

GAP opens dialogue, student group says

COMMENTARY

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“This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor tolerate error so long as reason is left free to combat it.” — Thomas Jefferson, Dec. 27, 1820, printed above the Fir Room in the EMU.

On Oct. 11 and 12, Justice For All hosted the Genocide Awareness Project (GAP) on our campus. We thank the University community for remaining peaceful and calm throughout the display. The ensuing discussions on campus, in classrooms, in residence halls and in letters to the editor have enriched the “freedom of the human mind” to explore controversial issues.

When dialogue ceases to take place on a given subject and the status quo is accepted without question, we must challenge ourselves to examine that subject. The purpose of the GAP is to stimulate dialogue and discussion on a topic that may have ceased to be critically analyzed: abortion.

Our society is a visual culture. Many people need to see something in order to believe it. Therefore, the GAP employs the use of large photographs showing the result of abortions.

Many people have asked us what we think of these photographs. The photos are shocking, revolting, disgusting. They

are unsettling. It is our hope that students will move beyond this initial shock, revulsion and anger to ask, “Why?” Why do these photos upset us so? Is it because these photos depict acts of violence?

Many people have been upset by use of the term “genocide.” Taking the time to see beyond the term, let us look at what is before our eyes: the systematic killing of a group stripped of the status of personhood. We acknowledge the societal responsibility for the crisis situation that leads a woman to consider having an abortion. For this reason we support and are actively volunteering for 1st Way, a local resource center for women.

Will we, as University students in the “marketplace of ideas,” engage in informed debate and dialogue? Will we seek to “follow truth wherever it may lead”? After viewing these photographs, we are all challenged to examine our conceptions of what the truth about abortion is.

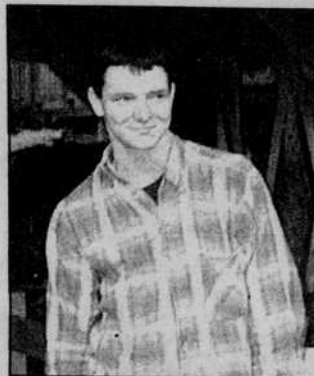
On Oct. 13, we incorrectly advertised a presentation by the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform as an “Open Forum Discussion.” This was our mistake. We resolve to properly advertise all of our events in the future.

Justice for All seeks to “promote ... justice ... and the right to life for ... all venerable people. To help women and men in crisis pregnancies find support To educate ... on all bio-ethical issues.” (Bi-Laws of Justice for All, Students for Bio-Ethical Reform.)

Dominic DeMaio and Tommy Stoffel are the president and vice president of Justice For All. Their views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald. Comments or questions may be sent to them at jfa_uo@yahoo.com

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