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From: Brian Odell <bodell275@gmail.com>
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I DO NOT agree that 16 year olds should be allowed to vote! And I'm in the majority. According to a Hill-HarrisX poll, a staggering 75% of registered voters oppose allowing 17-year-olds to vote and 84% oppose allowing 16-year-olds to vote. These numbers alone present enough reason to dismiss the option, seeing as every age group in the poll opposed lowering the voting age to 16 or 17.

Most adolescents do not possess the knowledge required to make an educated decision about their representatives. Their government and history classes rarely cover the current state of the U.S. government, so while they usually possess a basic understanding of how the government works, most do not harbor the knowledge older individuals do. Sure, a select number of individuals contain the necessary information to vote, but the average 16-year-old does not.

One high school senior says: "At 16 I was very immature, and just two years have changed me a lot. Most 16 years olds don't know anything about politics and lack the maturity to participate in voting. They wouldn't take it seriously if they can't even take school seriously."

Social media also plays a major role in this process and frequently portrays biased and faulty versions of people. These sites shape teenagers' opinions and provide them with ideas that do not always consider both sides of the spectrum. Moreover, most of these young adults do not stay up to date on politics, focusing more on trends and social media. So, their votes would reflect their expressive tendencies instead of instrumental considerations, and numerous young adults would vote just for the sake of voting.

Countless activists use whataboutism in their arguments, such as "if we can let them drive, we should let them vote". Yet, this dispute can reverse to "well if we can let them drive, we can let them carry a firearm" or "if we can let them drive, we can lower the draft age". Just because they can, does not mean they should. A mere two years can make all the difference in young adults due to their rapidly growing and developing brains. Tests conducted by the American Psychological Association proved that "while adolescents may reason as well as adults, their emotional maturity lags". Their logical reasoning and basic information processing develop faster than other systems, and therefore emotion drives too many of their decisions.

While 16-year-olds must participate in various "adult" responsibilities, they still reside under their parents/guardians' care until 18. Waiting until 18 to vote will allow them to venture out and form their own opinions on the world, as well as learn to make decisions based on facts instead of emotion.

"The majority of the world set their voting age at 18, which I believe is a perfect age. You're just out of high school and taking on adult responsibilities, and able to partake in the privilege of voting. 16-year-olds need a lot of growing and learning to do before they can make this major decision," says another high school senior.

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