

The Emotional Ties of Patriotism

Patriotism is defined as the feeling of love, devotion, and a sense of attachment to a country or state. That's not how Steve O'Dell in Jeffery McKenna's *Saving Dr. Warren... "A True Patriot"* sees it. He doesn't believe that patriotism is important, but he writes his essay as if he completely does. When Steve wins his school's essay contest, he begins to feel like he does not deserve to win. Then, Steve soon finds he can travel back in time and when he does he meets a Dr. Joseph Warren, who is a true patriot. Dr. Warren fought for the freedom of the U.S, without men like him, we would most likely not be able to sit here and write these essays. In my eyes, patriotism is the feeling of gratitude I hold towards this country for giving me and my family so many opportunities.

My family has a strong sense of patriotism. When my great-great grandfather, Habib Butrus, immigrated to the U.S. from his home in Zahle, Lebanon, he saw many opportunities for his sons and daughters to worship and work in peace. My great-grandfather was not able to go to college because he had to work in the family grocery store, but now I am able to attend a nice school because of their incredible hard work and effort. I believe that this is where my sense of patriotism has come from, because without my family's hard work and this country's open arms in a time of worldly turmoil, my family would not be in the position they are in now. My family's not a normal southern family. We do not fit many of the standards of a southern family. We are not Baptist, we are Maronite-Catholic, a small Lebanese denomination of Catholicism, and we certainly can not date our family tree back to the American Revolution. My family is incredibly grateful that we have the ability to worship freely in this country without fear of judgement or harassment. We are all united by one common denominator, our appreciation and love towards the country that offered a small glimpse of hope in many different situations.

My Grandfather was born in 1928 and entered the Army in 1946. 83 years later, he was buried in Lake Forest. It was a cold and rainy day, but the U.S. Army still came and blew their

trumpets in honor of him. My older brother, Tommy Butrus, saw this and was inspired greatly by them. Ten years later, I watched as my brother marched onto the Naval Academy campus and began his lifelong journey. My brother was inspired by all veterans who devoted their lives to defend our country, and Tommy has now dedicated the next six years of his life to fight and protect our country. I never truly grasped what it was like to have someone in your family willingly putting their life on the line because they love their country, until someone who I grew up with did. Tommy and anyone who has ever served are what true patriots look like. They did not have to serve, they chose to because they are devoted to this country. These brave people are much like Dr. Warren, who “fell gloriously fighting for his Country -- saying better to die honourably in the field than ignominiously hang upon the Gallows,” -John Adams (Letter from Abigail Adams to John Adams).

In *Saving Dr. Warren... “A True Patriot,”* Steve O’Dell is a fourteen year old who struggles to understand patriotism. He tries to get his other people's view on it, but still can’t quite understand it. It isn’t until Steve forms a bond with Dr. Warren that he realizes patriotism is about the love and devotion you feel for your country. Before I read this book, I was a lot like Steve. I did not truly understand why patriotism is so important. As I flipped the pages of the book, I realized that not only did I have a perfect example of patriotism that I could learn from, I was reading about one. I have grown to understand that patriotism is not just about how much you dress up on the fourth of July, it’s about your appreciation and love towards your country. The brave men and women who have or are serving this country have devoted their lives in order to protect this country. They did not enlist because they had to, but because they love their country. The military service members deserve much more respect than they are given, and not just saying “thank you for your service” whenever you may see them in the airport, we need to actually be silent for just a few seconds every day after the Pledge of Allegiance to think about all that they have sacrificed for us.

We are all connected, like a tree and its branches, whether your family came here through

the Mayflower or through Ellis Island. I don't think I will ever truly be able to put into words how grateful my family and I are towards this country for allowing us in and giving my family a second chance. With that being said, we all should love and appreciate the hard work and dedication that men like Dr. Joseph Warren put in in order to build a foundation for this great nation; after all, "The Patriot's blood is the seed of freedom's tree." -Thomas Campbell (The Pioneer Woman).

Works Cited:

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