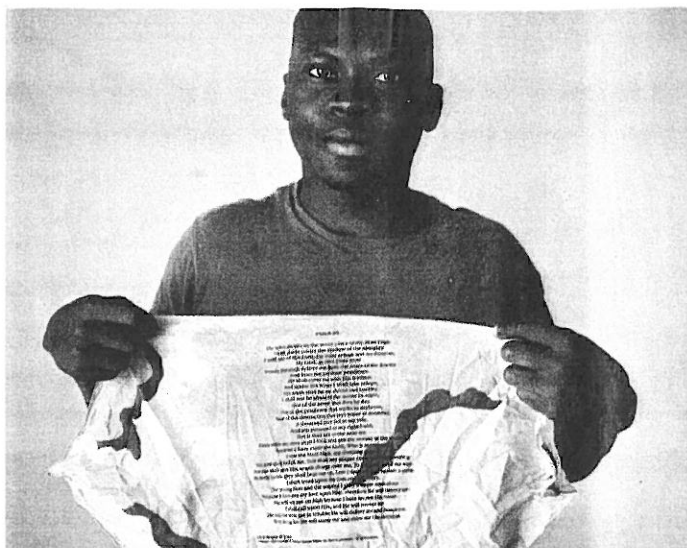


THE THINGS THEY CARRY

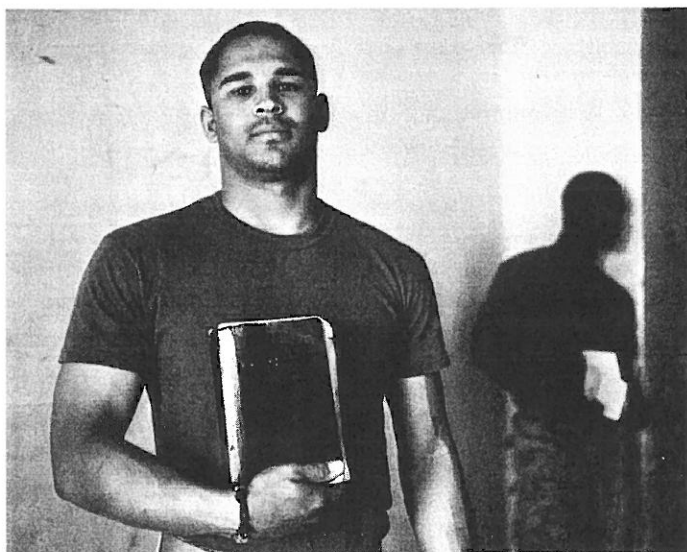
Photographer Yuri Kozyrev captures the tokens of faith that help Marines face battle in Iraq



PSALM 91 ON A BANDANNA
SERGEANT WINSTON DALEY



GRANDFATHER'S DOG TAG
LANCE CORPORAL RICHARD J. CASELTINE



A BIBLE FROM HIS GRANDMOTHER

IN HIS CLASSIC STORY COLLECTION about the Vietnam War, Tim O'Brien wrote that what G.I.'s carried into battle was determined by necessity, specialty and rank, and "to some extent by superstition." Three decades later, the 145,000 Americans serving in Iraq rely on their own talismans to protect them from the barrage of sniper bullets, mortar fire and roadside bombs that have claimed the lives of more than 2,700 of their comrades. The Marines of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment spent much of this year deployed in Ramadi, the heart of the Sunni Triangle and one of the most dangerous outposts in Iraq. The things they carry are often emblems of love or faith, reminders of home and a higher purpose. PFC Phillip Busenlehner's good-luck charm is an angel pendant given to him by his best friend's mother last year before Busenlehner left for boot camp. The case it came in reads, "An angel to give you strength to overcome any challenge." The pendant has been blessed by three priests and the Pope.

Lance Corporal Richard Caseltine wears a dog tag that belonged to his grandfather, who fought in the Korean War. "It is older than I am and means the world to me," he says. "I haven't taken it off since I got it." He was wearing it on April 8 when a bullet hit him in the head. He survived and returned to duty. "God was

with me and so was my grandfather," he says.

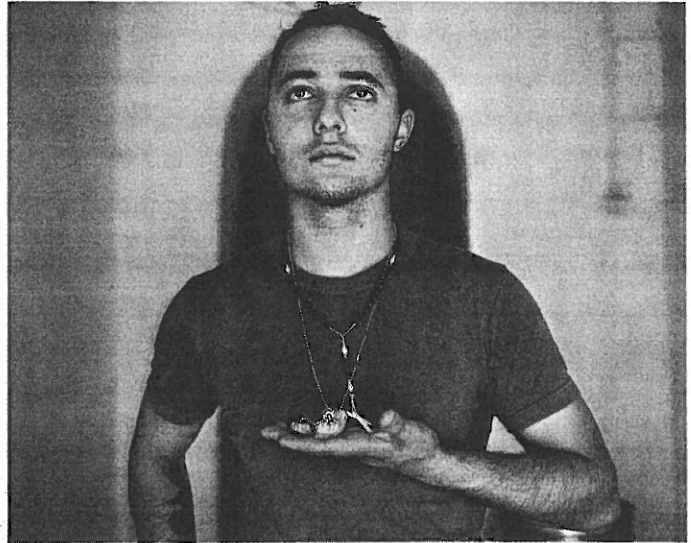
Corporal Michael Compton carries a plastic bag containing a pair of his wife's underwear. She gave it to him before his first deployment to Iraq, when they were still dating. "She said that she would stick by me," he says. But on a patrol outside Fallujah, the bag fell out of his pocket and blew away. "I thought it was long gone," he says. A week later, while "out in the middle of nowhere," he noticed a plastic bag and picked it up. The underwear was inside. "I couldn't believe it. I guess it was a sign because, sure enough, when I got back, me and my wife got married. I deployed again to Iraq, and I figured I should bring it with me. After all, if it found its way back to me, maybe it could guide me back to her."



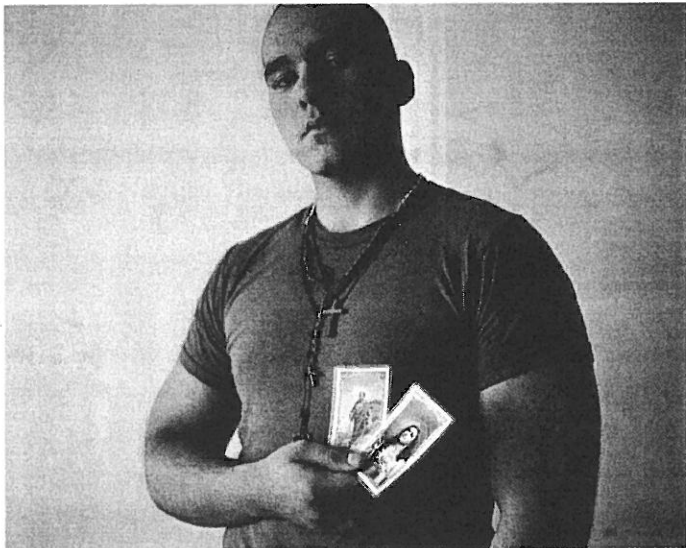
Having spent 3½ years covering the war in Iraq, **Yuri Kozyrev** has amassed his own collection of good-luck charms. Here he displays a few, including a cross, a gift from his wife and a ring that belonged to his grandfather. To see more of Kozyrev's pictures from Ramadi and hear him talk about them, go to time.com



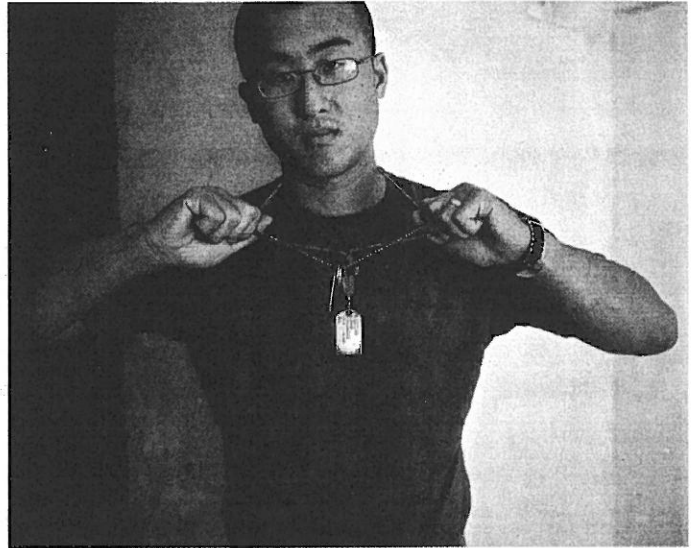
ANGEL PENDANT
PFC PHILLIP BUSENLEHNER



A CROSS, RING AND DOG TAGS
LANCE CORPORAL JEFF ORTIZ



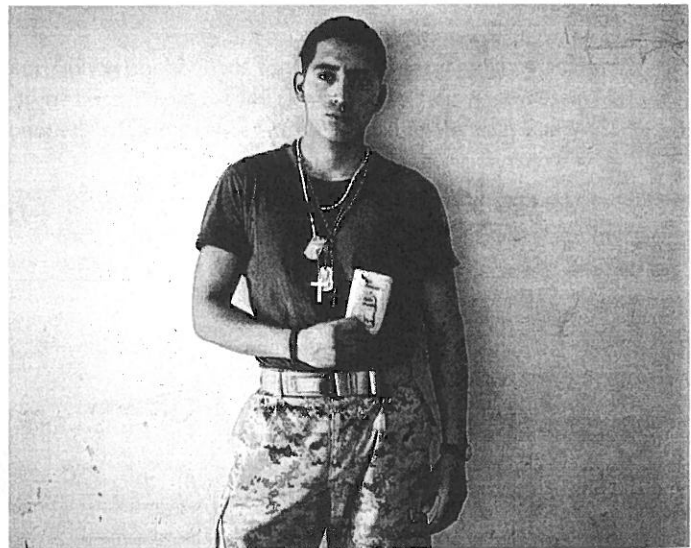
ROSARIES, PICTURES OF JESUS AND ST. PAUL
LANCE CORPORAL JOHN PORRAS



TWO DOG TAGS, A RING AND A CROSS
LANCE CORPORAL GEORGE AHN



WIFE'S UNDERWEAR
CORPORAL MICHAEL COMPTON



ROSARIES, A BIBLE AND DOG TAGS
LANCE CORPORAL JAIRO MUYCANDO