

Memorial Day time to reflect on past

Although the holiday was "observed" Monday, America officially commemorates the lives of fallen American service personnel today. However, like in previous years, it is likely that the true meaning of the holiday will be lost on many.

Memorial Day was set aside as a day to remember those people who have died in the service of their country. In years past, parades and ceremonies commemorating the dead were better attended. Many people knew of someone who had died in military service, fighting for their country.

Even though classes were not held Monday, students should take it upon themselves to understand the reasons for the sacrifices of those in military service who have died. Although war and military service tend to be unpopular here at the University, it is important to realize that the major purpose of the American military over the history of the country has been to protect the United States and its interests throughout the world.

Over two world wars and a number of other conflicts, the military has worked to defend the country and extend freedom and liberty to people in other countries of the world. Whether in Normandy or North Dakota, American service personnel have worked for decades to ensure that the country can look forward to a safe and democratic tomorrow.

Many University students can only remember the current peacetime era in America. War and death, for some, is something only seen in movies and high school textbooks. However, the United States has been involved in a number of wars and conflicts this century. In past generations, the news of military personnel killed in battle was more common than it is today.

In past years, thousands of Americans died while serving the United States. From world wars in Europe and Asia to conflicts in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf to a civil war that threatened to end America as it is currently known, the military has worked to protect the freedom of Americans and to extend our liberties to others. Americans owe their gratitude to those who have died in the line of duty for doing a job that few would do.

Americans have, for the most part, forgotten the meaning of Memorial Day, mostly because the nation's collective memory has forgotten the tragic reality of war. If more Americans personally experienced a major war, the observance of Memorial Day would be taken much more seriously by the public. As it stands now, the majority of those observing Memorial Day are those who have fought in battle themselves. Service personnel deserve more than that from their country.

Americans should remember the true meaning and intent of Memorial Day. For those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to this country — laying down their lives for the freedom of the United States — it's the least that Americans can do.



■ OPINION

Dear editor: Womack's an idiotic cretin



BRIAN WOMACK

To the Editor: While reading Brian Womack's columns, I often feel I'm reading a strategically shaved monkey.

How could this impudent brat's knee-jerk reactionary filth waste his time and, most importantly, mine?

Who cares what his opinion is and what ever possessed him to think that he might actually have an opinion worth espousing?

For instance, he actually dares to question diversity, which I am huge fan of. As long as I or any other good liberal like Kennedy agrees with it, it should be protected. Otherwise, it may be wrong. That will only lead to people thinking for themselves.

And who could understand or comprehend his confusing yet cumbersome logic that is full of redundancies and is hard to understand while one reads his or her *Emerald* every time he or she picks up a copy of the paper while he or she is doing something else and still trying to wade through his difficult syntax?

How dare this so-called columnist claim the military doesn't need to be cut anymore? Whether we or the free world are about to be steam rolled by some other power is beside the point. What we need is a National Kumbaya Singing Department. That way, we could bring peace to all — only under a dictatorship. At least horse-whipping conservatives or anyone else we don't agree with would be legal.

He says that affirmative action might have some problems. What? Isn't it pretty clear by now that we should hire on the

basis of one's skin color? Yeah, so it's racist. I'm sure more racism will make up for the racism we already have.

More infuriating, though, is when writing this column, he actually uses someone only liberals are allowed to quote — Martin Luther King Jr. I'm not sure where it's written, but I'm sure it's against the law. I'm also sure the original leader of the Civil Rights movement would only agree with those of us on the left, especially if there's more more racism being doled out.

Womack doesn't say government is getting too big just in hiring practices, but in most areas of our lives. He even attributes this as part of the reason for the Republicans winning in November.

The only people who voted for the Republicans were a bunch of white males. All right, maybe women did too. OK, maybe even blacks did, as well. But, I'm sure it's not the Democrats' fault. It's just that 40 years isn't long enough to show Americans what a Democratic Congress can do. Give them another 40 years, and they could really show us how big government can get even bigger. Of course, that's always better.

In yet another example, this Bill Bennett in sheep's clothing dared to say that America should return to some of the Judeo-Christian values. Like I want to hear some wide-eyed, whacked-out, right-wing, Bible Jim-type, religious zealot.

Though I'm not trying to stereotype here, I do think it's pretty clear America has done pretty well when we ignore our religious heritage. I'm sure broken-up families, war-zone school and other societal breakdowns are all attributable to Newt Gingrich somehow.

As bad as I want to, I'm not going to paint Womack as an abortion-killing pro-lifer. Yet most pro-lifers are. Sure, I may not be able to prove it. But it sure sounds good for my side.

On that issue of abortion,

Womack needs to quit his job as a columnist and make bumper stickers for Newt Gingrich.

Womack is sadly mistaken. What is he thinking when he says abortion should be rolled back? I really don't care if it might be a baby in the womb. Even if we find out 20 years from now we've been slaughtering millions of children in the name of "rights," I want to make sure I can do anything and everything I want.

My convenience is more important. It's not like it hasn't happened before. So why should we change? No one has the right to purport the pro-life or on the opinion page.

Speaking of health issues, I am at a loss to see where this cretin is coming from on the issue of health care. Every person has the right to health care just like they have the right to food, an attractive mate, cable and "A's in all their classes. I, for one, would like to see the government guarantee these rights.

Earlier this term, Womack said condoms aren't fool-proof. I've never seen such ignorance. Teenagers are going to be having sex like packs of dogs in heat no matter what we do. Condoms are the only answer. Sure, they may not protect teenagers completely, but I'd rather just keep the kids in the dark. If you tell them the truth, they might actually start to question the left's authority on every issue it addresses.

Womack needs to quit his job as a columnist and make bumper stickers for Newt Gingrich. I hope they say, "Honor Diversity."

Of course, he could never understand that like we do on the left.

Brian Womack is a columnist for the *Emerald*.

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