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VIEWPOINTS

ONLINE POLL

Have you been desensitized by Sept. 11 signs and slogans? www.dailygamecock.com. Results published on Fridays.

IN OUR OPINION

The reason we survived

One year ago today, the worst attack that ever occurred on American soil disrupted the lives of every citizen of the United States. On that day, 2,801 Americans lost their lives in the attacks. Some were innocent victims headed for a routine day at work. Others were police officers and firefighters who died in their efforts to save lives.

That morning, a somber mood encompassed the nation. Despite the horrors and the magnitude of the tragedy, a new feeling of American pride emerged. Despite our sadness, we were proud of all our citizens. Even in our great loss, we knew many had died selflessly trying to save others. And even after both the World Trade Center Towers had been leveled,

countless crews of firefighters and police officers never left the scene. Pushing themselves to their limits, they pressed on in search of survivors. Even in Columbia, the lines to donate blood were overwhelming to see. Surrounded by tragedy, America was a unified nation that day.

But as we reflect one year later, we wonder how much of that powerful emotion remains. For months after the 11th, we couldn't turn our heads from the television and the radio. We couldn't hear enough about what had happened. Yet now, we change the channel. The slogans "united we stand" and "God bless America" don't have the same effect they did even six months ago.

You will never forget that day; that's a given. But don't let the cliched messages desensitize you. On Sept. 11, we were all brought together in ways we had never experienced before. If we let go of that, we let go of what so many workers died for.

We live in a great nation. We experience freedoms that some cultures only dream of. But though these freedoms can leave us vulnerable to attack, holding on to the pride we found a year ago will keep us from ever falling for good.

GAMECOCK CORRECTIONS

In a photograph ("A Divided Message") in Monday's paper, the group is participating in the annual Stand Up for Life March and Rally sponsored by USC Students for Life and South Carolina Citizens for Life. The group is not affiliated with Carolina Christians for Life.

If you see an error in today's paper, we want to know. E-mail us at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.

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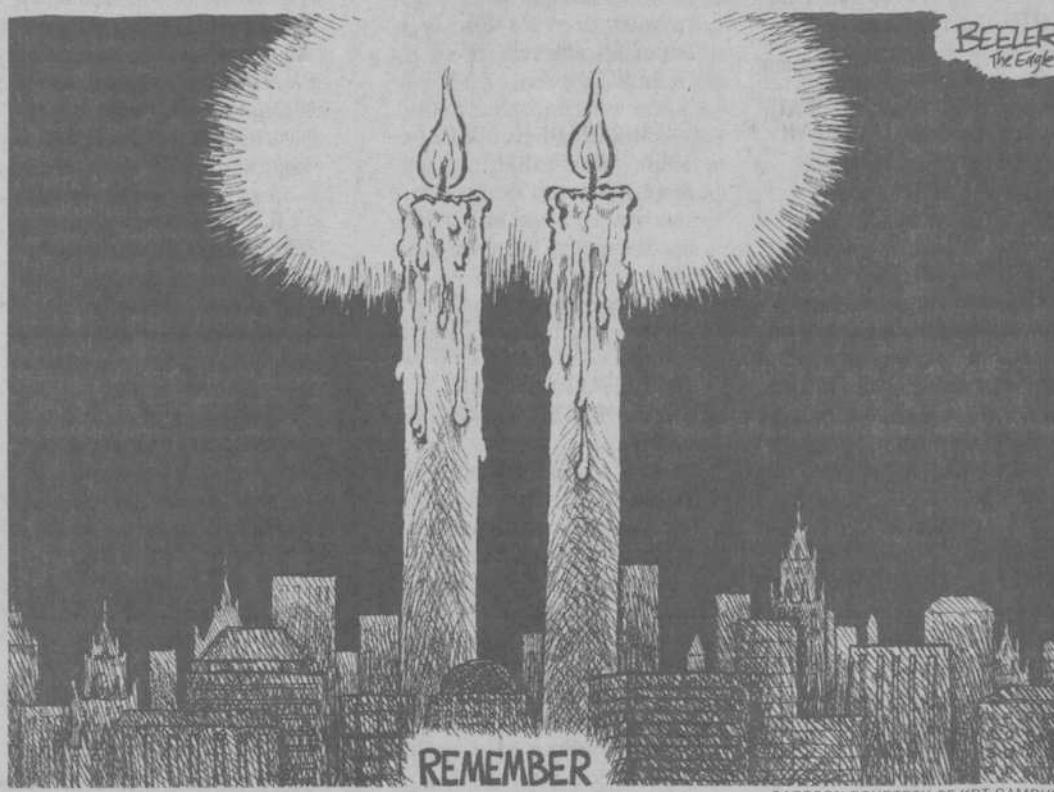
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9/11 THEN AND NOW



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

Now: Fighting for the First



JASON L. RAPP

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The media should be allowed to do its job.

Being naturally defiant, I refused to let last year's terrorist attacks on my country scare me for any significant amount of time.

I reasoned then, as I do now, that we shouldn't allow cowardly people who hide in hills on the other side of the world to dictate what we fear, their worldwide network notwithstanding.

But survey results released two weeks ago by the First Amendment Center and American Journalism Review suggest I have far fewer people in my corner than I imagined. It would appear, sadly, that the cowards have rendered America a cowardly nation. In doing so, they've come dangerously close to defeating us.

A whopping 49 percent of those surveyed think the First Amendment gives us too much freedom, and 42 percent think the American press has too much freedom. I present these facts as evidence that the "legal-

ize marijuana" movement has become too powerful.

I can only assume people fail to realize that the First Amendment is what makes us unique among nations. The five freedoms protected therein are why al Qaida flew 747s through our buildings and national psyche in the first place. They are why we are simultaneously loathed and exalted around the world. And it now looks as if half of us are biting the hand holding our meal.

The reasoning given to explain such opinions is that media questioning inhibits the government in the war against terrorism. Horse pucky. The media are watchdogs, and governments without watchdogs turn into governments that oppress women and return their countries to the 12th century.

Without the media raising questions, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft would likely have arrested and detained even his mother by now. Without the media raising concerns, President Bush would have invaded Canada for its maple syrup, perhaps without first informing Congress. Bush was reportedly overheard reasoning to defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, "We don't grow syrup in Texas."

The terrorist attacks have indeed scared Americans. Given our seeming vulnerability, that's understandable. Pearl Harbor should have been enough to deliver us permanently from our

isolationism, but we allowed time to take us back. Now that a foreign enemy has again dealt us serious harm, fear is making some doubt those things that make us great. That reaction is the wrong one, and it scares me more than hill-hopping terrorists.

On American isolationism, I offer that media questioning contributed to Bush's decision to seek world support before we try to topple Saddam Hussein's regime. I agree that Hussein needs to be ousted, but we need to make a clear case to the world before heading to the Middle East. I don't like joining the ranks of those nations who instigate war, but there's no other way to end the threat Hussein poses. Had media questions and Bush administration dissent not surfaced, we would face a war in which we have little support and many enemies.

Most of the people surveyed could not name the five rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, yet inexplicably feel it gives us too much freedom. I don't fear terrorists such as Osama bin Laden, al Qaida and Saddam Hussein; I fear ignorant Americans who need to understand that without the First Amendment, we'd be no better than the people trying to kill us. And they will have won.

Rapp is a fifth-year print journalism student.

Then: In the shadow of death



COREY FORD

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Every student should pitch in and help out.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This column was written one year ago after the attacks.

Our beliefs, our freedom, our way of life are what they want us to change.

The University of South Carolina and all other institutions of higher learning come into play now. We must not give in now or change our lifestyle; in essence, that would signify a total victory for these terrorists. At Carolina, we must continue our classes, our activities, our meetings and our athletics events. We must never give any indication that we will bow down to their desires for a chaotic and obstructive society.

Yesterday was without a doubt a watershed in American history. Students were stunned and shocked by the events, and

more importantly, many students had relatives in Manhattan or were working at the Pentagon. This was not a time for class. I therefore respectfully request that President Palms, Provost Odom and Associate Provost Greiner instruct all faculty members to discount yesterday's classes for attendance purposes. I think this is a fair measure, especially for students with loved ones in these war zones.

Multicultural Affairs Director Brandon Ray has already discussed potential situations with some international and Muslim students. I urge the student body not to prejudice any student on this campus. All Americans have developed a sense of rage toward this incident. Muslim-Americans are Americans, too, just as citizens of English, Scottish or Irish descent are citizens.

On days like today, however, it is imperative that we abandon the distinction of Italian, Scotch-Irish, African-American, Asian-American or any other label. Today, we are all Americans. Tuesday, we were all victims.

Whether or not you have embraced this country and everything she stands for, she has embraced you with freedoms no other peoples in history have even dared to dream. The more important question,

however, is what are you willing to do for her people in their time of need? Will you care? Will you give blood, donate to the relief fund, enter her service if she needs you?

Student Government has contacted the Red Cross to inquire about the possibility of having an on-campus blood drive. However, because of the overwhelming crowds at local banks, they do not have the time, staff or resources to have one at Carolina. Yet, APO will be running shuttles to the local Red Cross shelters.

As your president, I call on every student to donate blood, if physically possible. We have a duty to help those who would have certainly helped us if we had been attacked instead. In the next few days, Student Government will be selling ribbons to show our support and the proceeds will go to the relief fund coordinated by the Red Cross. So be on the lookout for this outside the Russell House.

We lost thousands of our citizens yesterday. If you do one thing — donate blood or donate money — then you have done something. As president, that's all I can ask. Thank you.

Ford graduated in May and was student body president.

Holding on to the reason I'm mad



PHIL WATSON

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It might be a year later, but I'm still mad as hell.

It's been exactly a year since my roommate burst into my room and woke me up from a late night to tell me the news. Since then, I've clenched my fists in anger every time I watch the TV and see some guy across seas burning an American flag while carrying his 10-year-old son, wearing a mock dynamite suit, on his shoulders.

A lot of people seem to have come to a peaceful acceptance of what happened. I have not. I'm still mad as hell, and I hope that's exactly where all 19 of those bastards are right now. In fact, that's exactly where anyone else who helped them, supported them or cheered for them can go as well.

After looking at the TV for a few seconds, I choose the punching bag I keep in the hallway as a release. You might have chosen a wall, a few curse words, loud and angry music, or tears. I spent several minutes furiously telling my roommate what I wanted to do to the murderers. I cursed at whoever did it, and the fanatical beliefs that brainwashed them into doing it.

A friend and I played racquetball that afternoon to alleviate some of our collective rage. He usually wins, and that afternoon he really beat me worse than usual. Some people, such as my friend, can turn their anger into something tangible; others just let it boil up like a covered pot on the stove. Many people let their anger do just that shortly after Tuesday. There was madness and grief all over the place.

Unfortunately, there's not one specific island these homicidal menaces live on. Getting rid of them would be easy if that were the case. Rather, they are hidden all over the world, brainwashed by an extremist sect that hates advancement and loves destruction.

It became apparent that more people will take these fanatical views and carry out mayhem after Islamic leaders from around the world would not denounce this kind of violence. They will not resolve that killing pregnant women, little children and whoever else might be at a shopping mall on a Saturday afternoon is wrong.

I've heard all the excuses and lip service, but the fact remains, they will not say, as a joint group of religious leaders representing one of the major faiths of the world, that blowing up a school bus full of children is wrong. This worries me greatly.

I've grown to hate the cliched words associated with that Tuesday. They've been spoken in the news hundreds of thousands of times, and I wince every time I hear them. But we will be hearing them more because of the many people across the world who are in love with the hateful ideology that encourages death and destruction as a means of spiritual gain.

There was a program on campus last week called "One year later, what we've learned."

One year later, what have I learned? I've learned that America, no matter how imperfect it might be, is still a light-house for freedom and individual rights, and it's under attack by people who think ravaging dozens of virgins is only a blown-up school bus full of children away.

Watson is a fourth-year print journalism student.