

opinion

May we never forget to remember

Gracie Wilson
AU-Live Managing Editor

Maybe I don't have a lot of room to talk because I was only a year and a half old. Maybe it doesn't matter what I say since I don't actually remember anything about that day. Or, maybe four simple words make it mean something to me. "May we never forget." We hear it every year, and we should continue to hear it for years to come. Even though I wasn't old enough to remember that day, I still remember alongside my fellow citizens. September 11, 2001. The day that shook the nation to its core and made a society always in motion stop right in their tracks.

I have been told that I was only a baby being fed breakfast when my dad turned on the TV to watch the morning news the day an unimaginable headline took over the screen.

A local fireman watching other men and women who share in his career run in to save the people of their city without hesitation. My mom, teaching a room full of first-graders upon hearing the news and having to handle delivering the message gently while in shock herself. Then my sister, only four-years-old but smart enough to know

that something had happened to upset the adults in the room. The magnitude of the situation slowly shaking one family and all the other families across the nation at the same time.

What still makes me pause in my tracks every Sept. 11 is the fact that all of those people probably left their house that morning with the same certainty that they would return home the very same way they had each day before that. People got out of bed and fed their babies, made a cup of coffee, took the subway and arrived at work for what they did not know would be the last time. The passengers aboard the planes likely had the same certainty: they would arrive at their destination without issue. We take for granted that same certainty upon waking up each day. That was theirs too; and then it wasn't. I stop in my tracks and think about it every year and pray that this year everyone else will not forget to remember too.

It almost seems like talking about COVID-19 or the 2020 election is the prerequisite for being newsworthy these days, but what we need to realize is that there are still other things going on in the world; namely stopping and paying respect to thousands of people who died on what was going to just

be an average Tuesday in September. I hope that in the midst of everything that has happened this year, all of the division we have faced as a nation, that we can still stop and remember or think about what that day was like, even if we do not know first-hand. People are still hurting, and it is important that we stop and pay respect alongside our fellow man and know that for just one day we are focused on the same thing.

It's sad to think that such a drastic tragedy is something that brought our nation together, I mean, why can't we just come together on a day where everything is normal and people are going about their typical day? Why does it take a tragedy for people to unite under one cause? It's almost a weird thing to find a silver lining in the midst of this tragedy, even 19 years later. However, there is one in this case and I think we could all use a reminder of it...unity. Can't we as a nation, even if just for one day, be united under the same cause. The cause of remembrance for those who left home one last time without even knowing it.

I hadn't really considered this remembrance much until I visited New York City myself when I was a Sophomore in high school. When we were in school, we would do a moment of silence and sometimes the

teacher had something to say about that day, but then that would be all.

I never really learned much about Sept. 11, 2001 until I went to New York with my family and learned for myself. We visited the museum and I was shocked into silence as we made our way through. Learning about firsthand experiences of that day, hearing from loved ones of the deceased and seeing items pulled from the aftermath. I felt like crying even though it wasn't something I had seen first hand and barely even lived through.

The feeling of knowing however, knowing that this is something that deeply pained so many close to me and so many of my fellow American citizens, that is what almost brought me to tears as we stood in what was the foundation of the world trade center twin towers.

So maybe it does matter that I—and all others who were not around—also stop to take part in remembering this day. Isn't that how we keep a legacy of remembering alive? We keep it alive by learning, and then honoring once we have the knowledge of what tragedy took from the American people on that day. Even though I, and many others who I am close to, were only small children at the time, we see and remember the hurt of the people who were directly affected, and we stand with them.

May we never forget, because if we do, then so will the world. May we never forget because if we do, those we lost do not get honored as they should, whether they were bystanders in the wrong place at the wrong time or first responders who charged into the fire. May we never forget, because if we do, who will remember those who fought so bravely whether that's in an office, on a firetruck, in the hospitals or on a plane?

May we know that these people will be remembered, those who were found and those who remain lost. May they not get lost in the fray of all the news that has so forcefully taken our attention to disease and politics. For just one day, even if it's the only day of the year, may we all come together and not forget to remember September 11th, 2001.



GRACIE WILSON

The AU community pays their respects to all who were lost on September 11, 2001.

The ten dollar founding father leaves a mark on 2020

Gracie Wilson
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They say, "history has its eyes on you" and that couldn't be closer to the truth. History has certainly been keeping its eyes on us and 2020 will surely be one that reigns prominent in the minds of everyone for years to come. In the midst of everything 2020 has thrown at the world, the release of Hamilton onto Disney+ is one of the positives.

Hamilton splashed onto the Broadway scene in 2016 and ever since, people have entered lotteries and paid through the nose for those coveted seats to the American musical written by Lin-Manuel Miranda. Now, four years later it is available to any user of Disney+ to watch and enjoy over and over again.

If you're like me, the only thing you really knew about Hamilton before 2016 was that he's on the ten-dollar bill and he lost in a duel to Aaron Burr. Now, through the musical stylings of Lin-Manuel Miranda, Philipa Soo, Leslie Odom Jr., Johnathan Groff, Daveed Diggs and others, we know there is far more to the story.

This musical, describing and detailing the events of the American Revolution, the election of 1800, the founding of a financial system and Hamilton's life with Eliza Schuyler, has certainly refreshed everything we learned about our ten-dollar founding father. However, it is possible that it hit viewing for a more general public at the perfect time in our history, showing that it truly has its eyes on us.


Over the summer, we as a nation watched as the Black Lives Matter movement became more prevalent in the public eye. People began to speak up even more for their rights and what they believed in, and then Hamilton stepped onto the scene and became culturally significant in more ways than one.


The cast of Hamilton is completely multicultural, and everyone comes together to put on the same amazing show. Everyone involved is part of this great and influential work of art. This unity is arguably exactly what we needed to see, as a nation we need to see that we are also able to come together because when we do, we can make something beautiful out of it. In the midst of all that 2020 has given to the world so far, Hamilton is certainly something that came to the right place at the right time.

People often pride Hamilton on the music, vocals and showmanship; but what about its cultural significance? To build a future for this nation, it is important to understand

how it started. Even though not everything in the musical is true to history (although seeing Hercules Mulligan as the flower girl in Alexander and Eliza's wedding is hilarious), it still helps viewers to see a creative rendering of some of the founding aspects of this country. People arguably know a lot more now about Hamilton than they did walking out of their history class that only talked about duels and ten-dollar bills.

From the title song to the final chords of "Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story," this musical takes its viewers on an emotional rollercoaster ride through the United States' early years and the ten-dollar founding father who did everything he could to not throw away his shot.

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88%

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