

A Vote for My Generation

-Dan Rosenberg

The 2012 presidential elections are closing in upon us, and soon America will make a decision for its future. A leader will be chosen, a president who will, for better or for worse, lead our country for the next four years. The choices this president makes will have a profound impact upon everyone's lives, not just those who can vote, but even young adults, like myself, who do not yet have the right to vote. Two years into this upcoming president's term, the young men and women of my generation, will be eligible to cast a vote. But, in this upcoming election, we have no say in the government. Our voices are not heard, and our opinions are dismissed. But they should not be. Because it's not just the future of the voters that this president will determine, but it is our future as well. Our voices should be heard in this election because the policies today will have a great impact on our lives tomorrow.

It's easy to dismiss the views of teenagers as unimportant, because we are young. But our ideas should not be taken so lightly, because we are not only the future of this country, but we are important members of society now. Every month, I get social security and Medicare taken out of my paycheck. I am a working American, just like the many blue-collar and white-collar folks across this country. So why shouldn't my voice be heard? What many people don't realize is just how important this election is to people my age. While we pay social security now, unless there is serious reform somewhere down the road, we won't reap the benefits of the fund. It's our future, but because of our age, we're seemingly dismissed, disregarded as men and women with opinions.

It doesn't stop there. As students of the public education system, we are affected by many of the policies enacted by the president. While the adults and politicians of America

debate over the legitimacy of education laws, we, the young men and women of America who are directly impacted by these laws, and whose children will be affected by these same laws, have no way of representing our opinions, or making our voices heard. While the lawmakers and legislators in Washington may be more experienced than us, and may have more knowledge than us, they should not be able to determine our futures without even considering us. No American would ever agree to have their opinions disregarded on the laws that would affect them. So why should my generation receive this treatment?

Not only are we the legislators and voters of the future, but we are the soldiers of the future as well. Many of my peers are actively engaged in ROTC and other military programs, and will be the soldiers who have to fight to preserve our freedom someday. The incoming president's decisions on the conflict in Afghanistan, and the crisis in Iran, will be integral in determining the wars of the future, wars that will be fought by my generation. But still, our opinions are ignored, politics are said to be things best left to the adults.

Well, I completely disagree with that. We are the adults of the future, and we are also the innovators of now. Perhaps we, with our technology and new ideas, could revitalize the

American government, and postulate new policies that could help give us a brighter future. So why shouldn't we have a vote, a say in a government supposedly "for the people, by the people." That, unfortunately, is probably just a pipe dream. Teens will most likely continue to be ignored in political proceedings. But maybe every adult out there, every voter who would ignore or disregard the opinions of the youth, should reconsider. Think about whose future you're really voting for.

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