

UNC Warning Sign Conversion

Spring 2003

The first time we took the Exhibit to the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), I witnessed a student knock over a JFA warning/help sign. Having just finished setting up the Exhibit, I had gone down the sidewalk about 150 yards toward the library to view our handiwork from a distance.

I was en-route back to the Exhibit, following a young man who suddenly stepped off the sidewalk to turn over a JFA warning sign that had been set up in the grass next to the sidewalk. He quickly stepped back onto the sidewalk and resumed his course toward the Exhibit as if nothing had happened. By then I was right behind him.



I picked up my gait to gain a walking position beside him and said, “Excuse me; I’m the director of the Exhibit that owns the sign that you just knocked down. Unless you return to replace that sign in its original position, I will be forced to speak with the officer up ahead and I assure you that you **will be** detained by him for questioning, and I **will** press charges.” (Fortunately, since this was our first Exhibit at UNC, the campus police stationed an officer at the Exhibit even during setup and take-down.)

The student stopped in his tracks, looked at me incredulously, looked toward the Exhibit at the uniformed officer about 30 yards ahead of us, and then looked back at me with even greater incredulity. He then looked back at the sign that he had knocked over and with a shrug and an audible groan quickly went back and reset the sign, but left the sandbag where it lie on the ground. I quickly added that he would also need to replace the sandbag to ensure the safety of the installation. Again he audibly groaned, but returned to reinstall the sandbag. I made a slight adjustment to the sign and caught up with him as he walked toward the Exhibit.

I thanked him for his actions and then ask, “So I take it you don’t like the Exhibit?”

He stopped, looking at the Exhibit, then at me, and asked, “So are you really the director?”

“Yup,” I responded. “I usually admit that only to people who like it.”

To which he replied, “I’m sorry, I wouldn’t normally do anything like I just did, it’s not who I am normally, but this really upsets me”.

I asked, “So is it the pictures or just the subject of abortion in general that upsets you?”

He answered, “Are you going to be out here for a while today?” I have to get to class but I’ll want to talk about this—I just can’t right now.”

“Totally understand,” I said. “Yes, sorry to say, we’ll be here for 4 days. Come by anytime – we’ll talk.”

To my amazement, the kid reached out and offered me his hand and said, “Thanks, I’ll be back”.

Sure enough, two hours later, he returned, and we had a very good discussion. He actually decided that he was pro-life! And yes, a good friend of his had an abortion.