

## As American as Mom...



*In 1914, President Wilson declared May 9th the first national Mother's Day. Efforts to celebrate mothers on an official holiday began in 1908 and the public responded positively through letters, reports, editorials, and newspaper columns.*

Which of the following reasons for supporting Mother's Day did not appear in American newspapers between 1908 and 1915?

- Supporting it was an easy way for politicians to establish sympathy with a large segment of the public, that is, women, even if women were, for the time being, unable to vote.
- It captured the natural affection of children for their mothers and of husbands for the mothers of their children.
- It would encourage women to cherish motherhood at a time when women were beginning to enter the workforce in larger numbers.
- Supporting it was an easy way for men in general to establish sympathy with their increasingly demanding womenfolk.
- Promoting it was an excellent way for florists and merchants to increase their sales around a traditionally slow time of the year.
- For progressives, the holiday recognized women's accomplishments and contributions to society which could help promote women's rights and pave the way for other state recognitions of women (e.g., suffrage, legal status in divorce court).

Nevertheless, the idea of Mother's Day (or "Mothers' Day") found critics in the newspapers. Which of these criticisms of Mother's Day did not appear between 1908 and 1915?

- Setting aside a Mother's Day seemed to suggest that the only day it was necessary to honor one's mother was a particular Sunday of the year.
- Setting aside a Mother's Day seemed to suggest that mothers were worthy of honor, whereas fathers (who had no corresponding day at that time) were not.
- The fact that florists and other merchants were vigorously promoting Mother's Day made it suspect, as a hypocritical device to their increase their profits, not as a true expression of anyone's deep sentiments.
- In the decades before the first White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Progressives concerned with the rights of children feared this holiday would overshadow the needs of Americans with the fewest protections, children.
- Establishing civic recognition of Mother's Day illegitimately mixed the state into the affairs of the church by introducing a holiday on a Sunday.



- Establishing civic recognition of Mother's Day also illegitimately mixed the state into the intimate affairs of the individual and the family, by making it the business of the state to officially honor mothers and to coerce citizens to do likewise.

Who said the following: "All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother"?

- Harriett Beecher Stowe
- President George W. Bush
- President Abraham Lincoln
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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