

# OPINIONS

## Take a brief moment to reflect



Justus D'Addario  
Columnist

Pause.

While watching the news coverage of the airliners exploding into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon Sept. 11, I realized how out of touch I am with the world. This catastrophe made me pause (thanks be to forces greater than myself, my life allows for it).

When this event came into my consciousness, I felt a myriad of emotions very difficult for me to express.

My heart goes out to all those touched by this day of tragedy, and all those who suffer without recognition.

Each time I am presented with a human tragedy, such as the recent World Trade Center event, the genocide in Rwanda, the Oklahoma City bombing, and on and on, I am reminded of the violent state of the world.

It hurts more deeply than I can put into words.

Someone screams as I write this, just as we mourn while you read this.

It is of utmost importance that we recognize that suffering happens to all people because of the separation and inequality stemming from fear. The root is self-cherishing, where I value my happiness over yours out of fear of not getting enough.

Each time the mass media chooses to present us with a human tragedy, such as the recent "Attack on America" event, we are reminded of constant suffering of others. It is important that we recognize that violence and suffering happen all over the world each day.

Many of these events occur because of the unfair distribution of property and material wealth due to our self-cherishing.

Even those with material wealth suffer, such as President George

W. Bush. President Bush made remarks about the World Trade Center event that morning from an elementary school.

Reporters asked him if he was aware of the event while he was reading a book to children. He nodded solemnly and deferred comment to a later time, according to the news.

This is the traditional "not in front of the children" response prone to adults in the United States and probably other countries, too. We are scared to tell children the truth about what goes on in the world, what we are making (or letting) happen.

We are responsible for the violent state of the world, and we are scared to admit it.

It is imperative that we act as medical professionals would: if we are interested in healing, we must diagnose the disease before we are able to begin treatment. In this case, the diagnosis means simply observing ourselves.

I do not claim to have knowledge of an all-encompassing truth, but there are some very obvious things that people aren't comfortable expressing.

Among these are multi-various, taboo, and hilarious things, such as stench. We all stink, but we are scared to admit it. Sound familiar? It's always the stench of others that we pay most attention to, trying to mask our own funk in the meantime. Crazy parallel, but this is what Bush and many others (including myself) are doing today.

We all suffer, and we try to blame our suffering on others. Bush's comments to America were basically we are going to get those terrorist bad guys that did this to us. He is saying, it's us (good) Americans against those (bad) terrorists.

Who's to say the terrorists couldn't

be Americans?

The killing of tons of people seems like a bad decision to me, but the underlying issue here is one of dualistic thinking. This fearful and historical response perpetuates the cycle of hatred, violence, and suffering.

This conditioned response is clinging fearfully to the mistakes of the past again, who is responsible for the state of the world? We are.

This is the mantra for the possibility of present and future life. If peace and equalization of all people is going to happen, we must quit this dualistic thinking of us versus them, or me versus you.

The dispute of world trade is about money and property, who gets what, and how. This is basic historical politics.

Humanity calls to us: why are we fighting over such a limited thing as material possessions, when there is an infinite supply of wealth around us?

For the past few millennia, we have concentrated on getting things we feel will make our lives more comfortable.

As we all know, but apparently not well enough, the majority of people existing in this world are not comfortable.

At the same time, there are enough resources of food, water, and shelter to go around to everybody if distributed equitably. We all should be aware by now of the current inequality of wealth.

What is the statistic? Twelve percent of the world's population has 80 percent of its wealth? That limited amount of wealth is material possessions.

Why do we feel the need to own the world? We've been conditioned to think that we need material things to feel good and secure in our position.

We get a sense of security when we have things, so we want more things, not realizing that this secure sense is an illusion.

We were probably feeling pretty secure in going about our daily routine the morning of Sept. 11, before we heard news of plane crashes and deaths of many people in New York and Washington D.C.

This is what routine and history is all about: doing the same things gives us a sense of security.

No matter how many guns or missile defense systems we have and how many people we kill with them, we are not safe. It is simple: when we want more, others get less.

As given in horrible example on this day, when anyone is suffering in this human family, we will all feel it.

I don't have any snake oil or techno-gadget you can buy to fix everything, but I do see that these terrorist attacks are examples of negative expression. A group of people felt rage and hate powerful enough to kill and injure many people in highly orchestrated attacks.

This action is that of a desperate person who see no other outlet to cause change or "send a message." We need more positive outlets.

Everyone's voice must be heard and respected before it comes down to such violence. We must quit the suppression of the state of life.

We must also find the truth for ourselves. It seems that new ways of thinking and being in this world, such as those brought to us by children and child-like minds hold the keys.

After thousands of years of history, most of us still qualify wealth in material terms.

What if we could define a wealthy person as one who is healthy, hence able to love, and who is loved by others?

We need humane treatment of one another. "You have to want it bad enough" seems fitting. How about...being kind to your neighbors, brothers and sisters. How about sharing? As usual, the solution remains paradoxically simple and complex. Worldwide expression of feelings of loving-kindness will undoubtedly solve every ill.

We must all get together in the positive expression of a new day. No matter how you see love, be love. These tragedies are catalysts. These events spark communication around the globe.

Let your communication be positive. Equally, give others this opportunity.

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Our telephone number is (828) 251-6586 and our campus e-mail address is banner@unca.edu. An online version of *The Blue Banner* is also available at www.unca.edu.

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Letters should be typed, single-spaced, and should not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication should also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA.

The deadline for letters is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you may send it to *The Blue Banner*, Karpen 244, One University Heights, Asheville N.C. 28804.

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## Look for answers instead of war



Brian Smith  
Columnist

Three weeks and two days ago, a hijacked plane slammed into the World Trade Center, forever altering the landscape of New York City.

Taxi drivers, businessmen and women, tourists, and shoppers on the street suddenly had their lives and their futures taken away from them.

Looking through the collage of blessings and bomb threats, coalitions and terrorists, American flags and stretchers, it is hard to assess the damage.

In all, over 6,400 people are missing and presumed dead at the World Trade Center. Nearly 200 more lost their lives in the Pentagon, and at least that many more passengers on the ill-fated hijacked planes.

Totalling almost 7,000 casualties, this incident has become the single largest loss of life on American soil since the Civil War.

The anger and remorse I felt that Tuesday morning, and still feel to this second, confound and confuse my intellect. I strive to find logic where there is only chaos, reason

where there is only death.

I read through article after article, listen to speech after speech, watch hour after hour of CNN, and still I am no closer to understanding the situation much less than forming my own opinion.

Thus, I must turn to my government, the leaders that I helped to elect, for answers. Osama bin Laden, they claim, is the face behind the act. War is on the horizon.

With such forceful language, I can't help but feel that my life, America's life, is about to change. Gone are the days of the Goodyear blimp over baseball games. Gone are the days of the helicopter tours of the Arch in St. Louis. Gone is the freedom of safety and security that we all once enjoyed.

How can I return to classes, work, and friends without bringing with me planes, stretchers, and bin Laden? I don't think I can. The images that interrupted the morning cartoons will replay forever in my mind's eye.

Today, America is at war with terrorism. But who or what is ter-

rorism? Is it Afghanistan or Iraq? Eric Rudolph or the Unibomber? The oppressed people of Kosovo or East Timor who routinely employ acts of terrorism against their oppressors?

The problem is that no one really knows. When a nation goes to war with an ideology instead of with another nation, the prospect for unlimited war in an unlimited sphere of action is made a reality. One only has to look back over the closing half of the 20th century to see proof of this claim.

The Cold War was a war against communism, which pitted the United States against a political theology. We were drawn into conflicts all across the globe, including Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Afghanistan, Panama, just to name a few.

Billions of dollars of support went to non-communistic regimes, and over 100,000 American lives were lost before domestic support finally teetered.

I wonder how many conflicts will have to be fought, how many billions of dollars will have to be spent,

and how many lives will have to be sacrificed before the American public sees the futility of warring with terrorism. The idea should not be who did this, but why was it done?

What, as a nation, did we do to cause/allow this egregious event to occur? We should be looking for answers rather than war.

That is not to say that I don't feel remorse, pain, and anger when discussing the hijackings. I want whoever is responsible for the acts to pay for his crimes tenfold. However, I don't think that our anger should rule over our reason. An old legal axiom reads "jus ex injuria non oritur;" rights do not arise from wrongs.

Time will bring us our enemies and restraint will yield justice.

In closing, I would like to state the following: As an American, I will support my government in whatever course of action they choose to pursue. As a patriot, I will fight and die for the future of my country.

However, as a human being, I must hesitate and question the reality of the situation.

**"When a nation goes to war with an ideology instead of with another nation, the prospect for unlimited war in an unlimited sphere of action is made reality."**