

Not a kid, not an
adult, just useless
narrative essay

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The school year has ended, and teenagers everywhere are poring out of the schools. Perhaps they are off to start a summer job? Perhaps their families are going on vacation? Perhaps they have great plans to visit colleges, take summer classes, or even get a foothold in the world of business? I look upon my peers, and I think not. Perhaps some of us will have a decent summer in this American society, but I know many of us will not. I know this of many of my peers as well as I know it for myself.

We will accomplish nothing this summer, and it is for one simple reason. We are teenagers. We are no longer small children that are handed everything to us, and we are not adults that might be capable of something; no, in this society, we are just useless. Perhaps I should introduce the life of an average teenager. Let us start with the typical small-town teen, as I live in a small town myself. A small community means a small local economy, and that means there is nothing to do.

These teens sleep half the day and spend the other half with friends, trying to convince each other that they are not bored out of their minds. No jobs to raise money, no places of excitement to visit, and likely, no vacation with the family, not in this economy. What small community would have jobs for a minor? What small community would have a good place for teenagers to spend the summer? More than likely, these small communities will not even have sufficient educational opportunities for those who desire them during the summer. Now, let us look at the typical big-city teen. Here, things are much better, but never as giving as they should be. When a nation is suffering from economic depression, who would hire a minor when there are five adults looking for the same low-class work, regardless of the community

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size? And for all that a large city has to offer, it does not always entitle that a teenagers' time will be full of productive, quality things.

No, location is only a problem to an extent. Beyond that, it is our society. It is the lack of opportunity for teens like myself. True, true, it is not always so rough, so dull that no-one can make it ahead. Many teens do find small jobs to be involved in, but there are only so many of those jobs, and they only pay so much. More and more I see myself and my peers with no chance to better our stature, and it gets worse.

Sadly, it is often found that lack of opportunity is not enough to degrade our chances to get a head start in the adult life. When there is a chance, when there is a way for a teen to make a difference in his or her life, society often turns to refusing teens simply because they are not "capable adults." Even as a teen myself, I cannot say that I believe teenagers are saints, willing and capable of anything, but I find it wrong to think that they are capable of nothing. True, I look upon the actions and behaviors of so many of my peers with disgust and a feeling of hopelessness at what society has become, and I am the odd one out, the one ahead my age. But this has never made me believe that there wasn't such thing as a teenager with true heart. I have seen many young people possessing the maturity, talent, and dedication that is expected of the best.

Too often such potential is never given a chance. It is a crises we face on many levels in every place in the nation. With a weakened economy, degraded society, and failing educational system, it is not one simple problem to be fixed by itself. It is everywhere, it is everyone's problem. We

push as if to promote excellence in school, yet we cannot even teach; I am surprised that the less dedicated teen even passes.

We talk about jobs, about people having good income and helping our kids, but our parents cannot even support a family like they used to. We talk about how teenagers need to take responsibility, but we are given none. We are teenagers, we are no longer helpless children, but we are not adults; we are just useless. And so, while everything falls apart around us, I ask myself, “ Why is the youth, myself included, reduced to nothing? Shouldn’t we be building our lives, our futures, instead of wasting time, year after year?” It is summer now, so I have wrungGoogledry for things that we teenagers can do.

Some of us get lucky. Some of rot at home, wasting time. All of us should be moving forward, but we don’t. I reflect back on what I saw in the school clubs and groups at my own small-town high-school during the end-of-year ceremonies. Journalists and writers, editors, business course students, artists, students of agriculture specializing in welding, livestock, and more—we are all there. Even in this failing educational system, even when many of us throw our early years away, wasting time, the potential is still there.

And, sadly, so many of our dreams drop like falling stars because we do not try hard enough, that or we have no opportunity. This is not a problem of teenage boredom, this is a problem of how our system raises the youth. Our elders are losing what they have, and we, the future, and growing in their shadows. It all has to change, for the old and young. We are teenagers—we are not small children, and we are not adults, but surely we are not useless.