Christmas Miracles?: Christmas overshadowed

On Dec. 25, 2001, I was not watching the usual Christmas movie. Instead, I was watching MSNBC's "America At War." Truth be told, last Christmas did not feel like Christmas. Last Christmas felt like war.

Now, one year and three months after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, many of us have undergone a great deal of healing. I know that most of my wounds have healed, but others have left permanent scars. Sept. 11 aged me. Before then, I viewed the world with childlike eyes. Last December, for the first time, I experienced Christmas as an adult. There was no magic, no yuletide cheer. In fact, I had plans to work extra hard to make this Christmas twice as joyful, in attempt to make up for last year's loss.

Already this Christmas seems merrier than the last. I am more apt to listen to Christmas music, send our Christmas cards and enjoy life. In fact, I have plans to work extra hard to make this Christmas twice as joyful, in attempt to make up for last year's.

Religious or not, Christmas is an outlet, a sort of therapy. And while it is important to keep those we have lost close to our hearts, I think this special time of year, is also important for us to embrace the magic of Christmas and welcome it into our lives.

Correction

In the Nov. 22, 2002 issue of The Rider News a Faculty Column was printed in the Opinion section entitled “Refuting criticism” and was accredited to Dr. Blair C. Saxman. Mr. Saxman is neither a doctor nor is he a faculty member at Rider. He is, however a staff member and an undergraduate student. The Rider News apologizes for this error.

Letter To The Editor: Baraka controversy till the end

This letter is a response to issues addressed in the Nov. 22 issue of The Rider News, specifically pertaining to the ongoing Baraka controversy.

Since Mr. Saxman's most insulting remarks were reserved for me, and because they were based entirely on erroneous statements attributed to me by him, I would like to respond. If Mr. Saxman had carefully read my original letter of Nov. 8, he would have seen that I did not advocate as claimed, "that our university withdraw the invitation made to Baraka ..." I did not "... call for the suppression of Baraka's right to discourse." I did not state my "... wish to muffle or silence the debate ...", as Mr. Saxman says.

What I did advocate, and I repeat, is "... that people stay away, simply boycott his [Baraka's] appearance ...".

As for your views on race, religion and ethnic-ity Mr. Saxman, I offer these comments: Were you a member of the Jewish persuasion, I would consider your thoughts to be an embarrassment to the biblical descendants of the people of Israel who populate the land the world over. If such is not the case, I would suggest your remarks have been made out of unfamil-

Lacy Korevec

Faculty Column: Baraka's not the only one

Although everyone is no doubt familiar with the story, let us review it one more time. A famous poet is invited to a campus to speak. In the meantime, he makes a series of anti-Israel statements that many people find offensive. The University withdraws the invitation to speak, then changes its mind and allows the presentation to occur.

I, of course, talking about the case of Tom Paulin at Harvard University.

It seems that the Irish poet Paulin was invited to give a lecture at Harvard University, then disinvisited after he expressed strong anti-Israel views. That decision caused a sharp response from three professors at Harvard Law School: Alan M. Dershowitz, Laurence H. Tribe and Charles Fried. These notable civil libertarians wrote in The Harvard Crimson that “rescinding the invitation simply because it would be divisive was a ‘truly dangerous’ precedent” (The New York Times, Nov. 21, 2002, p. A24).

I am happy that Rider University, when faced with a similar situation on our campus, did not require the advice of three law professors to uphold the invitation to Amiri Baraka to speak on our campus. That does not mean that his view should not be challenged; the right of free citizens—indeed, our duty—is to challenge those with whom we disagree.

We also have the right to demand that all involved have their facts straight. The basis of liberalism, however often criticized, is not that all views are equally true, or that we accept anyone's version of a story because it is, after all, “their opinion.” Rather, our ideals hold that all ideas have an equal opportunity to be expressed, debated and tested to see which are the most valid. As one writer (Milton, I think, but my colleague may correct me if I'm wrong) once stated: "If you put all ideas, good or bad, in an arena, and let them fight it out, in the end only the truth will be left standing.”

We should never fear the expression of falsehoods, except when truth is not allowed to be expressed; and we should never fear the conflict of the two, for in the end we have faith that the contro-

Letter To The Editor: The power of hateful words

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words are also tools of violence. In the pages of this newspaper, I cannot spell out the words of hate we all hear people speak. Pgs. "N--", "F--k", "P---k". When spoken with contempt, these words inspire and condone violence against gays, African Americans, women, and Jews. Words do hurt. Language dis-

Dr. Ralph Gallay Marketing Professor

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