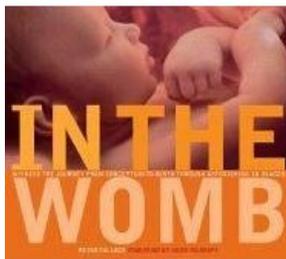


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“In the Womb” — One Look and Your Eyes Are Opened

Wednesday, May 2, 2007



The public discussion about the power of ultrasound and modern imaging technologies has revealed something fascinating — the pro-abortion movement does not want us peering into the womb. The view inside the womb transforms the moral debate over abortion. Once that image is seen, the vocabulary necessarily changes.

This gestating creature is a *baby*, a *child*, a *person* — and a wonder to behold. That wonder is beautifully depicted in a book released just recently by the National Geographic Society, *In the Womb*. Put simply — the book is one of the most amazing volumes my eyes have ever seen.

The book’s author is Peter Tallack, a geneticist and science writer who, along with scientific modeler David Barlow and ultrasound expert Professor Stuart Campbell, brings together absolutely incredible “four-dimensional” images and photographs of the developing baby.

As Tallack explains, “For obstetricians, the development of 3D and 4D scans has been the medical equivalent of the Hubble Space Telescope, allowing researchers to scrutinize fetal development and behavior in unprecedented detail.”

The book starts at the very beginning, with an incredible photograph of a human sperm actually fertilizing a human egg. That one picture and film sequence has been described as “the greatest purely optical magnification in motion-picture history.”

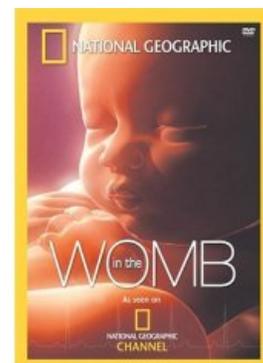
From that point onward the book traces the development of a baby girl through the sequence of trimesters. Her physical development is breathtaking in its beauty. But the biggest surprise for most readers may well be the revelations about fetal behavior. Babies are learning to sleep, taste, smile, cry, and suck their thumbs — all while in the womb.

A Tallack observes, the images reveal “that the fetus behaves in a much more serious way than previously imagined.” For most readers, that will likely be an understatement. In Tallack’s words, “During her odyssey in the womb, she will smile, recognize her mother’s voice, and maybe even dream.”

At just twenty weeks of gestational age — half a normal pregnancy — a baby can grimace, smile, and even laugh.

In the Womb, the book, is based upon *In the Womb*, the television documentary. The documentary is also breathtaking, and it offers the additional benefit of seeing these unprecedented images in motion. The book and the DVD together represent a scientific education of sorts. Parents will want to watch the DVD and read the book with their older children.

The development of these sophisticated imaging technologies is reshaping the abortion debate. Once these images are seen, they can never be forgotten. For the first time in human history, this generation has been given the gift of seeing inside the womb. Once these images are seen there is no way to deny what we see — the miracle of life.



What we see with our own eyes is the fact that every single human being is “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

As the Psalmist declared:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. [Psalm 139:13-16, English Standard Version]

We can now see the “unformed substance” being formed. These images allow us to see the wonder of the human baby in development. The proper response to these images is not mere wonder, however, but the worship of the Creator who reveals His glory in the womb.

Parents will want to note that both the film and the book mention evolution early in the story. Nevertheless, this is not a matter integral to the story of the baby’s progression and development. I would strongly suggest that parents read the book and watch the DVD, and then share these with their children, allowing for generous discussion and parental instruction. These images and photographs hold the promise of helping children and youth to understand the miracle of life in a whole new way. That is exactly what the pro-abortion movement should fear.



Other helpful resources include Lennart Nilsson’s pioneering book, *A Child is Born*, first published in 1986. Nilsson’s incredible photography inside the womb represented a revolution in themselves. Along with others, Nilsson has more recently produced *Life*, which traces the entire human life span. Nilsson shocked the world with his 1965 photograph of a living human embryo — a photograph that landed, appropriately enough, on the cover of *Life* magazine.

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