

The True Meaning of Memorial Day

Most people don't really understand Memorial Day. They see it as an opportunity to get a good deal on that shirt they've been eyeing for weeks. A letter to the editor of Mass Live had a great point. They said that "To the retail sector, Memorial Day is just another day, another way, to feed the greed for the almighty dollar" ("Memorial Day as Opportunity to Shop") That's not really what Memorial Day is about. Memorial Day is for remembrance of those whose lives were lost while fighting for the United States. Everyone should be able to embrace Memorial Day for what it is, not what it has become. I want you to know what the meaning of Memorial Day is to me, the importance to everyone, and it's impact as a holiday.

Memorial Day means a lot to me because many lives have been lost while fighting for our country. PBS says that "During World War II, about 12 percent of the total U.S. population were a part of the armed forces" (Crigger and Santhanam). Memorial Day is the one day where everyone in the United States should think about that. Some people, like me, don't know anyone who was killed during war. That shouldn't matter. I feel that everyone should mourn the loss of our troops.

Memorial Day has a lot of importance to people throughout the United States. Dying for your country is the greatest sacrifice that one can make, however, it was not always viewed that way. During the Greatest Generation, being in the army was not always an honor. Many men didn't volunteer to go to war and were drafted. Dying in war

was common during that time. Now, it's viewed very differently. It's a choice to be in the army and considered very honorable to lose your life while fighting for your country.

That's how I feel it should be.

Making Memorial Day a holiday made an amazing impact on our country. In 1868, a group of Union veterans established a day to decorate the graves of those who were lost in the Civil War. In 1971, it was declared a national holiday ("Memorial Day History"). I've never participated in grave decoration because I don't know anyone that has served in the war. However, I would like to participate in this act to honor others. I feel that students should be taught the true meaning of Memorial Day because it's a very important part of American history. It will also hopefully inspire people like me to participate in grave decoration in the future.

In conclusion, Memorial Day is a holiday that more people should think about and recognize for what it truly is. I think that there is so much more that people could learn about this important holiday. I'm very glad that Memorial Day is a holiday because it raises more awareness of this important sacrifice. The holiday is designated so that people can decorate the graves of those who fought fiercely to defend our country. It serves to recognize the bodies that lay in almost every graveyard.

-Lucy Vanover

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