

CCBR: Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform

Making Abortion Unthinkable

October 2007

“I wish to apologize.”

Dear Friends,

At the end of August I was touched by a very unexpected e-mail. It was a message from a UBC alumnus who attended UBC when Brendan and I were students and members of the campus pro-life club, Lifeline. Some of you may recall that, in 1999, Lifeline invited the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform to bring the Genocide Awareness Project (GAP) to our campus. We faced significant resistance from various students and university authorities. Eight years later, we heard from one of these students who had opposed us:

During my tenure at UBC and on [boards of campus groups], I lobbied against Lifeline UBC's invitation of GAP because I felt, as a 1st generation Canadian, and child of a [Holocaust] survivor, that the concentration camp imagery juxtaposed with abortion imagery was insulting to the memory of my family members who both survived and perished during the genocide. I agreed with the idea behind it [GAP], as I have always been pro-life, save specific circumstances, but felt that the method was wrong.

Since leaving UBC, getting married and having my own child, I have come to realize the error of my rationale; in fact, I now view my acts to prevent GAP... to be one of my big regrets from my time at UBC. I wish to apologize.

After I graciously accepted his apology, this young man e-mailed me more about his change of heart:

I moved to Montreal after I graduated university and while there I was attending the Chabad synagogue of downtown. They had all sorts of flyers and such in the main hallway. One was for a group called EFRAT-CRIB. Their flyer read, to paraphrase, “Since 1955, there have been 2,000,000 Jewish babies murdered in Israel by Abortion.” The flyer went on to talk about the group which provides financial assistance to women who feel that they cannot afford to have children.

But this 2,000,000 number stuck with me. It was then that I realized that [abortion] was a holocaust. There have been arguments about the Silent Holocaust being intermarriage, but no child dies with that; rather, children are born who are just not Jewish. But through abortion these are lives that just would not be. If this was

just Israel, how many children could there have been with world Jewry? That was 2004.

As a final thought, The Torah teaches that in the time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, one should ask their fellow person for forgiveness. Though this is early as Rosh Hashanah isn't until the 12th of September and Yom Kippur the Friday night of the following week, I thank you for your forgiveness that I may go to the Day of Atonement with a lighter conscience. [Emphasis added.]

And I thank *him* for his honesty and humility.

We continue to find ways to be uplifted amidst this grim reality of abortion, not only by encounters like the e-mail above, but by feedback from our presentations. Earlier this month, Jojo spoke in eastern Canada and the United States. A student who attended his talk at Georgetown University Law School wrote that Jojo's presentation “...helped deepen the conviction that I need to more fully devote myself to advocating for the unborn.”



▲ Jojo (second from right) poses with students and a professor from Towson University in Maryland, where he gave a talk.

When he spoke at George Washington University a student wrote, “I did not know what to say to someone who says, ‘I would not personally have an abortion but I don't enforce my views on others.’ Now I can respond, ‘I don't believe in slavery; should I let others have slaves?’”

Another student wrote that before the presentation he was “sympathetic to the argument that abortion should be legal before the third month, although he would never

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encourage one.” When asked if his view changed he wrote, **“I’m going to impose my beliefs and speak more passionately about saving life** and making abortion illegal.”

At the National Campus Life Network Symposium in Toronto, a student wrote that Jojo’s presentation “...made me realize that **my four years on campus could be the biggest opportunity** I will ever have to spread the ‘Gospel of Life.’ It also made me realize that there is so much I can do and make a difference.”

In September, I traveled to Nebraska to help our U.S. office display GAP at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. While there, I did two radio interviews and spoke to a Christian youth group. One girl wrote that the presentation made her “want to dialogue about this issue with my friends at school.” Another student wrote that before the presentation he “didn’t really think about abortion.” When asked if his position on abortion changed he wrote, **“Yes. I one hundred percent believe that it is wrong now. The movie helped my change of thought on abortion.”**

A day after returning from Nebraska, I spoke in Cold Lake, Alberta, at a pro-life youth conference. One attendee wrote, “The video was powerful. Keep it up!” Another said, “Stephanie **gave me the tools** to explain my views.” Yet another explained that the apologetics training I provided gave him relevant, practical knowledge to use.

As I read through these recent batches of surveys, I was reminded that our goal of equipping and activating the converted is just as important as our goal of converting the unconvinced. After all, it’s by training fellow pro-lifers that we play a role in converting the unconvinced whom we’ll never meet.

As an example of this, here is something my friend Mark told me. While working on tiling someone’s home earlier this year, he debated abortion with one of his co-workers. Mark’s co-worker became convinced that abortion is wrong. Mark learned to persuasively defend the pro-life view through a CCBR apologetics talk given years prior, as well as listening to debates at Genocide Awareness Project (GAP) displays.

Thank you for financially supporting our efforts to scatter seeds and to train others to do the same,

Stephanie
Stephanie Gray

Note: Quotations may have been edited for grammar, punctuation, syntax, spelling, and/or length.

Are you skilled in the area of graphic design and video production? We’re looking for one or more volunteers to create a CCBR promotional video. If you’re interested in this, please e-mail samples of your work to email@unmaskingchoice.ca.

Introducing our new intern, Hannah Walsh!



In September, Hannah (far left), joined CCBR’s team as an intern for the next several months. She has proven herself hard-working, insightful, and helpful. Earlier this month, we sent Hannah to Ohio to spend two weeks with CBR’s Midwest office. They needed an extra volunteer for GAP (and Hannah is an articulate, intelligent young lady who fit the bill) and we wanted her to gain greater exposure to GAP and the inner workings of CBR. She came back enthused about her experiences, excitedly sharing her stories and photographs.

At Akron University, Hannah had a powerful conversation with a student named John. After speaking with him on day one of GAP, Hannah wrote, *“We ended on a point of agreement: that the time to make the choice about having a child is not after conception but rather before having sex. We ended the conversation with my having hope for his further thought on the matter.”* And think further he did. He had done research the night after they spoke and brought the information to Hannah for a subsequent discussion. They talked about the unborn child’s degree of dependency and level of development and whether those matter when it comes to valuing human life. Upon reflection of their second conversation, Hannah said this:

“He had been willing to listen to everything I had to say because I took the time to hear his thoughts and focussed on listening to him. I don’t know if he is firmly convicted against abortion but he was thankful for the time I spent in discussion with him and was still obviously deep in thought when he and I shook hands and parted ways for a second time.”

Her interaction reminds me of a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., **“Whom you would change, you must first love. And they must know that you love them.”**

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