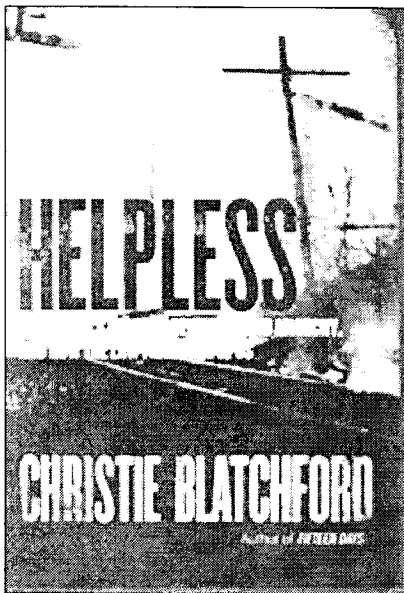


## Daily Bulletin

Tuesday, November 16, 2010

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## Apology after author is silenced

University officials issued a statement yesterday in the wake of a Friday night incident in which *Globe and Mail* columnist Christie Blatchford was prevented from speaking at a scheduled event in the Humanities Theatre.

A group of protesters took exception to what they called the "racist" attitude of her book *Helpless*, which deals with the four-year standoff over native land claims in the village of Caledonia in Ontario's Haldimand County. Blatchford had been invited to campus by the university bookstore to speak about her book. After some time, it was announced that her talk would be rescheduled.

The events of the evening were live-blogged by the Wilfrid Laurier University student newspaper *The Cord*, and got some media attention yesterday.

Says the statement that was issued by the university yesterday: "The University of Waterloo was disappointed that a guest invited to share a particular perspective on a topic of importance to Canadians was silenced by protesters. *Globe and Mail* columnist Christie Blatchford was scheduled to appear at the university on Friday night to discuss her new book *Helpless: Caledonia's Nightmare of Fear and Anarchy, and How the Law Failed All of Us*. Due to safety issues, the university decided to reschedule the event.

"The university considers Friday's events as an attack on its presence as a place where issues are explored, discussed and at times debated. The freedom to speak and to learn is fundamental to the institution. Waterloo's ethical behaviour policy states: 'The University is an autonomous community which exists to further the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and understanding through scholarship and teaching. The University aims to ensure an environment of tolerance and respect and believes that the right of individuals to advance their views openly must be upheld throughout the University.' To ensure there is no doubt of the university's convictions, Waterloo President Feridun Hamdullahpur apologized to Ms. Blatchford, on behalf of the university

community, for Friday night's disruption. He has asked the community to begin planning for a safe, open and respectful dialogue featuring Ms. Blatchford and her book."