

To be a true patriot today you have to understand the sacrifices made by the people before you. In the book "Saving Dr. Warren . . . a True Patriot" Steve O'Dell didn't understand this at first. He knew about our country's history, but didn't fully understand the sacrifices made. I can relate to how he felt because when I was younger, I used to live in Hawaii and I got to see the USS Arizona memorial, which I thought was really cool. Even though I learned about the bombing of Pearl Harbor every year at school, I didn't think much about the sacrifices made. Just like Steve I lived near a historical place, knew the events, but didn't fully understand the sacrifices. After reading the book, Steve's journey not only helped him realize what patriotism meant, it helped me too.

Steve's adventure made me realize that it takes a lot of courage to fight for your country. We should be thankful and appreciate all the sacrifices people have made for us. Those who paid the ultimate price did it for their country. Just like Steve said, their blood nourished our National Tree. Their sacrifices made America what it is today. Without patriots we wouldn't be a country. Without them we wouldn't grow and change for the better. We have to understand their sacrifices in order to consider ourselves true patriots.

Often, it can be easy to forget the sacrifices of our country's great patriots. Sacrifices were made by the soldiers in battle, and also by the family and friends they leave behind. In the book, Dr. Warren paid the ultimate price and when Johnny and Abigail Adams found out Dr. Warren had died, Johnny started to cry into the folds of Abigail's dress. I have never lost a loved one to war, but I know that it's a sacrifice all on its own. Sacrifices big and small are made everywhere to protect our country and liberty.

“Saving Dr. Warren . . . a True Patriot” made me think about the importance of showing recognition to these extraordinary patriots. Towards the end of the book, the June 17, 1825 Commemoration of Dedication was held to thank the veterans of the American Revolution and Dr. Joseph Warren. It reminded me of the Luau my family went to in Hawaii. We would always go to the same place and after all the dancing was finished, the host would take a moment and ask all the veterans to stand. After they had all stood, everyone clapped. When the applause ended he would ask us to hold up the candles on our table to honor the soldiers who didn’t come home. He would sing “Proud to Be an American” and everybody would join in, swaying with the candles. Both events show that when people take a break and pause, it strengthens our country, it helps us realize what patriots have done to get us where we are today.

Just like the host of the luau, we should take a moment to thank all of our country's heroes. We need to remember and understand their sacrifices if we want to be able to call ourselves patriots. We are in America, the land of the free, and we need to remember the sacrifices it took to get here. Steve’s journey took him to the past, where he could see and understand these sacrifices. His journey helped me realize how thankful I should be for the sacrifices patriots made for you and me.

When I first decided to do this essay I had no idea what I was going to write. I already knew people had made sacrifices to get us the freedom we have now, but I never really thought about what it meant, and neither did Steve. He just wanted to win a contest. But after reading through all of Steve's experiences I figured out what it takes to be a true patriot today. When you understand the sacrifices

people make for our country and are willing to make sacrifices of your own you are a true patriot.