Lending a Hand: Voting indecision, no excuse for apathy at the polls

Why is it that young people don't vote? This is not a new question. People have been asking it for as long as I became aware of the fact that I was a young person and that I had a vote. Drew Barrymore has been on a crusade across America on a bus asking people the same question. Politicians make special strategies to appeal to these particular voters. Research is done and polls are taken. But why is it that we keep coming back to the same fact that in past elections young voters did not turn out in big numbers. What might be even worse than this is that fact that young people are registered to vote and don't.

Is it that young people are too wrapped up in their own lives and could care less? Is it that they think that no matter what they do it is not going to make a difference? Is it that young people as a whole are not familiar with the issues and don't care to ask the time to learn? It is probably a mixture of all of these. I myself am still not sure why young people seem to be so upset about the lack of good candidates with relevant issues! I personally think these reasons are the most ridiculous answers to this question. I think it is a combination of all these things. However, I think that young people have a need to wake up. As one young person to another, if you are waiting for an invitation to vote, then here it is. Whatever reason you are giving not to vote is not good enough. Get over it. This is your world and your life. I don't care if you don't like the candidates, if you can't make up your mind or are fed up with the system. It does not matter. United States citizens are damn lucky that they have the right to vote and yet we don't turn out. The fact of the matter is that it is the participation in the process that makes this country operate. By not voting you are saying, "But mom, it was for charity!" I didn't know how else to start the conversation with my mother. After all, her daughter was in an emergency room in Trenton and I knew she wasn't going to be happy. Monday morning at the doctor's office, my first words were "It's an injury from flag football." FLAG football, mind you. Not some "let's tackle and kill everything we come in contact with" version of this favorite American pastime.

Or was it? With a completely torn ACL, several other knee complications, and a recent surgery tentative for December, I am seriously wondering where the flag concept of the game went. After spending the past week questioning it, I think I've come to a conclusion — it was erased, along with the whole idea of charity.

As many of you might already know, the purpose behind the Bowl (the flag football tournament that has taken place the past two Saturdays here on campus) was to aid St. Jude's "Up Till Dawn" program. If you're unfamiliar with this program, it helps raise money for pediatric cancer. So, in essence, wouldn't all of the teams be working together as one? I can't understand how the purpose behind the game shifted from helping dying children, to making threats such as "I'm gonna mess you up," followed by intentional (not to mention, cheap) shots. If someone from the Red Cross were to knock on your door, would you honestly consider giving them a black eye instead of a donation? The question I propose to our community is simple: where has our concept of sportsmanship gone? The willingness to compete does bring out intensity, but how can someone truthfully be so overcome by hate and jealousy that they give their teammate a high five after witnessing an opponent scream in pain? When it comes to charity, that is no better than laughing at a crying child going through chemotherapy.

Not to say that I'm comparing myself to someone with cancer, because I am very grateful that this is not the case. Also, if you haven't noticed, I've excluded team names for a reason. Bad sportsmanship extends beyond the playing field I was on; there is no need in sharing an entire group when perhaps only a few deserve to have fingers pointed at them. Thus, the purpose of this letter is not to seek pity, or vengeance or to spread rumors, nor is it to make anyone feel guilty. All I'm seeking is awareness.

Unfortunately after this past weekend, I think only one wrongfull lesson was learned: doing things for charity makes sportsmanship, or lack thereof, irrelevant. This is why I ask you to keep your intentions pure. While charity work is supposed to be impressive, it is not when it is done for the wrong reasons. And this injured writer is not impressed.

Elizabeth Rumbel Sophomore

Letter to the Editor: Poor sportsmanship mars flag football tournament

Letter to the Editor:

"But mom, it was for charity." I didn't know how else to start the conversation with my mother. After all, her daughter was in an emergency room in Trenton and I knew she wasn't going to be happy. Monday morning at the doctor's office, my first words were "It's an injury from flag football." FLAG football, mind you. Not some "let's tackle and kill everything we come in contact with" version of this favorite American pastime.

Or was it? With a completely torn ACL, several other knee complications, and a recent surgery tentative for December, I am seriously wondering where the flag concept of the game went. After spending the past week questioning it, I think I've come to a conclusion — it was erased, along with the whole idea of charity.

As many of you might already know, the purpose behind the Bowl (the flag football tournament that has taken place the past two Saturdays here on campus) was to aid St. Jude's "Up Till Dawn" program. If you're unfamiliar with this program, it helps raise money for pediatric cancer. So, in essence, wouldn't all of the teams be working together as one? I can't understand how the purpose behind the game shifted from helping dying children, to making threats such as "I'm gonna mess you up," followed by intentional (not to mention, cheap) shots. If someone from the Red Cross were to knock on your door, would you honestly consider giving them a black eye instead of a donation? The question I propose to our community is simple: where has our concept of sportsmanship gone? The willingness to compete does bring out intensity, but how can someone truthfully be so overcome by hate and jealousy that they give their teammate a high five after witnessing an opponent scream in pain? When it comes to charity, that is no better than laughing at a crying child going through chemotherapy.

Not to say that I'm comparing myself to someone with cancer, because I am very grateful that this is not the case. Also, if you haven't noticed, I've excluded team names for a reason. Bad sportsmanship extends beyond the playing field I was on; there is no need in sharing an entire group when perhaps only a few deserve to have fingers pointed at them. Thus, the purpose of this letter is not to seek pity, or vengeance or to spread rumors, nor is it to make anyone feel guilty. All I'm seeking is awareness.

Unfortunately after this past weekend, I think only one wrongfull lesson was learned: doing things for charity makes sportsmanship, or lack thereof, irrelevant. This is why I ask you to keep your intentions pure. While charity work is supposed to be impressive, it is not when it is done for the wrong reasons. And this injured writer is not impressed.

Elizabeth Rumbel Sophomore

The Rider News: Ridge House; 2083 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648; Phone: (609) 896-5256; Fax: (609) 895-5696; E-mail: ridernews@rider.edu

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY...

Oct. 22, 1746
Princeton University is chartered.

Oct. 26, 1955
The U.S. Air Force officially reports that there are no such things as flying saucers.

Oct. 28, 1886
The Statue of Liberty is dedicated.