

Swing vote



Introduction: A swing vote is a particular vote which may affect any candidate in an election. Such votes are usually sought after in elections, since they have such a large role in the outcome. "Swing Vote" is the actual name of the movie we chose to write about since it pertains to much of what we have discussed in class, such as how citizens have the right to vote. This movie also has the media itself come alive in mostly every chapter.

How it also affects the Electoral College and the battle between conservatives and liberals, and of course presidential election nominees. Film Summary:

Swing Vote is about a story of an election that takes place in New Mexico.

The main character Bud Johnson who is played by Kevin Costner, is a middle aged deadbeat single father with no ambitious goals that faces one of the strangest dilemmas ever to occur in the United States. He alone is faced with the decision of the next president. He has the complete power to pick whichever candidate he likes best. He has a twelve year old daughter named Molly who practically runs his life and is completely gifted intellectually. She has high hopes for her country and is completely involved with its politics.

It was because of her that her father was ever registered to vote. She insisted that he take part in the upcoming election and vote for the candidate he liked best. As voting day arrives he unintentionally missed his opportunity due to the fact that he was completely drunk. Molly then takes it upon herself to sneak into the polling place and votes for her father.

However, due to the voting machines being unplugged, the ballot is registered, but there is no decision on which candidate was selected. The entire election comes down to this one county, one person because the popular vote was exactly tied for each candidate in New Mexico, leaving Bud

to decide the next President of the United States of America. This film also includes both the Republican candidate and the Democratic candidate fighting it out to win over Bud Johnson's vote.

Bud gets wooed by both parties for best results in their favor. As the media gets involved, they misinterpret his opinions causing both candidates to switch on several positions. Throughout the story Bud begins to realize the power he has at his fingertips and how he completely changes for the best.

Concept 1: Citizen's Right to Vote In the Constitution of the United States, the fifteen amendment states that " the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition or servitude". Bud, the main character of the movie has every right to vote. Even though his twelve year old daughter went to the voting polls and did it for him illegally, he still had every right. This movie helped broaden peoples perspectives about the government and how voting takes place.

In the movie the main character Bud lived his life without a care for anything but his daughter. He was consistently hopping bar to bar getting drunk without a care, and yet he is still allowed to participate in one of the largest elections the United States has to offer. The movie portrayed voting more as a privilege and something that must be taken seriously because the person you are voting for is going to be around for the next four years. Concept 2: The Media Another large contributing fact towards the movie was the media itself. In the book " We the People" chapter ten is about the media and its effects on our society. It explains the various types of news coverage available for people in different situations. How the younger generations of

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people are now starting to use the internet as their main source of information, to where as an older generation will rely on the news coverage that is given to them on their newspaper.

It also explains how different news stations may have certain agendas which might help increase a vote for a specific candidate and others which are vice versa. In the movie the media shined upon everything that was going on. The dilemma between one man choosing the fate of the election allowed for great news coverage. Once news spread about where the main character lived, it was all over the news. The main character could not even look out his window without having a reporter take a picture of him. Every movement he made was being watched from every corner, allowing for every news station to report whatever they assumed he was thinking about or doing. Certain news stations made him seem very incompetent while others used it more for ratings.

Throughout the entire movie the media was relentlessly accusing the main character without hesitation. Concept 3: Electoral College According to the National Archives and Records Administration, the Electoral College is a process of the United States Constitution. It was established by the founding fathers as a compromise between election of the president by Congress and election by popular vote. It also states that each state is allocated a number of electors equal to the number of its United States Senators, which is always two, plus the number of its United States Representatives. In the movie, the case was by popular vote which is why it was up to one man to make the decision. Before his daughter had put in his vote it was an equal tie between both parties and his vote was the one that counted most. Since all other

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states had finished the voting only his state remained due to the fact of the polling machine being powered off during the exact timing of the voting process.

As the Electoral College is by popular vote, both parties were wooing the main character for his vote which in the end would give victory to one candidate only. Concept 4: Conservatives and Liberals Political movies always have your conservatives and your liberals or better affiliated as the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. Conservatives believe in personal responsibility and very limited government, whereas liberals believe more in governmental control over people and to create an equal opportunity for all. Both parties work under the democracy of the United States but have very different views upon government interactions with citizens. Throughout the movie both candidates began with their views toward their campaigns. As the story progressed both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party were doing anything they could to win over Bud for his vote. They went as far as switching perspectives for certain situations where the democratic would be pro-life and anti-illegal immigration stands; whereas republicans take a pro-environmental and pro-gay marriage stands.

Both parties were doing the opposite of what they preached just to win the election. Concept 5: Presidential Nominees In the movie both candidates qualified to be the President of the United States because they met the eligibility guidelines set by the Constitution, which states “ No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained

to the age of thirty five years, and been fourteen Years a resident within the United States. Both nominees in the movie were above the age of thirty five and both had been natural born citizens. They both had set up primaries and had campaigns going for them which supported the events which took place throughout the interviews. They were both running to become the President of the United States and doing whatever it takes to make it all the way.

Concluding Remarks: I personally believe the movie was quite interesting. I understand that this may not happen very often, but if it did, imagine being that one person to be in charge.

You alone get to decide who the next President of the United States will be. But then again, if you select someone who does a bad job it might just be your fault. That might be just a little too much pressure to handle.