After the events of Sept. 11, would you still consider studying abroad?

**BY TED GILDEA**

**ASSOCIATE OPINIONS EDITOR**

The opportunity to live abroad for a year is not one that comes around very often. Many refer to it as the “opportunity of a lifetime.” Before departing for Ireland, I certainly did. Upon arrival, it didn’t take long to realize that living and studying abroad was just that: an opportunity that would most likely come along just once, and to this day, despite many disturbing world events, it is an opportunity I am quite glad I seized. Furthermore, if the decision were put to me a year ago, and I was able to gaze into a crystal ball and know what atrocities were to come, I would have certainly chosen to study abroad this year anyway.

The word “I” is used repeatedly in the previous paragraph. The reason for this is quite simple: the decision to study abroad is an intensely personal one. No one can tell another “Study Abroad” because the bottom line is that if someone doesn’t want to study abroad, they should not. What can be said, though, is if someone has wanted to study abroad since, or before, the beginning of their college education, the acts of a few demented whack-jobs should not deter them from doing what they have looked forward to for years. Studying abroad remains an opportunity of a lifetime, and unless your religion is Hindu, you only live once.

Worrying about what may happen while abroad is rather useless. That worry is simply fear of the unknown. Everyone worries about his or her family and friends while abroad. Quite frankly, more people have died in car accidents since the beginning of the semester than they have in terrorist attacks. Terrorism in the U.S.A is now, unfortunately, an inevitable fact of life, just as many other dangers in our everyday lives are. What is going on in the world right now is simply not reason enough to alter what one chooses to study abroad this year.

The decision to study abroad is clearly the most personal decisions that a college student can make, and each person experiences his or her determination based on varying factors. When I was wavering about going or not, four airplanes were hijacked out of nowhere and thousands of innocent people died. I was scared enough, especially since we only have four precious years together. But the main deterrent seemed to be my involvement in activities on campus, and the feeling that if I left for a year, I would lose my foothold on the activities that mean so much to me.

Furthermore, if the decision were put to me a year ago, and I was able to gaze into a crystal ball and know what atrocities were to come, I would have never wanted to study abroad for a long time, think long and hard if you now feel that you should not study abroad because of world events. Studying abroad is an eye-opening, mind-expanding experience. The Holy Cross experience is a great one, but make no mistake, living at Holy Cross is living in a giant bubble. As far as I know, traveling in Europe my plane will be hijacked by Arab terrorists (I swear, I don’t know what I am going to do at any time in my future). I fear leaving my family and friends for an entire year, especially since I am so lucky to have them all safe and healthy at this time. At this time in my life, I am completely satisfied, and I am not looking for more. Someday I am sure I will get over my fear of flying, and the events of Sept. 11 will be far behind us.

When that day comes, my family’s refrigerator will be filled with postcards from the Eiffel Tower and Big Ben. And I will have experienced all of Europe that I could ever dream of, in my own time. For many, this is not the year to be taking those adventures, and for others, it is as perfect a time as ever. The choice is entirely personal, and I wish everyone the opportunity to do the same because a sadly inevitable world event occurred earlier this year. To do so would be succumbing to the unknown, and in doing so you could be leaving the best opportunities of a lifetime forever unknown.

**BY KATE MEYERS**

**CRUSADER NEWS EDITOR**

About two years ago, when I was visiting college campuses and collecting admissions booklets, one of the main features that I looked for in each college was the study abroad program that was offered. At the time, I wanted to go just to Spain for an entire year to experience Spanish and European culture and to expand my knowledge of the Spanish language. I was very fortunate enough to do just that; I went, and I was able to gaze into a crystal ball and know what atrocities were to come, I would have certainly chosen to study abroad this year anyway.

As is already evident, my college search eventually brought me to Holy Cross, where I was immediately dazzled at Gateways Orientation with the prospect of spending a year at the sunny beaches of the Mallorca Islands off the coast of Spain. But as I got more and more involved in the student life at Holy Cross, the prospect of studying abroad became more and more remote. The idea of living away from my family and friends was scary enough, especially since we only have four precious years together. But the main deterrent seemed to be my involvement in activities on campus, and the feeling that if I left for a year, I would lose my foothold on the activities that mean so much to me.

Early this fall, as I tried to come to a final decision of whether or not to study abroad, our nation was rocked by tragedy in the form of the attacks of Sept. 11. I never imagined that something like that would happen in Manhattan. The event completely knocked me out of my comfort zone, and I now experienced a heightened fear of our nation’s future every day, a fear that we have been shown is founded in reality.

The decision to study abroad is clearly one of the most personal decisions that a college student can make, and each person makes his or her determination based on varying factors. I was wavering about going or not, four airplanes were hijacked out of nowhere and thousands of innocent people died. I was scared enough, especially since we only have four precious years together. But the main deterrent seemed to be my involvement in activities on campus, and the feeling that if I left for a year, I would lose my foothold on the activities that mean so much to me.

I do not fear America being obliterated by an atomic bomb. I do not think that if I travel abroad my plane will be backed by Arab terrorists (I swear, I don’t know what I am going to do at any time in my future). I fear leaving my family and friends for an entire year, especially since I am so lucky to have them all safe and healthy at this time. At this time in my life, I am completely satisfied, and I am not looking for more. Someday I am sure I will get over my fear of flying, and the events of Sept. 11 will be far behind us. When that day comes, my family’s refrigerator will be filled with postcards from the Eiffel Tower and Big Ben. And I will have experienced all of Europe that I could ever dream of, in my own time. For many, this is not the year to be taking those adventures, and for others, it is as perfect a time as ever. The choice is entirely personal, and I wish everyone the opportunity to do the same because a sadly inevitable world event occurred earlier this year. To do so would be succumbing to the unknown, and in doing so you could be leaving the best opportunities of a lifetime forever unknown.

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**In Your Face!**

What song best sums up this past semester?

"Pump up the Volume."  
By whoever the hell sings it.

"Nothing but a good time."  
By Poison  
C.J. Janiszewski '02

"And then I got high."  
By Afroman  
Mario Cacciola '02

"Walk On."  
By U2  
Matt Connolly '02

"Oops, I did it again."  
By Britney Spears  
John Delfino '02