Commercialism Of Holidays Essay, Research Paper

HOLIDAYS SHOULD BE ASPECIAL OCCASIONS THAT HAVE RELIGIOUS, HISTORICAL, AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE. INCREASINGLY, HOWEVER, HOLIDAYS IN THE UNITED STATES ARE TURNING INTO LITTLE MORE THAN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES. FROM COAST TO COAST, THE JINGLES AND BEEPS OF CASH REGISTERS DROWN OUT THE TRADITIONAL SOUNDS OF HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE. THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAYS ARE BEING DESTROYED BY COMMERCIALISM.

THE ORIGINS OF THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT ARE VARIED IN THE UNITED STATES. THANKSGIVING REMINDS AMERICANS TO BE GRATEFULFOR THEIR BLESSINGS, AND THE FOURTH OFJULY STIMULATES PRIDE IN THE FOUNDING OF THE NATION. LABOR DAY IS A TRIBUTE TO WORKERS. mEMORIAL DAY HONORS SOLDIERS WHO DIED IN DEFENSE OF THE COUNTRY, AND VETERANS DAY HONORS ALL VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES. CHRISTMAS AND EASTER HAVE GREAT RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE TO CHRISTIANS. HOLIDAYS USED TO BE OCCASIONS FOR PEOPLE TO COME TOGETHER AND CELEBRATAE THEIR HERITAGES. TODAY, HOWEVER, THE OVERRIDING MESSAGE OF THE HOLIDAYS IS “SPENDING MONEY”.

THE MOST VISIBLE EVIDENCE THAT COMMERCIALISM NOW DOMINATES HOLIDAYS IS THE UNFORTUNATE EMPHASIS ON SPENDING MONEY IN PREPARATION FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. FOR EXAMPLE, BUYING AND MAILING CHRISTMAS CARDS HAS BECOME STANDARD PRACTICE FOR INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND INDUSTRY.HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN IGNORE THE SOCIAL AND BUSINESS PRESSURES TO MAIL CARDS? tHE COMMITMENT OF MONEY AND TIME FOR THIS ACTIVITY IS NOT SMALL. THE GIFT SITUATION IS EQUALLY STRESSFUL. ALTHOUGH EXCHANGING GIFTS ON CHRISTMAS OR HANUKKAH WAS ALWAYS PART OF THE CELEBRATION, THE THOUGHT BEHIND THE PRESENT USED TO BE THE POINT. TODAY,HOWEVER, ADVERTISING–PARTICULARLY ON TELEVISION–SETS A HIGH STANDARD OF EXPECTATIONS. CAN HOME-BAKED COOKIES COMPARE TO A MICROWAVE OVEN? CAN HAND-DRAWN, HANDWRITTEN CARDS BE AS IMPRESSIVE AS ELABORATE GREETING CARDS THAT PLAY MUSIC?

OTHER EVIDENCE THAT COMMERCIALISM IS RUINING HOLIDAYS IS THE EMPHASIS ON SHOPPING FOR BARGAINS RATHER THAN ON ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CULTURAL HISTORY. HUGE SALES HELD BEFORE HOLIDAYS, AND OFTEN ON THE HOLIDAY ITSELF, ARE ADVERTISED HEAVILY IN NEWSPAPERS, ON TELEVISION, AND ON RADIO. VETERANS DAY HAS BECOME THE DAY TO BUY FALL AND WINTER CLOTHING AT REDUCED PRICES, AND MEMORIAL DAY MEANS SPEACIALLY LOWERED PRICES ON PRODUCTS FOR THE COMING SUMMER. PARADES AND CEREMONIES ON LABOR DAY HONORING THE WORKERS OF AMERICA GET LESS ATTENTION THANBACK-TO-SCHOOL SALES.

HOLIDAY CEKEBRATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY HAVE MORE TO DO WITH THE WALLET THAN THE SPIRIT. SOME PEOPLE REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FRENZY OF A COMMERCIAL INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLIDAYS, OF COURSE. BUT FOR TOO MANY PEOPLE, HOLIDAYS ARE BECOMING STRESSFUL RATHER THAN JOYFUL, UPSETTING RATHER THAN UPLIFTING