

Popular reasons to avoid voting

BY STEPHANIE REIDY
STAFF OPINION WRITER

Let's start with a question: How many of you (who were eligible) voted in the last presidential election? Okay, okay, so maybe you needed to organize your lintball collection, or groom your pet tarantula. How about the last annual student body election? Anyone? Ooh, not encouraging.

Please answer this: What excuse could anyone possibly have for neglecting to use a whopping five minutes of their precious time in order to fill out a teeny little form that could have some very serious effects on their future? Aside from tarantula grooming and the like, let's take a look at some of the most popular reasons why NOT to vote:

"I don't have the time."
OK, look at it like this: It takes a lot less time to check that little ballot sheet (approximately 10 minutes for the entire process) than it does to petition student government to change a measure they've already voted on (approximately three million hours of hassle, pain and suffering.) Why not make the difference when it's easy?

"I don't know anything about politics."

OK, Einstein, so do a little research! If you read this paper even occasionally (and if you're a good student and worthy human being you will pore over every edition) you can't help but run across political articles in just about every issue.

"Government is so corrupt already, one vote won't make a difference."

Have you ever heard the saying, "It takes more than one tree to make a forest?" Or how about good old, "United we stand, divided we fall?"

The point is, each vote DOES make a difference.

If you choose to be apathetic concerning politics, then don't consider it your right to complain when student government outlaws food on campus or something similarly ludicrous, like spending \$15,000 on a tailgate party for homecoming, or another \$15,000 for a student senate trip to Washington, D.C. That's \$30,000 of your money spent on things most of us received no benefit from.

Sure, homecoming deserves a party, but a \$15,000 party?

Now for some other stats. Did you know that last year it cost approximately \$40,000 to hold student elections? If for no other reason, vote because so much of your hard-earned cash (in other words, tuition) went to pay for this ordeal!

Another reason to vote is to make sure that Joe Mills doesn't get the chance to hand out any more suckers. Elected or defeated, he can finally hang up that polyester suit after this next election.

A democracy is only as strong as the individuals who make up that democracy. If the students on this campus maintain a lazy, indifferent attitude towards the future of their school, then we as a

school will reflect this lethargy.

We also need to look at the ramifications of this political non-participatory trend in later life. Who do we think will run the country after we graduate and adopt our roles in middle-American life?

This is a presidential election year. Who plans to vote? Who plans to inform themselves of the issues and raise their constitutional voice?

Simply: vote. Here on campus, and in the larger world, your solitary vote counts, but it can only count if you cast it.

The primary elections for student government will be held March 6th and 7th. The general elections will be held April 3rd and 4th.

Clinton misleads, students urged to oust

Wake up students! We are in the middle of an election year with primaries in the very near future and more importantly, the presidential election just around the corner. There are far too many students who are either uninformed, misinformed, or simply don't care to get involved with the issues.

Just a matter of weeks ago, our president delivered a most remarkable speech in this year's State of the Union address. Many people who happened to hear this speech were greatly impressed with what our leader had to say. But let me pose a question: Is this the same Bill Clinton this nation elected?

It is no wonder a sense of faith was restored in our president. His speech contained messages that have been de-

livered for the last 15 years by people such as President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Vice President Dan Quayle, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Sen. Phil Gramm, and Sen. Bob Dole.

We were gifted to have follow-up comments by our "media-elite" throughout the following week on how well Clinton presented himself and his new message.

The fact of the matter is that Bill Clinton, since the election of '94, has come to realize that conservatism is alive and well and these beliefs are shared by the majority of our nation's people.

Therefore, he gave us what we wanted to hear. Leaving those such as Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw and Bernard Shaw in a pathetic state of awe while deliv-



ering the news, the public was misled into thinking this is the 'new message' from our president, that at least he is focusing on the issues, unlike the Republican presidential candidates.

To me, this was just another example of how two-faced Bill Clinton really is.

A politically-minded person can't possibly say, with a straight face, that this is the message Clinton was elected on. For over an hour, Clinton told our nation the "time of big government is over."

This comes from the same person who has continually pushed for legislation to increase our government's power over people. For three years Clinton has not only shunned, but made a mockery of those who have been trying to deliver this same message, such as Bob Dole and Newt Gingrich. Those of you who aren't up on current political issues may have watched this speech and thought what a great message our president is trying to convey. Don't be misled!

Our liberal friends in the media who are "objectively" covering the Republican campaign consistently run stories on mud-slinging that is taking place among the GOP presidential hopefuls. Common, negative campaigning has been going on in this country

since there has been campaigning. If a finger should be pointed at somebody, it should be the media.

The reason many people feel negative campaigning is on the rise is that our country's media coverage increases dramatically each year. Candidates have to bring up their opponent's past because past records should count. A candidate's character should count. There isn't anybody out there who encourages negative campaigning but it is an effective way to get the message out.

If people want to hear the issues, and it is the media who is there to provide us with the issues, why don't they focus on the issues? The media is not acting responsibly and it needs to be pointed out.

Our current president has had about half of his administration either resign, get fired, go to jail, or spend hours in court defending themselves against numerous charges brought against them. His wife is currently out promoting her newly published book with taxpayer dollars.

His old liberal-Democratic friends are shying away from having him speak on their behalf in local Representative and senatorial campaigns. He continually makes promises he can't keep. Time and time again he portrays himself as

this country's Santa Claus but turns out to be the Grinch.

It is time for us, the young voters of America, to get more involved in what is happening in our country.

Since Clinton has taken office, racial tension has skyrocketed, hatred between our nation's social classes is up, and more and more people have been given the impression that conservative Republicans are heartless. His continuous hate-spreading is rubbing off on our country.

Today, telling people on a college campus that you are a Republican

means you want babies to starve, homeless to remain homeless, and the world's environment to be completely and utterly destroyed.

I care what direction this country takes as we head into this election season. I feel making people more responsible for their own lives and their own actions is much more caring than letting the government continue to run the lives of the many Americans it does.

Providing people the incentive to strive for achievement is what this country needs, not the reliance of the next hand-out by our government. We are a free-enterprise, capitalistic, democratic society and I would hate to see us head down the path of socialism the liberal-Democrats have set out for us.

Therefore, my fellow UNLV students, no matter what side of the political spectrum you may stand on, learn to look past the rhetoric, hype and hypocrisy, and choose your candidate wisely. It is important and your vote does matter.

Let the candidates be their own spokespersons, not the media... and certainly not Bill Clinton.

Robert Uithoven is a senior, majoring in English

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UNLV
4505 MARYLAND PARKWAY
LAS VEGAS, NV 89154-2011
PHONE (702) 895-3479
FAX (702) 895-1515

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