

# Picture: How Two Minds Changed

## Impact Report

JUSTICE  
FOR ALL

Nov. 2022

### BECAUSE ONE PERSON CAN...

Before they step foot on campus, our interns and volunteers are trained to be faithful to God as his ambassadors, to leave the results of each conversation to him, and to be ready to not always see impact. Still, we hope their first experience can include some glimpses of change in the way people think, feel, and act regarding abortion. To support them, our veteran team members make it their highest priority to serve as mentors at our outreach events. In this Impact Report, JFA intern Hannah Cook shares the story of her first outreach day in August. Along the way, you'll see the important role JFA trainers Mary and Tammy played in helping Hannah experience success. Thank you for praying for and supporting the work of our trainers, volunteers, and interns. God is changing the world through them, one conversation at a time. (See [www.jfaweb.org/blog](http://www.jfaweb.org/blog) for other recent stories of impact.)

*Sm* - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

...CHANGE THE WORLD

I wanted to run away.

We had just about finished setting up our outreach displays at Wichita State University (WSU) when a girl gestured to our "Should Abortion Remain Legal?" poll table and said, "What are you guys doing here? I thought we already voted on this." She was referring to the "Value Them Both" Amendment that had been soundly defeated in the Kansas Primary Election four weeks earlier. My foggy brain immediately snapped to attention as I sensed the edge in her voice. She was clearly irritated. I couldn't tell if her condescending smile was a half-hearted attempt at cordiality or simply a way of insulting us further. In any case, I could tell that she was ready for a fight. One wrong word from us, and she would pounce. I felt adrenaline rush through my body as my heart began pounding. I looked to Mary Biegler who was standing next to me, hoping she would know what to say. I was thankful that she did.

As Mary calmly began explaining that we were aiming to have productive conversations about abortion, I relaxed a little, hoping that the girl would have an open heart and mind. She did not. She questioned and challenged Mary at every turn, refusing to give an inch. At this point a guy walked up and joined the conversation. He listened for a few minutes, echoed the girl's sentiments, and added his own challenges. We talked about bodily rights, the question of rape, and the central question, "What is the unborn?" No matter what we said, though, it was like trying to reason with brick walls. Nothing was getting through. Our arguments were cast aside and rejected. A mix of frustration, discouragement, and hopelessness swirled through me as I tried



Hannah (right) discusses the images in the JFA brochure with a student at Oklahoma State University in October 2022.

## Make Your Own Impact by Giving a Year-End Gift

As you consider your year-end giving, please consider giving generously to JFA to help us train more Christians to change more hearts and minds about abortion in 2023. With various state ballot initiatives strengthening abortion rights following the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision, it's especially important that we continue our work of changing hearts and minds, one person at a time. Even in the states where unborn children now have legal protection, we see hearts and minds wavering, especially when no one has come alongside to help each person think things through. We're encouraged, though, because we know that one person can change the world. Each person we train and each person we engage in dialogue can change the world for an unborn child, and each child allowed to live can in turn change the world for others. Above all these, we believe God is the one who really changes minds, heals hearts, and changes the world. Please partner with us as we seek to humbly serve our great God in this work in 2023. You can give online ([www.jfaweb.org/donate](http://www.jfaweb.org/donate)) or use the enclosed form and envelope. Learn more about JFA's vision and needs for 2023 at our "Invest in JFA" page ([www.jfaweb.org/invest](http://www.jfaweb.org/invest)). Or, call me directly at 316-683-6426 to discuss!

- Steve Wagner, Executive Director

to keep up with the onslaught of objections being hurled at us. This was nothing like the life-changing encounters I had been reading about all week from other JFA interns and trainers. What happened to the nice open-minded discussions that left me feeling warm and fuzzy inside? At that moment, I wanted to flee the scene, drive the 19 hours back to my peaceful hometown in Idaho, and never talk to another pro-choice person again.

Well, it turned out that I *was* able to escape – not back to Idaho but at least out of that conversation. Someone asked for directions, and I stepped away to help her. A little while later, I noticed three guys standing nearby listening to a conversation at the outreach. They seemed interested in the topic, so I asked if they had any thoughts about abortion. They told me that they were from Zimbabwe and that abortion really isn't talked about there. Their names were Chimdi, Denzel, and Bryan.

Denzel and Bryan said they were personally pro-life but that abortion should still be legal. Chimdi didn't think it should be legal. When I asked Denzel and Bryan if they thought there should be any restrictions on abortion, Bryan told me that he thought the cut-off should be five months gestation. "Why did you pick that specific point?" I asked. He replied, "Because by then they have arms and legs and everything."

When I heard this, I knew that he needed to see pictures of fetal development because the features he was describing appear so much earlier than five months. When I showed Bryan and the others that arms and legs are clearly present at seven weeks post-fertilization, they were all shocked. Immediately Bryan switched his cut-off point to three months gestation. I was amazed at such quick progress. It showed me the power of pictures. We talked some more, and I trotted out the toddler to help us focus on the question, "What is the unborn?" Even so, they still held pretty firmly to the belief that a woman should have a right to choose. Meanwhile, Tammy Cook had come up and was listening to our conversation. She later told me that she was there to be a support, and she wasn't planning to say anything unless I asked her.

The conversation had been productive so far, but I wasn't sure how to proceed. I turned to Tammy and asked what she thought. She asked all of us to imagine two buckets filled with different choices. The first bucket contains personal preferences like which foods you eat, what college you attend, and with whom you choose to spend time. The second bucket contains choices that harm people – choices like rape, child abuse, and murder. She noted that there should be legal restrictions on the second bucket of choices because those particular choices harm other human beings. She then asked which bucket abortion belonged in. They all said that it belonged in the second bucket. I was amazed and delighted – even more progress! (For more about the "Two Buckets" analogy, see [www.jfaweb.org/two-buckets](http://www.jfaweb.org/two-buckets).)

Tammy's "Two Buckets" analogy had definitely put us on the right track, but Bryan was still resistant. He said that the reason people don't care about abortion in the same way that they would care about a toddler being killed is because they can't see abortion. He almost said it in a way that justified his own position about abortion – suggesting that he too thought it was okay because he couldn't see it. I suddenly knew what I needed to say. I asked the three of them if they had heard about Emmett Till, the black boy who was murdered for allegedly "whistling at a white woman" in the South in the 1950's. I was a little surprised when they nodded and said that yes, they knew of him. (For a good introduction to the story, watch the trailer of the newly-released movie, *Till*.) After briefly recapping the story, I was able to explain that when Emmett's mother physically opened the casket of her maimed and disfigured son, she metaphorically opened the casket on racism, and the whole world saw racism for the evil and horrific thing that it was. No longer was racism hidden from public view – it was on full display and could not so easily be denied or minimized. Then I said, "I actually have some pictures of the results of abortion with me. Are you willing to look at them?" Denzel was the first to view the brochure, followed by Chimdi. Bryan refused to look, but the connection between Emmett Till and abortion was sinking in.

The next thing I knew they were all agreeing that abortion should not be legal at any point. I was overjoyed. One conversation had resulted in a complete change of heart and mind for these students. Regardless of whether people change their mind, it's still worthwhile to have conversations with them, but it is such a gift when we do get to see change take place. It was a great encouragement as I continued having conversations with other students who were not so quick to change.

I also realize that if I had chosen to run away after that initial conversation, I never would have received the blessing of witnessing such a profound transformation of heart and mind in Denzel and Bryan. I thank God for helping me to continue to be faithful even in the midst of discouragement.

– Hannab Cook, for the JFA Team

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