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Is Voting Important to You?

Louis L’Amour once said, “To make democracy work, we must be a nation of participants, not simply observers. One who does not vote has no right to complain.” I believe that every individual, of legal age, should exercise his/her right to vote. Voting is so much more than going into a booth and choosing a candidate. Voting is the way citizens voice their feelings towards the future of this or any nation. By intelligently selecting a candidate for either mayor, senator, or even president, one is virtually saying that s/he entrusts that individual with the territory for which s/he has been elected to serve. Being an African-American citizen, voting holds a historical value. I strongly believe it is my civic duty to make sure my voice is heard.

In 1920, blacks were legally allowed to vote. However, racially biased stipulations still hindered this process. Blacks everywhere marched and fought for their rights to vote. In 1965, their fight was won when Blacks were finally allowed to vote freely and equally. Because of their sacrifices, the younger African-American generations are free to vote and utilize their first amendment rights of free speech – expressing their opinions on political matters. Also, I feel that it is my duty to exercise my right to vote in honor of those who did not have the privilege to exercise this right.

One thing my parents always instilled in my siblings and me, was the importance of voting. Even when I was younger and was not of the voting age, they made sure I was aware of the political candidates and their platforms during elections time. We would have heated discussions about those who were running for the various offices. My dad would breakdown the candidates’ pitches and ask me if I would vote for them. Although I did not understand at the time, I now know that he was preparing me for the future. My parents also explained to me the importance of not voting for the most popular candidates but to truly look at what they were proposing – making the world a better place for the all people. I do have to confess that I would often side with the candidates that I saw on the news the most. On the other hand, I would pick the names of the candidates that were most familiar to me. Of course, this selection process came from my ease-dropping on my parents and others who were debating their positions. At any rate, that was my way out of my dad’s political interrogations. Thankfully, I now can attest that by researching, and monitoring electoral campaigns, I know that my votes should be based off of whoever reflects the change I wish to see, not just for me but for future generations, as well.

Some believe since millions of people are already voting that their votes will be diminutive in comparison. Others feel as though the election has already been rigged in favor of who “they” appeal to more. However, I do not feel as though this should stop someone from voting. My personal belief is that a vote is symbolic of an individual’s voice. In this day and age, withholding my vote would not be an option. The stakes are too high to be nonchalant about politics. Voting, today, determines the freedoms of the nation tomorrow.

Voting was put in place for the people. So how could I, being one of the people, ignore this act? Voting is one of the ways I can voice my opinion on political topics. Also, so that I can have a say on the future of my city, my state, and my country. It is my way of honoring those who ensured I could have this right. It is a reflection of the teachings my parents so firmly instilled in me. Voting to me is much more than ballots, it is the building block that aids in shaping our nation.