

URBAN FAITH

The Myth of the Unwanted Child

Posted By [Christine A. Scheller](#) On October 19, 2011 @ 2:35 pm

As a co-founder of the Radiance Foundation, Ryan Bomberger is one of the minds behind the controversial 'Black Children Are an Endangered Species' billboard campaign. Here's why he thinks the black community should be at the forefront of the pro-life cause.

Ryan Scott Bomberger is co-founder of The Radiance Foundation, an organization whose mission is to illuminate, educate, and motivate others about the intrinsic value of human life. He is also the creative force behind a [controversial billboard campaign](#) that described black babies as an "endangered species." What didn't make the headlines is the fact that Bomberger was conceived during a rape. He is both an adoptee and an adoptive parent. UrbanFaith talked to him about his work and what motivates it. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

UrbanFaith: What does the Radiance Foundation do?

Ryan Bomberger: [The Radiance Foundation](#) is comprised of three main components: media campaigns, one-on-one community outreach where we live and in other areas, working in conjunction with other organizations, and our educational component. We create all the content, whether video, print, web, or otherwise to illuminate the truth that we are all born with this beautiful intrinsic value. We want people to understand it and embrace it and to effect positive change in their own life and in the lives of those around them.

How did you become passionate about the pro-life cause?

I'm passionate about the pro-life cause mainly because I had two parents who defied the myth of the unwanted child and believed that they could simply love a child and help unleash that child's purpose in life. They had three biological children and then adopted ten. That's what inspired me throughout my life to reach out to the broken, to reach out to those in need.

My wife Bethany and I started the Radiance Foundation in 2009. For our first public campaign, we decided to tackle the subject of abortion. Like a breast cancer awareness campaign, we wanted to address where abortion's impact is the greatest so we addressed the black community's crisis of abortion. That is what led us to launch [TooManyAborted.com](#) and the billboard campaign that has been in numerous states across the country.

What inspired media frenzy around those billboards?

It was the billboard that stated "Black children are an endangered species." We were the first organization to ever do a public ad campaign about abortion's disproportionate impact on the black community. That campaign [exploded in the media](#). Each subsequent campaign that continued to highlight the disproportionate impact while promoting adoption as a life affirming alternative has continued and it's raised the ire of [Planned Parenthood](#) and [other pro-abortion groups](#). They've tried desperately to remove our billboards. Three hundred billboards later, they've never removed a single one. I think part of that is our diligence in doing the research. When these billboard companies look on our website and they see the message we're conveying and they see how documented all of the information is, they feel satisfied and comfortable that the billboards that they're placing up there, although they may be controversial, they are rooted in fact.

What about the billboard that was removed in New York City?

Those are from [a different company](#). Their billboards have been brought down. Ours, thankfully, haven't.

In the New York case, the parent of the child that was used in the billboard objected. How do you deal with challenges like that?

That's not been an issue. We use some original photography and in some of our work we use stock photography, but that's part of the agreement. When that particular parent signed away the rights, there was no caveat as to who could use it. That's the thing with the pro-abortion or pro-choice side. They're always trying to find the distraction, and they succeeded instead of talking about the numbers. In New York City, 60 percent of black pregnancies end in abortion. It is epidemic in that city, the home of Planned Parenthood. They successfully were able to divert the conversation, which I think is tragic for all of us.

Are you able to speak on this issue more easily because you are an African American man rather than a white activist?

I don't believe in hyphenations, I'm just American. I happen to be as black as Obama, which means I'm mixed, biracial. There are times when I feel like I have to use the label, but the thing I like to focus on is that because I'm biracial I'm able to be a bridge on a number of different issues. However, I may say I'm biracial, but the next person wouldn't have a clue. Throughout my life, I've been treated unfortunately in quite racist ways, so it does allow me to address this. I am a black, biracial child who was adopted and so it does give me an authority in a sense to speak from that perspective. It's also hard to argue with my story of being born of rape.

What has the response been?

We were completely overwhelmed and inundated with email responses, phone responses, media interviews. But what it showed was this issue that many believe is a settled issue isn't settled. The unexpected portion of the response was the venomously racist emails and phone calls we would get. I can't tell you how many emails and phone calls I've received that have said, "More niggers need to die" or "Abortions don't kill enough niggers." But thankfully, the majority of the responses have been incredibly positive, particularly from African American women, from post-abortive men and women. And so, we know that there's been a positive impact.

I would say the other response that we weren't expecting was a direct response from Planned Parenthood. Our billboards have caused them to hold two separate conferences. One was a phone conference and other was a bloggers/journalists conference. So in the last year-and-a-half, two major conferences from the nation's largest abortion chain to try to figure out how to combat specifically our TooManyAborted.com campaign.

What tactics have they employed?

Their response has been relatively simple. They love using buzz words, so they have resorted to calling us racists or misogynists or anti-woman. That would pretty much encompass their strategy. Every billboard we've placed, there would be this response and it comes from a Planned Parenthood funded group called Sister Song that is a radically pro-abortion minority collective. Their whole tactic is laughable considering that the team of leaders nationwide that have endorsed and championed this campaign are all black, and many of them are black post-abortive women like [Catherine Davis](#), like [Dr. Alveda King](#). What they can't do is refute the numbers. Even in their phone conference, which I managed to attend, they couldn't refute any of the actual numbers, mainly because they're from federal sources and from Guttmacher.