

Is voting for young people?

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PoliticalScience298 Book Review November 6th, 2012 Danny Fitzpatrick Is Voting For Young People? The main point according Martin P. Wattenberg in Is Voting For Young People is that young people today do not vote during elections as much compared to other voting groups. Young people today are politically unengaged. “ These state patterns of voting participation can be confirmed on the national level by the Census Bureau’s 2010 survey data. Among U. S. citizens under the age of 30 in 2010, only 24 percent reported that they voted. (Page-188, IVYP) The low attendance of young people voting in Presidential elections indicates that young people do not care enough about politics to participate. According to Wattenberg, there is only one method to make young people care about voting. Wattenberg believes that Compulsory Voting is the only method to obtain votes from young people. Compulsory Voting requires all adult citizens to vote in an election or pay a fine. Compulsory Voting would be a useful method to obtain a larger voter turnout from young people.

The low attendance of young voters is bad because those young voters will be in charge of the United States one day. All people in the United States unless under the required voting age should cast their vote in an election. By failing to vote, a person is missing their chance to fulfill their civic duty. “ A generation who is relatively unlikely to see voting as an important civic responsibility is one who may well have many of its members lost as voters for the rest of its duration. ” (Page- 128, IVYP) Wattenberg believes young voters need to participate or fall victim to being ignorant.

Being ignorant to elections is bad because there are people in the United States that political policies will affect. By not voting and being ignorant to

an election, a person misses the chance to vote for a candidate that could better their own situation. There are American citizens that really do need specific policies to be implemented that only one candidate can deliver. One idea that Wattenberg suggests that I disagree with is that young people do not receive enough information to be politically informed.

Information concerning politics has never been more available in society than it is today. When a person watches television specifically a news network, they will become politically informed. " Without reading a daily newspaper, watching the TV news, or otherwise following current events, even the best-educated people will probably not pick up much knowledge about the political world. " (Page-69, IVYP) Media on television is constantly reporting what the President or other political figures are doing. Usually the media is criticizing politicians for statements or decisions they made.

The problem with the media being critical to politicians all the time is that the negative news coverage is unappealing especially to a young voter like myself. Additionally to television, many political figures including Barack Obama use social networking as a way to reach American citizens. Social networking is practically a right of passage among youth today. Political influences are in all types of media. Any young person that uses social networking or watches television is choosing to not pay attention to politics. It would be reading too much into such responses to say that these two-thirds of young Americans didn't value voting; they could well have seen voting as a fundamental right or a crucial choice. Nevertheless, without a strong sense that electoral participation is a responsibility and a duty for everyone, it seems reasonable to conclude that many of these young adults

will not vote on a regular basis. ” (Page-119-120, IVYP) Wattenberg succeeds in establishing that voting among young people is not popular. The title of the book suggests that voting for young people is not a priority.

Young people who do not feel the urge to vote in an election have not experienced a political change that affects them personally. My overall opinion of Is Voting For Young People is that it was very informing. I was aware how low voter turnout is among young people in the United States but had no idea about the international world shared that issue. With the exception of Compulsory Voting nations, many nations share a similar voting situation to the United States. The fact that so many young people today do not participate in elections motivates me to help my generation to become more politically informed.