

# Social Science Says: Go Vote!

November 07, 2016

## NPR:

Millions of Americans will cast a vote for the next president of the United States on Nov. 8 — Election Day — and for countless other offices and propositions.

In case you need the extra encouragement, here are three (more) reasons to vote, courtesy of the social sciences:

**1. Voting is rational.** (Maybe.) In fact, there are heated debates over whether it's rational to vote. On the one hand, voting is effortful: There is time and energy involved. And on the other hand, the odds that your individual vote will make a difference to the outcome of an election are miniscule. If you make decisions with the aim of maximizing your expected utility, it might be wise to avoid the minor costs, and to instead stay home on Election Day to enjoy your morning coffee (or something a little stronger).

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In a case like this, we don't let each individual Team Slow member off the hook just because that individual's actions didn't "make a difference." We might instead hold them responsible *as a group*. Or, for each individual, we might consider how different the world would have to have been for that person's slow performance to have made a difference. In a world in which the other team members hadn't been unusually slow, then that individual's slow run may well have made a difference, and that world isn't too far-fetched to consider.

Read the whole story: [NPR](#)