

My Historical Tour of Washington DC  
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English 105  
3/31/2010

Final Revision: To be graded

Goal: In this final revision I made changes from the previous revision to tighten it further.

Evaluation: I found different ways to express emotion while visiting the memorials and fixed the sentence comments throughout the story.

It was October 2002 and fall had just arrived. There was a chill in the air as colors of the leaves were beginning to glow with shades of sunshine yellow, bright orange and crimson red. I was in the midst of preparing for my trip to Washington DC, a city full of culture, history and political influence.

I didn't want to forget anything so I was up at the break of dawn for last minute packing before departing to the airport. My flight and hotel confirmations neatly tucked into my travel packet, I enjoyed my last cup of coffee before heading to the airport. My Mom picked me up and drove me to the terminal. Before departing, she took a picture of me with my luggage as a souvenir snapshot of my trip.

The flight was long but uneventful. My hotel, the L'Enfant Plaza, is a beautiful historical building, the interior richly decorated with marble floors, fine paintings and plush rooms. Directly underground was a shopping center with access to the Metro Subway line for traveling all across town in every direction.

The next morning I was ready to see historical buildings, walk city streets and hunt for the nearest Starbuck's coffee shop. The first destination was the Senate buildings, each one containing the office of Senators representing each state along with their assistants, aides and advisors. The Senate buildings are beautifully ornamented with doors 10 foot tall and majestic in appearance, wooden borders sculptured with artistic engravings and gold accents. A state flag proudly adorned each doorway along with a wall mounted plaque announcing the Senator's name and state they represented.

I was in awe to be in the Senate buildings, walk through the halls, climb the marble stair cases that our forefathers had done before me. I wondered that if the walls could talk what they would say to me or what secrets they are obligated to keep. In a quiet hush did I just hear them whisper or was that the sound of my own imagination?

I attended a Senate session in progress with all observers being required to participate silently. There is a code of ethics revealing a formal protocol dictating the Senators speech and actions. I sensed the historical relevance of history unfolding before me as each Senator discussed and debated current issues and suggested possible resolutions.

The Arlington National Cemetery, Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial deeply impacted me as I journeyed through the historical relevance and reasons for war. At the Korean Memorial 16 brass sculptures of fallen soldiers frozen in time walk cautiously through mine fields. A tall black wall to their right shimmered with the holographic scenes of etched faces, towns, soldiers and bystanders who lived through this horrific time. My eyes gently touched the wall saddened by the ugly scars of this war.

Across the park was the Vietnam Memorial, a massive dark marble wall with soldiers' names etched in white representing each life lost in battle. A sobering hush fell like a light mist upon those who walked here giving respect to these soldiers. I was deeply moved by a pink rose left at the wall extending honor to those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom.

The Arlington National Cemetery is the monumental resting place of deceased presidents and fallen soldiers who have bravely fought for our country. The expansive grounds had row after row of whitewashed tomb stones flowing like sea waves ebbing over the hills and valleys into the trees. The changing of the guard ceremony was about to begin at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. The crowd quieted down as a Lieutenant gently instructed the audience that the ceremony was performed in silence honoring those soldiers. As the ceremony proceeded with the intricate inspection, the soldiers act of honor, respect and dignity tugged at my heart as tears streamed down my cheeks. I felt privileged to be there participating in a ceremony that honored the unknown soldiers.

I visited extraordinary historical locations. Some of the most memorable were: the Capital Building, Washington National Cathedral, Supreme Court House, Congress (in-session), Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, Mount Vernon, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Presidential Museum, and standing outside the gates of the White House.

Visiting Washington DC has richly impacted my life. It has taught me that all of us play an important role in life, little or great. I was impacted by the unfathomable history, politics, and multifaceted culture as I walked the streets our forefathers did hundreds of years ago as they fought for freedom declaring that America should become an independent union separate from the British Empire. I embraced the dedication and historical revolution of what others before us have sacrificed to make the United States of America the great nation it is today.