

Loss of freedom through apathy

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



We do have freedom in this country but we simply choose to ignore it. We live in a democracy, the most just kind of government, where we the people hold supreme power. It is an institution that is a culmination of revolutions, wars, philosophies and heroes. It is the greatest and proudest government in the world. One reason for this is that Americans have a right citizens of Iraq and China and North Korea only dreamed they could have. It took one of the greatest military epics in history for our Founding Fathers to receive this right. It took the marching of thousands for women to achieve this right.

It took 400 years of abuse for blacks to finally to win this right. It is the highest and purest form of freedom of speech and as Americans it is our single most powerful instrument of self government. It is the American vote and in this Presidential election it is a right 250 million chose to ignore. This year I had the great opportunity to volunteer my services to the Democratic party. I was excited to work for the Democrats because it was my first ever experience involved with the election. For 17 years I stood as a common bystander to this great American tradition.

Volunteering my hours made me feel like I was part of something important. Mostly my work consisted of random polling. I would call people up between the hours of 7 and 9 P. M. and ask them a few questions about the election. With every call I hoped for the best, but it seemed that I was calling people at the time they were most irritable. Most would simply hang up, leaving with a polite " Oh, I'm not interested. " Others acted militantly to my calling, slamming the phone in disgust. It startled and in a way disheartened me, the way many of the people I polled seemed totally apathetic to the political world around us.

To me, spending a minute answering questions about the future of politics did not seem like too much to ask at all. Yet it continued. " Hello I'm calling on behalf of your congressman Bob Toricelli. I'd like to ask a few questions. " " I'm sorry I'm really busy right now. I can't talk. " *click " Hello I'm calling on behalf of your congressman Bob Toricelli. I'd like to ask a few questions. " " Not interested" *click " Hello I'm calling on behalf of your congressman Bob Toricelli. I'd like to ask a few questions. " " I'm tired of hearing about this election. " *click

If I was calling from a telephone company or some other corporate monster disturbing people with their propaganda, I could understand how their sheer rudeness could be justified. But I am not calling on behalf of some annoying telemarketing scheme. I am an eager high school student with a fresh infatuation with politics. I am polling people about the leader of tomorrow, who will directly affect the taxes they spend, the wars they go into, and the moral values that they seem to hold so dear. To take a minute did not seem like a lot. In this past election over 52% of the population eligible to vote did not.

Many don't find anything particularly wrong with this. Their logic being that half of the nation voting would be just as effective as the entire nation. The problem with this reasoning is that some groups in America vote in larger numbers than other groups. Take for example the elderly in this country. It has been well documented that senior citizens above 60 have the highest voter turn-out of any age group in this country. Both Presidential candidates this year have appealed strongly for medical reforms with this group

especially in mind. For Politicians this is the group that can make or break their election hopes.

They will do whatever it takes to please this group, even if it means stepping all over another group to please them. In contrast the age bracket with the lowest voter turn-out are new voters between 20 and 29. This " X" generation of voters will have their rap music censored for being too explicit and their action films for being too violent. The Internet that this generation seems to embrace so dearly will be censored by the telecommunications bill and its television programming will include little ratings on the top left of their screens.

Politicians will have no problem abusing the rights of this Generation X because simply put, they don't go out and vote. In this way the government pays more attention to the elderly as compared to the young. They will care more about the trials and tribulations of the rich and middle-class rather than the suffering of the poor. They will support the N. R. A. with its sinful operations because yes, each and every one of their 2.5 million members vote. The vote determines who has the power in this country. It is not necessarily the majority. It is those who are dedicated. America is the land of the free.

Too many Americans take this for granted. We are not a monarchy. We are not a communism. We are not a dictatorship. We are a democracy and the people have the control. We are different from all the other types of government because the voices that govern us are our own. But when 250 million do not vote, who has the right to say that we control ourselves? When

half chooses to hold their mouths, who is to say that we are not a nation of special interests who do not hold their mouths? We have freedom, but it is apathy that is taking it away from us. We have that control we simply don't use it.