



Newsletter Collection

Facing Abortion

Explanation:

“Facing Abortion” is the name of the opening presentation JFA trainers have used for years to help JFA’s audiences begin to restore meaning to the word abortion, both for themselves and for those they’re engaging in conversations about abortion. It features horrific pictures of the results of abortion as well as wonderful video of the unborn in the womb. This collection features newsletters which illustrate the importance of pictures for helpful dialogue on abortion.

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Rebecca's Reflections



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January 2015

The Power of a Picture

This past semester at the University of Oklahoma (OU), I had a five minute conversation with “Peter,” a man from Senegal. The end of our conversation took a turn I was not expecting. I began the dialogue by asking him to take a survey, each question of which asked for a “yes” or “no” response. Halfway through the survey the conversation went as follows:

Rebecca: I have a picture that accurately depicts how U.S. law allows women to treat the unborn. It is very graphic. Are you willing to view it before answering our final question?

Peter: Yes.

Rebecca: [*Showing Peter a picture of an embryo after a 9-week abortion*]

Do you believe abortion should continue to be legal in the first trimester for any reason the woman wants it?

Peter: No.

Throughout the survey, each of his responses consistently indicated that he believed the unborn are valuable humans, so at the end of the survey, I continued the conversation by asking this follow-up question:

Rebecca: In the survey, you answered that you do not think abortion should be legal in the first trimester. Have you always felt this way?

Peter: If I hadn't seen that picture, I would have said it *should be legal* in the first trimester, but I changed my mind when I saw this picture.



Several years ago, high school students from Lincoln participated in an outreach at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln (UNL). The two high school students pictured above, wearing the brown and red shirts, were conducting a survey with the UNL student seated on the stairs. This survey was similar to the survey I conducted with “Peter.” Although he already held a Justice For All Exhibit brochure in his right hand, the UNL student grabbed a second brochure to better examine the picture.

His response was not what I expected. If he had not viewed the picture of the abortion, we would have likely had a very different conversation. In that moment, both this young man and I were shown the power of a picture.



However, not every student changes his mind the moment he sees a picture of abortion. Often, students still have many questions about the humanity of the unborn or about women's rights. They have hesitations about the consequences of illegalizing abortion. Yet, even during a conversation with a student who has these concerns, a picture like the one I showed Peter helps express a truth in much greater depth than words alone can.

Sometimes a picture has the power to prick even a hardened conscience. I've found in my life, in fact, that it can take a lot to reach my conscience. It's easy for all of us to become apathetic about a particular subject if apathy is the very thing that allows us to live more

comfortably. This pricking of the conscience is the same thing that can force a student to stop avoiding the subject of abortion. Viewing abortion imagery makes him uncomfortable with the consequences of his pro-choice views, and thus develops within him an internal conflict.

It's this internal conflict between a person's initial pro-choice concerns and the reality he is now faced with that prompts him to ask important questions. Thus, a conversation ensues, whether internal or verbal. This is why I train pro-life advocates in the art of dialogue. I want each pro-choice student who sees the reality of abortion to be able to have a conversation when this internal questioning begins. I want each of these conversations to take place with pro-life advocates who can answer questions with truth and love; pro-life advocates who can guide pro-choice advocates to understand why they feel internally conflicted; pro-life advocates who can help those who've disagreed with them to finally see that it should not be legal to violate the dignity of human beings by killing them.

For Peter, though, words weren't necessary. His heart was soft, and there was enough power in the picture alone to transform his view. Please pray that God would similarly soften the hearts of students who will see images of abortion this year on the campuses I visit. Please also pray that each of us who believe abortion should be illegal would continue to prepare for the moment we have the opportunity to have a conversation. Finally, pray that we would actively seek opportunities to share this message with the many people who, unlike Peter, need to have a conversation after seeing the pictures in order for their views to change.

Thank you for all your support, which has allowed me to equip others to have these conversations. If you would ever like to be trained in this way, please join me on a mission trip! Let me know if you are interested. I would be honored to work side-by-side with you in the very places to which your support has sent me.

Defending life together,

Rebecca J. Haschke





Rebecca's Reflections



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December 2014

If Only I'd Taken a Picture

I'm sure you've experienced those moments when you witness an event that you know is profound. You can't formulate with words exactly why it is profound, but you nonetheless have full confidence of the moment's significance. It's a moment that you wish you could have captured in a photo, because words will do no justice.

Such a moment took place this past September at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in front of the Justice For All (JFA) Exhibit. After talking for about twenty minutes with Michael, a student who felt abortion should remain legal in at least some cases and possibly in most cases, a little boy came walking toward the JFA Exhibit. The Exhibit includes pictures of the unborn before and after abortion. The instant I saw him in my peripheral vision, I turned toward him and searched for an adult who I'd hoped was accompanying him. In my estimation he was no more than four or five years old. Once I identified the woman he was with, I realized he would reach the Exhibit long before she would. She was giving him the freedom of enjoying the sunny weather and letting him run.

Knowing I might cause Michael to think I was ignoring him, I nevertheless walked toward the boy and began talking to him before he looked at the Exhibit. My interactions with him stopped him in front of the pictures that show a child developing in utero. He noticed the Exhibit and began to examine the photos. In order to hold his attention on these non-graphic panels until his mother arrived, I squatted down next to him, pointed to the pictures, and explained, "Did you know that at one point in time you looked like the baby in that picture? When you were eight weeks old that's what you looked like inside your mom." By this time his mother approached us and began listening to what I was sharing with her son. "In the picture that baby looks really big, but that's just so we can see what the baby looks like. Do you know how big you were when you looked like that?" He was silent so I said, "You were about the size of a quarter. Do you know what a quarter looks like?" Eyes wide with awe, he stared at me again in silence but this time with a smile. I pulled a quarter out of my purse and showing it to him said, "This is about how big you were. Isn't that tiny? You were this small, but you had arms, legs, fingers, toes, a nose, a mouth and eyes. Would you like to keep this quarter?" This time, although he kept the smile, he broke the silence saying, "Yes!" I handed him the quarter and his mother thanked me for taking the time to talk to him.

I stood up and took a few steps back so I could reconvene my conversation with Michael. The boy's mother waited while he walked closer to the Exhibit. Too



The little boy mentioned in this newsletter peered through barricades like these, which help hold up the JFA Exhibit. The left exhibit panel shows the 8-week embryo that he saw when he stopped.

short to see over them, he put his hands on the Exhibit barricade bars, and peered through them for a better view. Michael, watching the little boy, commented, "Wow, what a profound moment. I need a picture of this." Michael pulled the phone out of his pocket and captured that *moment* in a photo. Even Michael, who was processing through the cases in which he thought abortion should be legal, was able to see the significance of this little boy's experience.

I didn't take a picture that day, but yes, I have many times wished I could somehow find Michael and ask him to email me the picture he took on his phone. I wish I could share that photo with you because, although I've described to you step-by-step the actions that took place during that five-minute event, I have not done enough to explain why those five minutes were so profound. I don't know how.

However, this past October another picture was taken. This is one that I can share with you (picture shown to the right). The JFA staff were cleaning up after a seminar in Wichita and some of the staff brought their children to help. As we were finishing, JFA's executive director Steve Wagner, shared the first two panels of the Exhibit (the same panels that the boy with the quarter viewed) to six of the children. When I saw this picture it took me back to the moment at OSU when Michael took the picture of the little boy by the barricades.

This picture is my way of sharing with you my experience at OSU so that you and I can ask ourselves, "What does God want me to learn from these profound moments that I've witnessed?" Especially, "What does He want me to learn from an experience in which the people involved aren't even aware of how profound it is?"

In this Advent season, I am mindful that Our King, Jesus Christ, is like the 35-week old child in utero that Steve showed to the six young children. Mary carried Jesus in her womb. God humbled Himself, and in human flesh, came to Earth as a defenseless and dependent unborn child. That is profound. Are you aware? Let us learn from the little boy with the quarter and the children in this picture. If you haven't already this Advent, let us take time these last few days before Christmas to contemplate how profound it is that our Lord came as an unborn child -- that He came to us as a human being. Let us ask Him what He wants us to learn from the experience of these children. Maybe He wants us to see Him as we would see him if we were looking at Him through the eyes of a child.



Merry Christmas!

Rebecca J. Haschke

The Conversation

#2 in an
Ongoing
Series

JUSTICE
FOR ALL

Note: "The Conversation" is a series of articles from Justice For All, an organization that trains thousands to make abortion unthinkable for millions, one person at a time. Each article in the series allows you to learn from a JFA mentor or volunteer the skills of good dialogue on abortion by looking in on one of their conversations. In this article, an anecdote from Laura Beeson (a 2010 JFA Intern) models how to start a conversation in real life and make it productive by finding common ground and giving a tour of the first few pages of the JFA Exhibit Brochure – what JFA calls "Repeat Work." – Stephen Wagner, Director of Training

Repeat Work in Science Class

Stephen Wagner & Laura Beeson, JFA Mentors

JFA Mentor Laura Beeson is currently a nursing student in New Mexico. Recently, she relayed a conversation to us that took place in the fall of 2010 in her Anatomy class.

Laura: We were talking about abortion in my biomedical ethics class.

Friend: Yeah? You know, I'm pro-choice, but only in the very early stages.

Laura: I used to be like that, too, actually. I'd stick up for the right to an abortion to my cousin when we'd discuss it. Until I saw a picture. I actually have pictures with me. Do you mind if I share them with you?

Friend: Sure.

Laura: Well, [the JFA Exhibit Brochure] doesn't start with abortion, it just starts with biology. Like when does life begin? Or is this a human? What do you think?

Friend: This is interesting.

Laura: Well, the next picture isn't of an abortion. It's a picture of a surgery being performed on a little guy named Sammy. He had spina bifida, so the doctors went in and performed a 35,000 dollar surgery on him while he was 21 weeks old to fuse his spine. Now he's actually a competitive swimmer!

Friend: Oh my gosh. That is so cute. But 21 weeks?! What kind of sick person would abort then?

Laura: Well, this is how we treat wanted children, right? We give them surgeries to fix and help them, but unwanted children... they get a whole different type of surgery. This is abortion. So I'd like to ask, does our wantedness or unwantedness define our value as human beings?

Friend: Oh my gosh, *you can see their intestines!*

Laura: I know. I don't think the majority of people know what this looks like.

Friend: How could anyone do this!?



Laura Beeson talks to a student at a 2009 Justice For All Outreach.

Continued... →

She [the young woman from my class] approached me the following Wednesday and said,

Friend: Laura, I cannot stop thinking about those pictures. I was *always* pro-choice. But, I never put a face to the word! I even told my mom about it! I just can't believe that happens. I held someone's hand during an abortion when I was young. I had *nooooo* idea what was going on. Why don't more people know!?"

I looked down at my Exhibit Brochure and thought, "This is one powerful tool."

Notice how this conversation seems very natural. Laura didn't have to force the discussion of the difficult topic of abortion. She knew that most people want to think and talk about the issue, that few ever experience good dialogue on abortion, and that she had a recent experience related to abortion. Laura had also been trained over the last three years as both a volunteer and intern with Justice For All. She experienced our seminar ("Seat Work") and outreaches ("Feet Work") multiple times. Because of these things, Laura had the courage to bring up the topic with a friend. We call this "Repeat Work."

Laura was on the lookout for an opportunity to bring up the topic of abortion. ("We were talking about abortion in my biomedical ethics class"). Then she was on the lookout for specific aspects of common ground in what her friend was saying. ("I used to be like that, too, actually.") She also had the JFA Exhibit Brochure in her bag, ready for any opportunity that might arise throughout the day. Finally, she was courteous with the graphic pictures in the exhibit. She asked for her friend's permission even before she opened to the first page of the brochure.

The JFA Exhibit Brochure is a museum-quality, nine-by-four-inch version of the Justice For All Exhibit. It's a simple conversational tool that includes images of the unborn and abortion. She didn't give it to her friend with no explanation, assuming that an impersonal set of words and pictures would be effective on its own. Instead, Laura walked her friend through the first four pages, summarizing the panels in two main questions ("Is this a human?" and "Does our wantedness or unwantedness define our value as human beings?"). Those questions helped Laura and her friend keep focused on the most important aspects of the abortion issue.

This conversation wasn't grueling or nerve-wracking. Laura knew how to start the conversation, how to ask the right kinds of questions, and how to show pictures of abortion in a way that was helpful. What strikes me also about the conversation is that it's so "everyday." It's a small moment in which a friend's few words and gracious, no-pressure approach helped a young woman change her mind.

Next Step: To receive your own copy of the Justice For All Exhibit Brochure, along with a script of the "Tour" Laura used in this conversation, send an email ("Please send brochure and tour script" in the subject line) to brochure.request@jfaweb.org.

For more on Laura's "Repeat Work," see Tammy Cook's June 2011 newsletter.

Laura Beeson was an Intern with Justice For All in 2010 and serves as a Volunteer Mentor from time to time. She is currently a nursing student in New Mexico.

Stephen Wagner is the Director of Training at Justice For All and blogs at www.stephenmwagner.com

Bryndan Gets the Picture

A Conversation at Fresno City College



STEPHEN WAGNER'S MONTHLY UPDATE

JUNE 1, 2012



Note: Graphic photos below.

Dear Friend,

“Should Abortion Remain Legal?” Our poll table at Fresno City College in California asked passersby to sign a pad of paper signifying YES or NO. One young man named Bryndan signed “No,” and I asked him a question. Here’s a paraphrase of the conversation that followed.

Steve: Do you think abortion should not be legal in every case?

Bryndan: It should be legal in the case of rape.

Steve: I think rape is a serious evil. We should give the woman who was raped the best care possible.

Bryndan: Yes. I agree.

Steve: What would you say about the woman who has a product of rape that’s two years old? Should she be able to kill him?

Bryndan: No.

Steve: I’m curious why you think that.

Bryndan: It’s killing.

Steve: I’m curious: What does “abortion” mean to you?

Bryndan: Getting rid of the fetus.

Steve: Does it live or die?

Bryndan: It dies, I guess.

Steve: Have you ever seen a picture of abortion?

Bryndan: No.

Steve: I have one here in this brochure. It’s graphic. May I show it to you?

Bryndan: Sure.

Steve: [Pointing to Page 4, see sidebar] This picture shows a fetal surgery meant to help Samuel Armas. [Pointing to Page 5] And this picture shows abortion. Imagine this kid is the product of rape. Should this be legal?

Bryndan: No.

Steve: Are you saying you think abortion should not be legal in the case of rape?

Bryndan: It should not be legal.

Then, pointing to a group of students about 40 yards away, Bryndan asked for a copy of the JFA Brochure,

Behind the Conversation: What I Was Doing and Why

1. **Offering pictures** like the ones in the JFA Brochure, pages 4 (left) and 5 (right), helps people reckon with what their words (sometimes words they’ve said over and over and over) actually mean.



2. **I don’t assume** I know what someone means when he says that abortion should not remain legal. He may not be against certain “hard case” reasons for abortion such as rape. I also can’t assume I know *why* he is against abortion or that his opposition is strong enough to hold when life circumstances make abortion appear to be the choice that’s best for everyone.
3. **I don’t avoid the question of rape** as if it’s simply intractable. On the contrary, the question of rape helped me to clarify the moral logic of the pro-life position in this instance. First, though, I was careful to show sympathy for the rape victim.
4. **Teaching someone else** helps us improve. Since I enjoy abstract discussion, I sometimes forget to share pictures with people. Just two days prior to meeting Bryndan, I taught our volunteers to use the JFA Brochure. This helped me remember to use this simple, mind-changing tool.



JUSTICE FOR ALL TRAINS THOUSANDS TO MAKE ABORTION UNTHINKABLE FOR MILLIONS, ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

WEB: WWW.JFAWEB.ORG

STEVE’S UPDATES: WWW.HBMM.NET

CONTACT: 316-683-6426

saying, “I’d like to show this to my friends over there who haven’t come over to talk to you yet.” Off he went, brochure in hand, to help his friends think more clearly about abortion.

This conversation was memorable to me for a number of reasons. First, it was fun to see my efforts bear fruit when Bryndan changed his mind right before my eyes. Second, I saw the power of one of our simplest training tools, the abortion pictures. Although complicated philosophical arguments are also important in some conversations, in this case they weren’t. Bryndan needed just one picture and one question helping him to consider how the truth of that picture should affect public policy.

Finally, this conversation illustrated what my colleague David Lee has been saying recently, that most people have never experienced an on-topic conversation regarding abortion. David means that few people have ever considered what the unborn is and what abortion does to her. I think this was true for Bryndan. Even though he said he was against abortion, he really didn’t connect the word abortion with the reality that abortion kills an innocent human being. When he confronted that reality through a picture, he was no longer able to make an exception for abortions in cases of rape.

Even though he said he was against abortion, he didn’t connect the word *abortion* with the reality that abortion kills an innocent human being.

This conversation with Bryndan illustrates one other thing: Some of JFA’s training materials are simple enough that a pro-life advocate can use them to help a person change his mind with just a few minutes of coaching.

Don’t believe me? See www.jfaweb.org/2_Minutes, and then call me at 316-683-6426. I’ll help you learn to share the JFA Brochure with someone like Bryndan, and you’ll see for yourself how easy it can be to talk to a friend about abortion. Your friend might even see the JFA Brochure as simple enough to share with his friends, just like Bryndan did.

In less than two weeks, four interns will arrive in JFA’s Wichita office to participate in a six-week intensive training experience. It will be a first for JFA. Pray for us as we plan the curriculum that will help these interns become mentors and teachers in JFA’s training program. In addition, over the summer, I’m spearheading the creation of new dialogue tools for campus outreach and developing materials to help our most experienced trainers mentor others through the certification process. We now have about 70 people in our Certification program, and 34 of these are certified to serve as mentors at JFA events.

Thank you for partnering with me to help these committed leaders learn to train others to make abortion unthinkable.

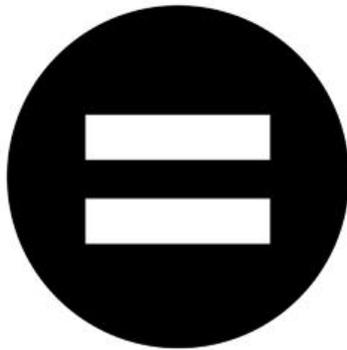
Warmly,

Stephen

P.S. The question of rape can be much more complicated philosophically and relationally than it was in the conversation with Bryndan. For training that addresses the question more fully, please contact the JFA office (316-683-6426) and ask for Steve.

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to make abortion unthinkable for millions,
one person at a time.

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