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Is Voting for Young People?

By Martin P. Wattenberg



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In 2008, everyone expected young people to turn out to vote in record numbers for the first youthful, hip, new media-savvy, African American presidential candidate in history. They didn't. When Obama ran for re-election, he targeted young voters and they still didn't come to the polls in overwhelming numbers. What will happen in 2016, another potential history-making election?

Is Voting for Young People? explores the reasons why young people are less likely to follow politics and vote in the United States (as well as in many other established democracies) no matter who the candidates are, whether they tweet or blog, or what the issues may be. This brief, accessible, and provocative book suggests ways of changing that, and now includes a new chapter on young people's role in the 2008, 2012, and 2014 elections, looking ahead to 2016.

New to the Fourth Edition:

- A new introduction placing current youth voting trends in context with recent elections.
- A new Chapter 8 covering the elections of 2008, 2012, and 2014?looking ahead to 2016.
- Updated voting data on 2012 and 2014 elections.
- A new concluding chapter offering recommendations for improving young voter turnout.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Following the 2008 presidential election the dominant news narrative was that Barack Obama was carried to victory by increased turnout by engaged young voters. The virtue of research is that it assesses facts. Wattenberg carefully and thoroughly reviews the evidence and finds that the 2008 narrative was a myth. Aggregate turnout by young voters did not increase and in subsequent elections has even declined. Youth remain largely unengaged. If you wonder why Medicare and Social Security have thus far continued untouched, read this book."

– *Jeffrey M. Stonecash, Syracuse University*

Praise for previous editions:

"For years, political scientists have told their students that it doesn't make a difference whether they vote because one vote won't make a difference. This book is an antidote to that argument."

– *Richard Niemi, University of Rochester*

"Marty Wattenberg's new book is a brilliant analysis of a big and growing problem in modern democracies; it is also an urgently needed wake-up call. How can we call ourselves a democracy if fewer and fewer and people participate in elections and, in addition, if these voters are far from representative of the whole population? The author's recommendations for remedial action, including the adoption of mandatory voting, deserve the most serious consideration."

– *Arend Lijphart, University of California, San Diego*

"This is a fine example of putting first rate social science research in the service of larger normative concerns. Not everyone will agree with Wattenberg's prescription, but his description of the disengagement of younger citizens here and in other advanced democracies, and his explanation for their disengagement, are compelling."

– *Morris Fiorina, Stanford University*

"Everyone who seeks to understand today's politics and tomorrow's ought to read Martin P. Wattenberg's marvelous new book. Today's young adults are not like yesterday's. Even if you had thought they are less interested in politics and in news, you're going to be surprised by how much less involved they are. Democracy here and in Europe faces the disturbing challenge of how to get young people to take part in their governing."

– *Thomas E. Patterson, Harvard University*

"This is first-rate scholarship. Wattenberg's [book] makes an important contribution to our understanding of voter participation, while at the same time speaking directly to young people."

– *Miki Kittilson, Arizona State University*

"This text is likely to become one of the seminal works on voting -- readers of all levels cannot help but be impressed by the clarity and strength of Wattenberg's answer to why young people do not vote, and his solution will spur debate about the meanings of democracy, rights, and responsibilities."

– *Sean Matheson, Knox College*

About the Author

Martin P. Wattenberg is Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Irvine, USA.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Matthew Coleman:

Do you among people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained within the straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This *Is Voting for Young People?* book is readable through you who hate the straight word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable looking at experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to supply to you. The writer regarding *Is Voting for Young People?* content conveys thinking easily to understand by lots of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different as it. So , do you continue to thinking *Is Voting for Young People?* is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

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Elizabeth Hart:

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