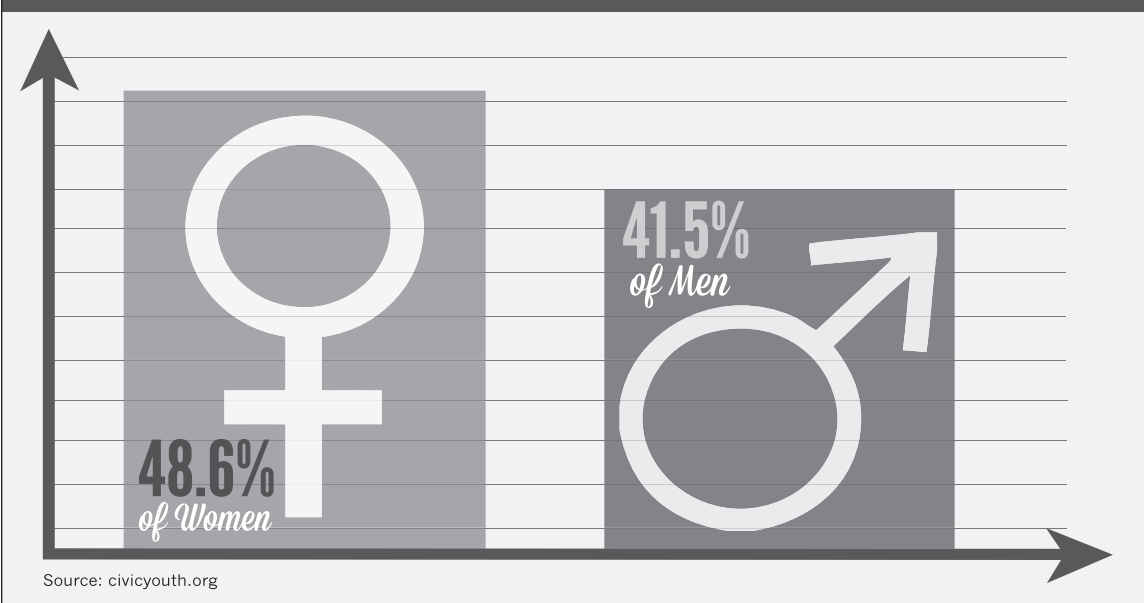


18-29 year-olds who voted in the 2012 U.S. Presidential Election



Vote for your beliefs



UmmeKulsoom Arif

If the signs on Baltimore Street are any indication, election season now is upon us. With the August primaries finished and the general election less than a month away, campaign ads have been cropping up everywhere. While the constant YouTube ads are annoying and the many signs promoting judges, representatives and other state officials can be grating, it's important to understand their significance and how necessary it is to pay attention to elections.

Voter turnout rates among eligible voters between age 18 and 24 have dropped from 50.9 percent to 38 percent between 1964 and 2012, according to an April 2014 report from the U.S. Census Bureau. The next-highest age group, ages 25 to 44, had a turnout drop from 69 percent to 49.5 percent. Currently, the only age group experiencing a growing turnout is that of voters age 65 and older, moving from 66.3 percent to 69.7 percent.

As young adults lose interest in politics, they lose their voice. There's no doubt we've learned to be helpless against our elders as they tell us to sit back and wait until we're older before we engage in politics, but that mentality only will cripple us during the future. We need to use early engagement in politics, research into candidates and their platforms and careful scrutiny of ballot proposals, all of which result in an educated voter, and educated voters to move politics in the right direction. But young voters

have started to lose their interest in politics and that can be devastating.

While it might seem unlikely, politics is subject to the whim of the people. Politicians have to appeal to their voter base, and by appealing to the largest base, they can gather greater support and more or less assure victory. However, if they want to remain in power, they have to keep a majority of their campaign promises. Currently, with the largest voter base consisting of people age 65 and older, politicians continue to focus on services that benefit that demographic, like retirement benefits and social security. With more money being budgeted for services like this, other important institutions — elementary, secondary and higher education, for example — end up getting less money than they need.

We don't share the same ideals as our grandparents. However, in an attempt to appeal to a more conservative voter base, politicians have passed multiple laws that some people in our generation have taken offense to — such as laws dealing with gay marriage, women's rights and race issues — and there's no doubt we have opinions on all three of those issues. But if we don't get to the ballot box and make our opinions known — by voting for politicians who support our view, thus choking out the ones who don't agree with us — all we can do is sit around and complain.

Our generation is a jaded one — passionate, but jaded — and it's time we took some passion to the ballot box. General elections take place during November and, for Missouri, the election is Nov. 4. It's too late to register as a new voter, but those already registered should head to the Secretary of State's website for your state and request an absentee ballot. While you're there, take a look at the measures on the ballot as well as the representatives up for re-election.

UmmeKulsoom Arif is a junior creative writing and justice systems major from St. Louis, Mo.

Explore Kirksville's historic landmarks



Natalie Carbery

In Kirksville, attractions are far and few. The train bridge is a classic option for freshmen at Truman State, and Thousand Hills State Park has plenty of weekend activities for families and students.

But off the beaten path is Kirksville's abandoned ski lodge and the collection of petroglyphs at Thousand Hills.

The Rainbow Basin Ski Lodge only was in business from 1982 to 1991 and eventually failed because of lack of snow and a poor market, according to a January 2009 article on stlmag.com.

The legend I often have heard among students is the ski lodge was closed during the 1970s and might be haunted.

While the hike itself is fairly short, it goes up and down a few hills and does not always have direct tree coverage to protect visitors from the sun. Any potential adventurers should beware of the heat when visiting the ski lodge and pack a lot of water.

After the trouble of getting there, the Rainbow Basin Ski Lodge is worth the effort. With at least four standing buildings and the remains of a ski lift, the ski lodge looks like the setting of a horror movie.

College and high school students have covered the inside of the buildings with graffiti, often covering subjects such as murder, Greek Life, drug use and lines from famous horror movies. This off-beat artwork adds to the experience of being somewhere abandoned and dated, reflecting not only the Truman community, but the Kirksville community as a whole in its general aesthetic.

The adventure itself transcends getting off campus and out of town for a few hours. It is an artistic experience. The colors of the chipping paint and the natural environment make it an interesting location to photograph or sketch.

At Thousand Hills, there is a small pavilion off the road surrounding a large slab of rock. Native American tribes from the area etched their symbols on the rock. The petroglyphs at Thousand Hills are at least 1,500 years old. Inside the protective pavilion are large signs interpreting the meaning behind each image, according to moststateparks.com.

Visiting the petroglyphs not only is educational, but less of a time commitment than the ski lodge and can be done regardless of the weather.

Kirksville is full of interesting history and adventures for those willing to seek it out. For Truman students, the four years we have in Kirksville are an important time to make memories and to explore new frontiers — don't leave Rainbow Basin Ski Lodge and the Thousand Hills petroglyphs off the Truman bucket list.

Natalie Carbery is a junior creative writing major from Chicago, Ill.

Editor's Note: Birney Belfield, owner of the abandoned Rainbow Basin Ski Lodge property, gave permission to Truman Media Network representatives to access the property. He asks that any other students who wish to visit the property ask his permission before accessing it at (660) 341-9081. Trespassing is a crime and the landowner's express permission first must be obtained.

Career paths can take twists and turns



Conor Gearin

For anyone who took a U.S. history course during high school, Rachel Carson's name is associated with her 1962 book "Silent Spring" and not much else. But Carson first became famous not for that book, but for her 1951 book "The Sea Around Us," — a natural history of ocean wildlife. Carson's varied career in marine biology, scientific writing and environmental activism speaks to the twists and turns a career can take — perhaps an important lesson for college students about to enter the workforce.

"Silent Spring," which I read for the first time this semester, shocked an American public that passively had accepted high levels of pesticide use with little testing or consideration. Chemical manufacturers churned out increasingly powerful

products, killing beneficial insects such as bees and ladybugs in addition to pest species. The poisons were passed up the food chain to predators, leading to a broad threat to life on earth, according to biographer Linda Lear, author of "Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature." Carson's call to prevent a spring without birdsong galvanized the environmental movement, which succeeded in banning the pesticide DDT in the U.S. during 1972.

But there is much more to this writer than the short section found in textbook chapters crammed with the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Great Society and Rosa Parks. While always passionate about conserving the natural world, public activism came only at the end of her life. According to Lear's book, Carson began her career as a marine researcher at Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory. Graduating during the Great Depression, she knew she would have to be creative at finding sources of income. She wrote radio pieces for the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and natural history articles for the Baltimore Sun.

With credentials as a researcher and writer, she joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to edit publications. She stayed with that job for 15 years, eventually becoming the organization's editor-in-chief.

But she continued to write about the place she loved most — the ocean.

After a number of articles for periodicals, Carson cemented her reputation as a science writer with "The Sea Around Us," published during 1952. According to oceanographer Robert Ballard, Carson drew a wide readership by depicting ocean wildlife poetically and informatively years before the rise of scuba diving and Jacques Cousteau's books and films.

Most natural history writers are able to draw on firsthand experiences of living in a familiar ecosystem. Carson was faced with the challenge of creating a thorough portrait of ocean life using only the images and data gleaned through brief forays into the water and her imagination. By telling the stories of a mackerel escaping predators and navigating the dangers of undersea life, Carson encouraged readers to think creatively about the realities of life in the oceans.

With the success of this book and support from a Guggenheim Fellowship, Carson retired from her job as editor to focus on writing more about the sea. It was this solid career as an author that granted her the credibility needed to make the controversial "Silent Spring" convincing to a broad audience.

Carson's path toward environmental activism and her most famous book was much more winding than I had assumed. Much of her life was spent doing quite different work. I think there is a lesson in Carson's story for college students.

While I think it is appropriate to carefully consider where I send my applications for work and schooling after Truman State, I sometimes think I make such decisions based on a mistaken picture of how careers work. Perhaps the picture comes from vague notions I have picked up from movies like "It's a Wonderful Life," in which young George Bailey chooses between a stable job at the bank he would keep until death, or an unstable life of world travel and decadence.

Stories like Carson's show how, for many, the choice is not that simple. Whether living during the Great Depression or Great Recession, people often try out a number of jobs to find their way. We might as well think of it as an adventure.

Conor Gearin is a senior biology and English major from St. Louis, Mo.

AROUND THE QUAD

Would you think of career switching as scary or as an opportunity?

I'd get bored with one job, so I plan to switch.

Molly Kinder
Senior



If you look at the positives, it could be an opportunity!

Kelsey Spencer
Junior



As long as I switched to a secure job, I think it'd be fine.

Rick Cazzato Jr.
Freshman



I think it would be super intimidating to change careers.

Rae Greer
Senior

