

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Eric Mathison

Phone: (403) 478-3476

Email: ejmathis@ucalgary.ca

CFI-Calgary Defends Free Expression at University of Calgary

CALGARY, AB (November 25, 2008)—As the University of Calgary moves to limit [Campus Pro-Life \(CPL\)](#), a ratified group on campus, from presenting an exhibit, the Center for Inquiry-Calgary is making efforts to allow free, unfettered expression.

The Genocide Awareness Project (GAP), which seeks to compare abortion to the act of genocide through large, graphic photographs from the Holocaust, has been presented on campus the last five semesters. Citing worries of violence, the [University has threatened](#) non-academic misconduct, which could result in suspension or expulsion, as well as arrest, in an attempt to deter CPL.

“It is critical to understand that CFI is here to defend Campus Pro-Life’s right to freedom of speech and freedom of expression. We do not, however, endorse or agree with their statements, beliefs and policies; we only support their right to express themselves and their opinions freely, which is recognized in Canada’s Charter of Rights,” said [Cliff Erasmus](#), Center for Inquiry Community of Calgary Executive Chair.

The University of Calgary has the legal right to press charges if the demonstration takes place, but CFI-Calgary is making efforts with hopes the exhibit will occur without penalty to CPL. In the past, security has been stationed at the exhibit, and signs have been posted warning people of its graphic nature. These methods have proven effective in previous years, and across Canada no significant confrontations have been reported. On Thursday and Friday when the exhibit takes place, members from CFI-Calgary and the University of Calgary Freethinkers, its campus outreach group, will be present in solidarity of CPL, as well as alerting passerby about the potentially disturbing nature of GAP.

The ability of a group to express its view, CFI maintains, is of paramount importance in promoting open assessment of contrary opinions. Only by allowing free expression can the marketplace of ideas be nurtured, whereby no individual shall have an opinion forced upon her, and all opinions shall be subjected to the demands of reason and rational dialogue. Erasmus stated, “We may not agree on the pro-life/pro-choice debate, but we share common ground on the principles to express ourselves freely—this is the beginning to a humanist approach to communication.”

The Center for Inquiry is a think tank and research institution devoted to the appreciation of science and reason and their applications to human conduct. The purpose of the Center for Inquiry is to promote reason, science, and freedom of inquiry in all areas of human endeavor. The Center for Inquiry is a transnational nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that encourages evidence-based inquiry into science, pseudoscience, medicine and health, religion, ethics, secularism, and society. CFI-Calgary’s Website can be found at <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/calgary>

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