

Respect Yourself

✖ Last month Catherine Davis and her

Atlanta-based Georgia Right to Life (GRTL) organization launched a groundbreaking effort to stop the egregious number of black abortions in their state. The organization decided to use billboards to present its case for life – that's right – billboards.

The 80-billboard campaign permeates the skyline of Atlanta. Because of its scale, the campaign is nothing less than cutting-edge innovation. The billboards read, "Black children are an endangered species." The words encircle the face of an adorable black child. In addition to the message, the only Web address listed is .

At the Web site, the message is very clear. Their research and statistics are complete. The editorials are also compelling. The Georgia Right to Life group has designed a sophisticated communications vehicle. Yet, it all starts with a winsome message from the billboards. The graphics experts say that billboards can only effectively use seven words – just seven words and a visual impression. Therefore the designers tastefully showed the innocence of a beautiful black baby.

This campaign is controversial, not because of its effect on Atlanta drivers or the average Joe. Changing lives by saying, "Respect yourself!" should hardly be controversial. The controversy

arises from their effectiveness as record numbers of black girls are going to their Web site. Angry pro-abortion groups and Planned Parenthood have attempted to label GRTL as deceptive. GRTL is also accused of working against the best interests of young black women. Some even have demeaned Davis as, you guessed it, a "sell out." Once again in opponents' minds, the "naive black crusader" is being used by white extremists. In response to pro-abortion advocates, Davis has also been pitted against them on CNN, NPR and in a recent New York Times article.

Despite opponents' vitriol, GRTL's work is both tasteful and historic. How is it historic? First its anti-abortion message is direct and hard-hitting. Second targeting blacks so directly, without condemnation, is revolutionary. This is a major course correction in anti-abortion marketing. As a result, it is finally piercing the cultural veil over the issue of abortion in the black community.

So who is Davis?

She is a native of Stamford, Conn., a lawyer, and a Magna Cum Laude graduate of the prestigious Tufts University. Thirteen years ago she moved to Georgia to become a change agent. In 2006 Davis ran for Congress in Georgia, because she had a desire to impact her community. After a crushing political defeat, she felt

unsupported by her
Republican Party and ostracized by the democrats. She decided
to take on an
advocacy role.

For the last few years she has served
tirelessly to give a voice to the voiceless. She focused on
positive change
through education, local/state involvement and peaceful
action. Davis' Radiance
Foundation and Operation Outrage exposed the destruction of
the
African-American community through the abortion industry.

Then in 2009
Davis became the Minority Outreach Director for the 30-year
old organization
GRTL. In her new post she simply continued grass root
activism. Davis traveled
the state of Georgia returning to the real strength of the
black community –
the Church.

Her education and experience have
catapulted her to the forefront of the abortion struggle. She
has mobilized a
coalition of over a hundred black pastors who have begun to
confront the issue
of abortion politically. This informal coalition has educated,
debated and won
over many legislators on both sides of the aisle.

Today, however, a fresh wind is
blowing. Recent studies show that black attitudes about
abortion are changing
nationally. The community is waking up to a truly genocidal
trend that cannot
be masked by the term "reproductive freedom."

Davis' rise to prominence is a sign that the religious and political landscape is changing. She and other pro-life black champions are passionate because of the horrifying abortion statistics of our day. Since 1973 more than fourteen million African-American babies have been aborted. In Georgia, like most communities in America, the black abortion rate is skyrocketing. Over half of Georgia abortions (57 percent) are performed on blacks, who make up only 29 percent of the population.

I want to challenge you to become a part of the growing number of people who are taking a stand against abortion.

I also want you to celebrate and congratulate preachers like Bishop Wellington Boone of Wellington Boone Ministries, pastor Clenard Childress of LEARN and the Rev. Johnny Hunter founder of the black pro-life movement and LEARN, who have been blowing a trumpet for years. They have been maligned and persecuted. It's time to honor them and their message. Become educated about the issue. Speak to others about the genocide that is currently accepted among many Americans.

Respect yourself and God's gift of life.