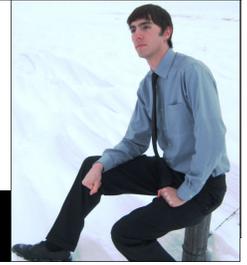


THE OBVIOUS OBJECTION

Joshua Pedrick's April Update

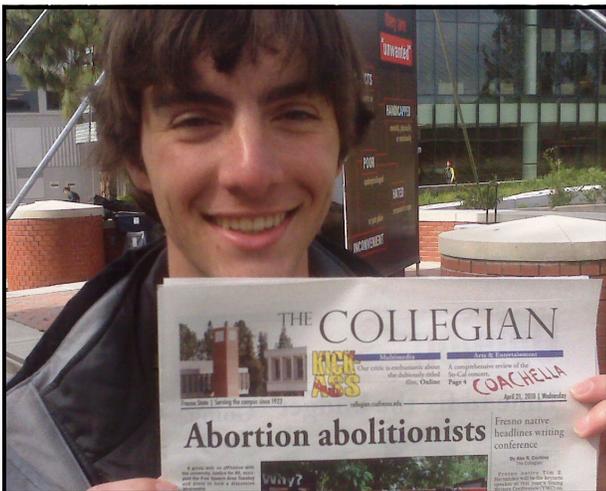
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Dear friends and family,

The past two weeks have been spent in Colorado and California, training people to dialogue about abortion with students at the University of Northern Colorado at Greeley and Fresno State University. The trainings went well, the students were willing to dialogue, and my hosts in Fresno made some delicious blueberry—cream cheese French toast for breakfast.

Nearly every time people engage in dialogue about abortion there is one case that is bound to be discussed. The question of abortion in the case of rape is by far the most intimidating justification that a pro-choice advocate can raise. That is because [the case of rape presents two different challenges: a relational challenge, and an intellectual challenge.](#)



JFA makes the front page

In Colorado I spoke with a girl, I'll call her Stephanie, who presented a very strong relational challenge. She and a guy, "Peter", were standing a fair distance away from the exhibit and I engaged them in dialogue. As the conversation progressed I noticed that Stephanie

brought the conversation back to rape at least four times. Every time she raised the question I responded by saying that rape was a serious evil and no woman should be put in that situation.

I noticed that whenever she referred to rape she talked about it in the present tense, saying odd phrases like, "in my situation" and "if I'm in that situation". At one point I asked Peter what we, as a community, could do to reduce the number of rape crimes. He said that people need to be aware of their situations, and be in groups of people they trust. At that point Stephanie said, "**I trusted him**".

I suddenly realized why the topic had repeatedly come back to rape, why she had been referring to rape in such odd ways, and why she was so interested in what I thought about the situation; **the person standing right in front of me had experienced this horror in her own past.** The challenge was no longer proving that the unborn was a valuable human being, it was showing Stephanie that *she* is a valuable human being.

I continued my dialogue with Stephanie and Peter, trying to show as much compassion as possible. At one point Peter asked me, "**If a girl told you that she was raped and had an abortion, would you think less of her?**" I told him that I wouldn't. We exchanged just a few more thoughts before Stephanie stated that she needed to get to class. As she and Peter walked away she turned and said, "Thanks for not yelling at me."

The dialogue with Stephanie ended well, I was able to meet her where she was, and

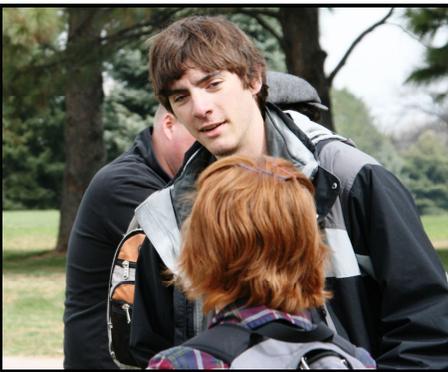


demonstrate that I could care about her pain in addition to caring about the unborn. Have you ever heard the phrase, “They don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care”? It is definitely true; for some people, some of the time. It was true for Stephanie, but it wasn’t true for Garrett at Fresno State University.

Garrett was standing next to our small exhibit, looking at the pictures. I asked him what he thought about abortion and he told me that he was against abortion in every case, except rape. After asking him why, he told me that he believed that no woman should ever be forced to have a child that she didn’t consent to create.

In response, I agreed that no woman should be forced into that position, and that rape is a horrible evil for which the rapist should be punished to the fullest extent of the law. He then asked, “So how do you justify taking away a woman’s right to choose in that situation?” I then knew that Garrett was interested in something different than Stephanie, he wanted to know the intellectual reasoning behind my position.

To respond to his question I gave him the following example, “Garrett, what if there



Hear Sarah’s story next month!

was a woman who was raped three years ago, became pregnant, and decided to keep the child. So, she now has a two year old sitting in the crib, but the two year old is starting to look like the father. Every time she looks at her child she is reminded of the horrible crime in her past. Would she be justified in killing her two year old, who is a product of rape,

because she cannot stand being constantly reminded of the father?”

Garrett immediately replied, “Of course not!” I asked, “Why not?” and he stated, “Well, that would be different than abortion.” I then asked, “Garrett, how would it be different?”

.....
■ WOULD SHE BE JUSTIFIED IN KILLING HER TWO YEAR OLD BECAUSE SHE CANNOT STAND BEING CONSTANTLY REMINDED OF THE FATHER?
.....

Garrett pondered for a few seconds before looking at me and saying, “I guess there really is no difference.”

By using a tool we call Trot out the Toddler I was able to respond to Garrett’s question in a rational way. Did Garrett want to know that I cared about women? Absolutely, but he really wanted an intellectual response to a specific case. Did Stephanie want to know what I thought should be done in the case of a woman who was raped? Probably, but she really wanted to know that I wasn’t a heartless jerk who just wanted to take away women’s rights.

Meeting a person where they are is very important in dialogue. Pro-life advocates can sometimes get weird, we care so much about the unborn that we forget to care about the person we are talking to. I hope that we are all able to better know how to respond to people where they are.

In Christ,

Joshua Pedrick

Joshua Pedrick’s Prayer Requests

- Upcoming May Trip to California
- That we would speak with love
- That lives would be saved and changed