

Rockin' the Vote

The Millennial Generation Gets A Say

In 1990, several members of the recording industry got together to protest a wave of attacks on their freedom of speech in the form of music censorship. Outraged, they created an organization called “Rock the Vote,” and launched its first high-profile campaign titled, “Censorship is Unamerican.” While the group was born in protest of music censorship, it quickly grew to represent America’s young voters, particularly those who were being increasingly ignored by the political establishment. Its unique position in pop culture made it a perfect advocacy group for a generation that had for years been overlooked as apathetic and uninformed. Since then, Rock the Vote has grown to be one of the leading organizations for youth empowerment, registering millions of young voters, building awareness for youth issues, standing at the forefront of innovative technologies, and helping youth utilize their political voice.

Today, Rock the Vote stands aside a new generation of voters. Unlike their predecessors, today’s youth (known as the Millennial Generation) find it important to stay abreast of current affairs, are likely to volunteer in their community, and have rejected precedent by reversing a trend of declining voter turnout among their age group. In 2004, the percentage of young people going to the polls increased three times as much as the overall electorate, resulting in the highest turnout of voters aged 18–29 since the twenty-sixth Amendment lowered the voting age to 18 in 1971! We have to give credit where credit is due: educators play a huge role in young people’s lives, especially in their development as active and engaged citizens. It is in the classroom that they learn about their country, their democracy, and the role that they will play in this country’s future.

That’s why we’re asking for your help. In keeping with our mission, we have set a goal of registering two million young voters for the 2008 election cycle. That’s no easy task, and we can’t do it alone. We plan on using social networking sites like Facebook.com and popular web services like Google to do it, but we

know that these things simply don't compare to the influence that a role model or an educator can have on young people. We need your help and your expertise.

Encourage your students to take an interest in the 2008 election. Some of your students might be old enough to vote already: make sure they register (we make it easy: read about our new online voter registration tool on the opposite side of this page. It makes a great addition to any school, class, or personal website or blog)! If they aren't old enough to vote, there are still plenty of things you can do to make sure that they're ready and excited to go the polls when they turn 18. We've compiled a list of tips, tools, and websites to help you engage your students in the political process. Be creative! A lot of your students are probably on Facebook: ask them to take a look at some of the candidates' profiles, and friend one. Turn YouTube into a homework assignment: have your students look at some of the clips from the recent CNN/YouTube debates. The internet-intensive nature of the '08 campaigns is making politics uniquely accessible to this generation of young people. Use it to your advantage!

As educators, you have a tremendous influence on this country's future. You are teaching the next generation of citizens, and your ability to instill a sense of civic duty in your students can strengthen our democracy and our country as a whole unlike anything else. Empower your students to use their political voice, to make a difference in the world, and to get out there and vote.

Rock The Vote Online Voter Registration Tool

Rock the Vote's Online Voter Registration Tool (OVR) is a free tool that allows you to easily integrate voter registration into your school's Web site or your classes' Internet component, playing an important role in one of the largest voter mobilization efforts in history.

How it works: After registering to use the tool, you will be able to cut and paste a short snippet of code into your Web page or blog, and a full voter registration application will instantly be available to any visitor to your site. Once someone registers through the tool, he or she only has to print the PDF document

*Excerpted from **RHI: Promoting Active Citizenship**, a publication of Random House, Inc. To request a complimentary copy of RHI, email highschool@randomhouse.com, subject: "RHI: Citizenship"*

(which our tool populates automatically) and then mail it to the Secretary of State's office (address provided).

Why it's the most effective online voter registration tool currently available:

- The entire voter registration process happens on your site. Users are never directed to a third-party Web site, and there are no pop-up windows.
- Seamless integration means less voter registration drop-off. The simple one-page form makes it more likely that your students will complete the registration process.
- Our tool will automatically follow up with registrants to make sure they complete the registration process and know where and when to vote on Election Day.

Benefits for your school and classroom:

- You have access to the registration data submitted through your site. Build databases of interested students, and use it to start student groups, craft programming, and generally keep your students involved in the political process.
- The voter registration tool makes it easy for you to create custom questions as part of the voter registration process. Use them to incorporate voter registration into one of your lessons! Or use it to build your school's e-mail list.
- Because the entire voter registration process happens on your site, users never leave your Web site and stay on your site longer.
- Think you can't teach civics in a computer science class? The tool has an API function, making the OVR infinitely customizable—perfect for creative students with a knack for computing.
- Keep a running tally on your blackboard of how many of your students have registered with the help of our real-time voter registration counter. Or compete with other classes to see who can register the most students.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/highschool/RHI/>

- Using the Rock the Vote OVR allows you to play an important role in one of the largest voter mobilization efforts in history because the data that you collect will feed into a larger database that will show real political power for young people.

*Excerpted from **RHI: Promoting Active Citizenship**, a publication of Random House, Inc. To request a complimentary copy of RHI, email highschool@randomhouse.com, subject: "RHI: Citizenship"*

Election 2008 Suggested Reading

The Audacity of Hope *Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*

by Barack Obama

Pundits and voters alike have hailed Senator Obama as a man of uncommon vision in an age of partisan opportunism. *The Audacity of Hope* is a book of transforming power, a foundation for those who long for a politics that acknowledges the nobility and complexity of our lives.

Three Rivers Press, TR, 978-0-307-23770-5, 384 pp., \$14.95

Promises to Keep *On Life and Politics*

by Joe Biden

Promises to Keep is the story of a man who faced down personal challenges and tragedy to become one of our most effective leaders. It is also an intimate series of reflections from a public servant who refuses to be cynical about political leadership, and a testament to the promise of the United States.

Random House, HC, 978-1-4000-6536-3, 400 pp., \$25.95

Brave New Ballot *The Battle to Safeguard Democracy in the Age of Electronic Voting*

by Aviel David Rubin

Imagine for a moment that you live in a country where nobody is sure how most of the votes are counted, and there's no reliable record for performing a recount. Imagine that machines count the votes, but nobody knows how they work. Now imagine if the machines were attacked. If you live in America, you don't need to imagine anything. This is the reality of electronic voting in our country.

Broadway, HC, 978-0-7679-2210-4, 288 pp., \$24.95

Declaring Independence: *The Beginning of the End of the Two-Party System* *by Douglas Schoen*

Declaring Independence is the first major work to analyze the large-scale trend that could open the door for a major third-party candidate. It also explains how the major party candidates talk about the issues and communicate with voters and organize their power.

Forthcoming February 2008. Do not order before 2/1/2008.

Random House, HC, 978-1-4000-6733-6, 224 pp., \$23.95

The Way to Win *Taking the White House in 2008*

by Mark Halperin and John F. Harris

"The book's comprehensiveness should make it a lasting piece of scholarship—an in-depth, indefatigable examination of American media and politics at the turn of the millennium."—*Publishers Weekly*

Random House, HC, 978-1-4000-6447-2, 480 pp., \$26.95

How Would Jesus Vote? *A Christian Perspective on the Issues*

by Dr. D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe

Excerpted from **RHI: Promoting Active Citizenship**, a publication of Random House, Inc. To request a complimentary copy of RHI, email highschool@randomhouse.com, subject: "RHI: Citizenship"

“The question is not if morality can be legislated. The question is whose morality will be legislated?” *How Would Jesus Vote?* is a book for anyone wondering about the guiding forces that shape the conservative Christian, and the larger nation as a result.

Forthcoming January 2008. Do not order before 1/01/2008.
WaterBrook Press, HC, 978-1-4000-7406-8, 288 pp., \$16.99

Grand Old Party *A History of the Republicans*

by Lewis Gould

“In this richly informed and timely book, Lewis Gould provides an illuminating, fluent and persuasive history of the Republican Party. His saga addresses both issues and leaders in the frequently contentious politics of the party of Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan, their heirs, their enemies and their legacy.” —John Morton Blum, Sterling Professor Emeritus, Yale University

Random House, HC, 978-0-375-50741-0, 624 pp., \$35.00

The Almanac of Political Corruption, Scandals & Dirty Politics

by Kim Long

Watergate. Billygate. Iran-Contra. Teapot Dome. Monica Lewinsky. American history is marked by era-defining misdeeds, indiscretions, and the kind of tabloid-ready scandals that politicians seem to do better than anyone else. Now, for the first time, one volume brings together 300 years of political wrongdoing in an illustrated history of politicians gone wild.

Delacorte Press, HC, 978-0-553-80510-9, 368 pp., \$24.00
