



Making abortion unthinkable

“We can’t say human life has objective value. We’re only as valuable as other animals.”

–Male student from Capilano University

Dear friends,

I knew, as soon as I finished speaking, that he wasn’t happy with my comments.

I was speaking at Capilano University in North Vancouver late last year, as part of my campus tour of schools in the Lower Mainland. And as I spoke about how we must recognize that human life at all of its stages is valuable, one of the students raised his hand. He had introduced himself earlier as someone who was leaning towards the pro-choice position but that he had attended the talk to hear the pro-life view.

But he was having problems with my claim. He questioned how we know that human life has value, not just for fetuses but for all human beings. And as a vegetarian, he asked, **“Who are you to say that human beings are more valuable than animals?”**

Unfortunately, his point of view is no longer uncommon. Almost anytime I speak on a university campus (and even to some Christian audiences), I get similar questions—and they aren’t just coming from philosophy graduates or medical professionals but from ordinary students like him.

On that same speaking tour alone, I handled similar questions from the audiences at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. At Trinity Western University, a Christian school, I encouraged them to prepare for conversations where this fundamental truth is questioned. The students were so glad to experience this kind of training that they are hoping to have me speak again this year.

Back at Capilano, I answered that student’s question briefly but invited him to talk to me after the presentation, an offer he was glad to take. We walked outside and, sitting in full view of the greenest outdoor space I’ve seen on a campus, he explained to me how life has no inherent value. For almost an hour, I was able to share how even from a secular point of view it makes more sense to value human life than not value it. I challenged him to provide alternatives to that point of view and to explain what a world that doesn’t value human life would look like. I even asked him how he could say the blades of grass in that area were just as valuable as the people sitting on them. At the end of our conversation, he told me he appreciated what I said and that he had **“a lot to think about.”**

As I watched him walk away, I couldn’t help but think that he is exactly the reason why we need full-time pro-life workers. If I weren’t doing full-time work, I wouldn’t have heard many of his comments before at other presentations. I also wouldn’t have known how to respond to his questions (which are based on ideas that I don’t think he understood the full implications of). And if I weren’t doing full-time work, I wouldn’t have been there at all to speak to students like him.

What’s even more encouraging is that others are seeing the value of what we are doing. They can see how effective we are in responding to even the most fringe ideas and how we are able to bring that message to others. For example, one of CCBR’s new student interns comes from my alma mater, Carleton University. I encouraged



Alexandra Myhill-Jones,
president of Capilano
University Heartbeat
Photo by Marissa Grootes,
Capilano Courier

him to apply to work with us after he had heard both Stephanie and me speak at his school. He's now been renewed to work with us for his second four-month term.

We're even encouraging pro-life leaders to follow our model for professional, paid workers. Earlier last year, I also spoke in the northern B.C. communities of Terrace, Houston, Smithers, and Kitimat. Each community's pro-life group hosted me for a special evening, and I also spoke at two local Christian schools. Between the groups and schools, I spoke to almost 400 people in the area.



Houston Pro-life Society, Houston, BC



Leaders of the pro-life groups from Kitimat, BC and Terrace, BC

When I came up there, I challenged the pro-life leaders to understand that the front lines of the abortion debate are not in Ottawa or on Parliament Hill but right there in their communities. I explained to them how abortion debates across the country affect what happens in their own communities and so as pro-lifers they need to be equipped to effectively defend the pro-life view right in their home towns.

The group leaders told me that all the pro-life work they did was because of volunteers who were often busy doing other jobs or who were already ready to retire. But they were so impressed with what they heard from me and what we do at CCBR that many of the community leaders wanted to meet with me after the talks. They asked me to explain how I could do this work full-time so that they could create a similar position locally. After explaining our support-raising model, the leaders said their goal for 2009 is to hire a paid, professional pro-life worker for their region starting this year.

All of this of course is only achievable because friends like you see the need for professional pro-life workers like me. Thanks to you, we're not just challenging the bad thinking coming from abortion advocates but equipping pro-life groups across this country to do the same.

Sincerely,

Link of the month: Read more about my talk at Capilano University here:

<http://capcourier.theorem.ca/2008/11/03/heartbeat-club-holds-the-first-meeting/>

***Upcoming Schedule:**

Mon., Jan. 26th Langley Pro-Life General Meeting (main speaker), Langley, BC
Tue., Jan 27th Trinity Western University, Langley, BC
Tue., Feb. 3rd Axis (mid 20s – mid 30s group), Centre Street Church, Calgary, AB
Thu., Feb. 5th Dalhousie and St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS
Mon., Feb. 9th St. Francis Xavier, Antigonish, NS
Tue., Feb. 10th St. Francis Xavier, Antigonish, NS
Wed., Feb. 11th University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, PEI
Thu., Feb. 12th University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, PEI
Mon., Feb. 16th University of New Brunswick Saint John, hosted by *Lifelink*, Saint John, NB
Tue., Feb. 17th University of New Brunswick Saint John, hosted by *Lifelink*, Saint John, NB

*Please note there are still openings in my schedule for talks in B.C. and on the East Coast. If you are in the area and would like me to speak at your event, please let me know.

Please make cheques payable to CCBR, write Jojo Ruba on the note, and mail them to
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