just as normal people. The clown is still just a clown to Columbus, and all of the celebrities still attend trivial events such as the Hollywood ball.

By the film's end, the meaning of the opening image of Washington, D.C. burning to the ground becomes clearer. Our first glimpse of zombie America is the destruction of the nation's capital because in the instance of complete breakdown of civic engagement, the government center would be rendered nothing more than a metaphoric burning sea of buildings. During this opening scene Columbus's voiceover says, "I wish I could tell you that this was still America, but I've come to realize that you can't have a country without people." In a country that emphasizes social media and electronic communication, face-to-face contact with other people is becoming a rare commodity. *Zombieland* makes the argument that the country is headed down a path of chaos and that people need to be active and aware of politics and the culture around them to avoid becoming an aimless "zombie" population.

The problem of political disinterest and civic disengagement has been infecting America for years; however, it still can be fixed relatively easily. Over the past thirty years, voting participation and civic involvement have dropped double-digit percentages and participation in community-based events has declined as well. The less people are attached to the very ties that define America as a democracy, the worse off the nation as a whole is going to be. America was built on the participation of its citizens in a way that allows every person's voice to be heard. However, as of late out attention has been held by media advertisements and pop culture that has been increasingly focused on goods and services on improving one's standing with little regard to their community. Similar to a zombie wandering the street, chasing down any food it can get its hands on, people in modern America have been doing the same. Now more than ever, people have started becoming detached from any semblance of a functional community, and the generation of stand-alone citizens is taking over. With television viewership skyrocketing and the number of people leaving the house plummeting, the zombification of America is well underway.

Despite the fact that there is so much "doom and gloom" surrounding local, state, and federal politics in America, there is still a light at the end of the tunnel. America is built in a way that could always allow for a spike of civic engagement at any time. At the state

level citizens can submit proposals as a new piece of legislation to be voted on or garner enough signatures to submit a referendum to vote on an existing law. With the 2012 elections, a significant aura of patriotism flooded the nation, spurred by the debates and conventions. Two weeks before the election, President Obama and Governor Romney spent over 500 million dollars combined on advertising, allowing for the average citizen to see their fair share of political advertisements soliciting their support in November. Headlined by one of the youngest presidents in American history and a promising, under-fifty vice presidential candidate, the 2012 election could be the youthful jolt that America needs to energize political participation. Unlike the zombies chasing Columbus, Tallahassee, Wichita, and Little Rock, the "virus" that infected American citizens is completely curable. The doctor cannot prescribe any easy cure, but with effort from enough people, overall political engagement can return to the glory days of the roaring 1950s. Just think of how frightening it would be to walk up to a voting booth at the next election and see no one around. Seems a bit like *Zombieland*, does it not?

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