executive director knew Lee, and told him of Arlen’s desire to start a pro-life group at UCLA. Lee helped her start a JFA club.

Today, she plans to counsel students from inside and outside the barricade.

“Being behind the barricade means that I’m on this side and they’re on that side, and that gives me more authority. When I’m outside, I’m on the same side with them, so we can examine the issues together.”

Also behind the barricade today is Vicki Kane, a JFA staff member from St. John’s, Michigan, where she worked at the Beacon of Hope Crisis Pregnancy Center.

“I was [the CPC’s] executive director for five years,” Kane says. “I talked to more abortion-minded women in four days at the [JFA] exhibit when it came to Minneapolis [in 2002] than in five years at the CPC.”

That’s just the sort of outreach Lee, 53, the father of 12 children, hoped to establish when he resigned as pastor of the First Evangelical Free Church of Wichita, Kansas, in 1993. In



his first new venture, “I wanted to help pastors find ways to get their churches active,” Lee says, but when that didn’t catch on, he decided to seek a new audience.

“This is a crossroads,” he says, looking out on Bruin Walk, the main artery of the UCLA campus. “This gives us a shot at getting the nation’s future leaders to understand the word ‘abortion.’ ”

Lee, like all JFA staff members, raises his own support. And traveling to distant campuses isn’t cheap. He estimates that each event costs about \$12,000. That figure includes three advance visits plus transportation costs in driving the truck and trailer to the site and flying the rest of the staff to the area.

JFA staff cut costs by spending nights in donors’ homes and inviting local churches to provide meals. Lee built the exhibit’s aluminum framework in his garage, with design help from his neighbor, a Boeing engineer.

Boldly Sensitive

Lee brought the JFA exhibit to UCLA once before, in 2002. That’s when Chris Folk, 30, a graduate student in mechanical engineering, first saw it. And Folk liked what he saw.

“The exhibit speaks with a secular voice, which is important, because there are Jews, Muslims and atheists on campus,” he says.

He’s returned this year to volunteer as a counselor behind the barricade. No one approaches him at first, but then he engages in a conversation that quickly turns to a discussion of faith.

David France, a 26-year-old music student, saw the exhibit when it visited his school, the University of Minnesota, last year. The response of students there—the ones who spent half an hour talking about abortion, sex, adoption and Christianity—gave him hope that attitudes can change, and he’s traveled to UCLA to be a counselor.

“The university is a ‘pro-choice’ camp, and I had the impression that the pro-choice camp could not be penetrated. They think they’ve won; they don’t think they have to defend the camp. But it is penetrable,” says France, who’s earning a master’s degree in violin performance. “God has gifted me apologetically, to be boldly sensitive. I love to do this.”



Several days later, the exhibit is on Library Walk, the main pedestrian thoroughfare on the UC-San Diego campus. This time, the invitation has come from two brothers: Dean Covalt, 30, who’s earning master’s degrees in education and chemistry, and James Covalt, a biochemist. Both are convinced the exhibit will shake up what they agree is an apathetic campus.

“The best part of this display is that you can’t give platitudes in response to it,” James says. “You’re hit with the hard reality of ‘choice.’ It’s hard to make an argument for abortion with a dead baby in front of you.”

JFA says there have been a few dramatic “conversions” in the exhibit’s history, when “pro-choice” protesters have put down their placards and set aside their preconceptions. “Cass,” a student at the University of Texas at Austin where the JFA exhibit visited in February 2001, later wrote JFA to say the exhibit changed her mind about abortion:

“The exhibit forced me to admit that abortion kills children. And since I want to be an elementary education teacher, I was advocating killing the very children that I someday want to teach.”

Continued on page 14.



REFLECTION ON THE JFA BOULDER OUTREACH:

*ASHLEY

I remember the bus ride up to Boulder—talking and laughing with my friends. All the while, in some deep part of me, I felt some very familiar emotions being pulled. *Babies, unwanted pregnancies, abortion, embarrassment . . .* I began to remember them all. I know some of the other students were a little nervous. They didn't have any experience with this stuff and were afraid they didn't have much wisdom to offer others. In a way, it's sort of true. Unless you have been there—unless you know what it feels like to be single, pregnant, in an abusive relationship, maybe even disowned by your family, it's hard to say what you would do. I wish I had been in the same boat with my friends, but I wasn't. I'd been there; I remember what it felt like.

No one will know unless I tell them, I thought. I never considered that God would use me. I was broken, embarrassed and ashamed. I was surrounded by 87 students who had more character and integrity than I had ever seen; and I felt their strong, honorable lives were more valuable than my destructive past. I knew we were all sinners, but my sin was different . . . you could see it.

Everyone else got to quietly discuss their issues with God, while mine was displayed for the whole world to see for nine months. There's a stigma that comes with unwed mothers, especially in the Christian community. Sometimes I still wonder if my Christian friends see me as "Ashley" or "Ashley-who-had-a-baby."

I was intrigued—standing around the exhibit, listening to debates, arguments and people sharing so vulnerably with strangers that you knew a lot about a person after only a few minutes. Everyone was being real, and a fire was starting inside me. This issue was so close to my heart.

A year and a half earlier, I found out I was pregnant by a not-so-wonderful guy. Not walking with the Lord, and all the options on the table, I seriously considered abortion. I remember when I made the appointment: I wanted it done as soon as possible. But the woman on the phone told me we had to wait six to eight weeks because the baby was so small right now that they wouldn't be able to tell if they got it all out. It was only a couple of days afterward that I decided against the abortion. It wasn't a heroic gesture to save my

baby's life. It wasn't a good moral decision based on the idea that all life is sacred. It just felt wrong to me. Though I wasn't walking with the Lord, the Holy Spirit was with me and wouldn't let me go through with it. I gave birth to my son on January 13, 2003, and placed him with an amazing adoptive family.

I believe in divine appointments—the kind that you know only God could have set up for a certain 15 minutes of your life. I was surrounded by a crowd of people, all standing in silence looking up at the giant, horrific pictures. In the background you could hear side conversations and debates, but they all were drowned out by a voice in your head, trying to comprehend these pictures. *Are they real? This is so wrong. These can't be real.* You finally gain your composure after your breath is literally taken away, and you muster up something to say—maybe to yourself, maybe to the person next to you.

“I would have another sibling, but my mom had an abortion,” said the young man standing next to me. His eyes didn't move from the pictures. I'm not sure who he was talking to, maybe anyone who would listen. As I slowly turned my head to see the tall, thin man, with a baseball cap, and hands in his baggy jean pockets, I hear another person speak out. This time, on my other side. The man, not quite as young as the one on my left, had a beard and glasses. He was holding his girlfriend's hand. “I participated in an abortion once.” I nodded my head to acknowledge his words and looked down at the ground as I gently moved the grass under my foot. After what seemed like an eternity, I looked up and made eye contact with him. The girl on his arm had tears streaming down her face. Before I had a chance to speak, she

said, “I had an abortion once.” I couldn't hold it in any longer. With no reservation, I blurted out, “I had an appointment for an abortion once, but I ended up releasing him for adoption.”

The girl let go of her boyfriend's hand, took a few steps, and collapsed in my arms, sobbing. We held each other and cried, holding nothing back. I sensed other bodies around us and then felt the arms of the two men who had also shared their hearts with us. There we were, four strangers in the middle of a college campus, surrounded by hundreds of people, brought together by the Creator of the universe, to help heal each other's pain. After the heavy sobs stopped and we began to sniff and wipe our noses,

I asked these three strangers if they wanted to pray. None of them spoke, but they all nodded in agreement. I took the girl's hand, knowing the guys would follow, and led them away from the crowd, under a tree, where we stood in a circle, holding hands, praying to our Lord. I have no idea what I said or prayed as we stood under that tree, because it wasn't me speaking. I spoke the truth to them that day, and though I'll never know how it was received or if I made a difference, I know how they impacted me. As I watched them walk away in different directions, I felt a sense of peace and relief for what the Lord has saved me from. I am forgiven and have been washed as white as snow.

This experience wasn't just a “highlight” of my week or even semester, but something I will treasure all my days.

If you know a college student who would benefit from a life-changing experience at the Focus on the Family Institute, a one-semester college program, log on to www.focusinstitute.org for more information.

“. . . Everyone was being real, and a fire was starting inside me. This issue was so close to my heart.”

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Still, many students do not believe what the exhibit says about the humanity of the unborn. So Lee has an idea: Recruit uniformed physicians to staff the exhibit one day; encircle the exhibit the next day with women who’ve had abortions; and on the third day, have Ph.D. graduates in biomedical sciences answer students’ questions.

“Credibility is the key,” Lee says. “It changes the discussion when a doctor, a researcher or a woman who’s been through an abortion is doing the talking.”

Lee also hopes to build stronger ties to local pregnancy resource centers, which are better equipped than JFA to continue a conversation with students.

Lee gives an example from a visit to Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. Near the exhibit was a table set up by the Hope Center for Crisis Pregnancy.

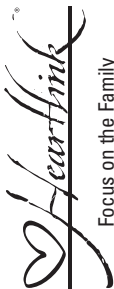
“A woman came to the table, and she was angry. She asked, ‘Why weren’t you here two years ago?’ ” Lee recalls. “They asked her what she meant, and she said, ‘If you’d been here two years ago, I wouldn’t have had an abortion.’ Eight weeks later, she knelt in the counseling room at Hope Center and put her trust in Christ. She had been convicted of her sin, the realness of her sin, and that made her sensitive to the grace of Christ.”

TAKE ACTION: Here’s how to contact Justice For All:

Justice For All, Inc.
2250 N. Rock Road, #118-120
Wichita, KS 67226
Phone: (316) 683-6426
Fax: (316) 683-4621
Web: www.JFAweb.org

For more information about how your center can benefit from a Justice For All event, log on to www.heartlink.org.

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parting words

“When all the voices that are heard on campus echo those of top secular bioethicists, then decisions about life and death are minimized to individual preferences alone. Unfortunately, a decision made by a 20-year-old young lady is usually made in the darkness and loneliness of her dorm room amidst the darkness and loneliness of a campus community that turns its head and ignores that decision.”

—Dr. Chris Leland
Senior Fellow of Christian Worldview Studies
Focus on the Family Institute