America being a tad bit slower than the people making television entertainment. The familiar metaphor of referring to someone entranced with a television set as a "zombie" sets up the expectation that the film will explore the realm of undead citizens.

I argue that the term "zombieland" is a metaphor for the lack of political interest in America. The film contrasts the numerous, mindless zombies with the politically-engaged (eventually) main characters. Zombies are mindless creatures that wander aimlessly around the streets and fulfill carnal human desires like eating whatever they can get their hands on. In contrast, the main characters are incredibly proactive, goal-oriented, and conscious of avoiding dangerous mistakes. The group of survivors is representative of the shrinking population that remains civically involved in politics and cultural events while society descends into ignorance around them. Imagine the zombies in the movie as regular humans avoiding all matters that pertain to the community and focusing only on things that keep themselves alive, which may unfortunately be the future that this country is headed towards.

There are several ways that one can gauge civic engagement and knowledge across the nation, revealing several disconcerting trends. The easiest way to see active participation in politics is to monitor the number of people voting on Election Day. Moving past national engagement to national political knowledge you can see that by standardized testing and random polling that the average American's political knowledge is in severe decline. The lack of people's lust for knowledge is becoming evident in modern political advertising, where the content has become less complex, thus requiring less attention from citizens. Finally, we can see that the disinterest and lack of engagement of the American people has rattled the nation down to its individual communities and trust between neighbors.

The last fifty years have seen an incredible drop off in voting participation on a national scale as the voting booths have become increasingly empty during election time. Being able to vote has been a right that Americans have literally fought for and has always been considered a core component of democratic systems. However, in presidential elections voter participation has gone from 63.1percent (of registered voters) in 1960 all the way down to 56.8 percent in 2010 and continues to drop; turnout in the 2010 midterm elections (which is always lower) dropped to 37.8 percent. These statistics are much more

significant than a six percentage point drop may indicate since during that time the population of America has significantly grown while participation numbers have shrunk.

One major problem with decreasing voter participation is that the group of citizens who notched the highest turnout rate in the 2008 Presidential Election represents an incredibly small percentage of the population (roughly 25 percent according to the 2010 Census). According to statistics gathered by the Educational Testing Service Center for Human Capital and Education (ETS), the most involved people in the McCain-Obama election were 55-74 year olds, those with advanced degrees, or those earning more than $100,000. Only 48 percent of registered voters ages 18-24 went out to the voting booth in 2008, an alarming statistic since this section of the population will be the core of America's working class in a few short years. Slightly ahead of his time, President Franklin Roosevelt said, "nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves—and the only way they could do this is by not voting" (1934).

The nation's current collective historical political knowledge is also in danger of being forgotten by today's current population. A survey conducted by the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs in 2009 proved that only one in four high school students could successfully name the first president of America. More statistics gathered by the Educational Testing Service Center for Human Capitol and Education (ETS) show that only 27 percent of fourth graders can identify the purpose of the American Constitution and only 22 percent of eighth graders could name a single function of the Supreme Court. American late night personality Jay Leno often does a segment on his show (The Tonight Show with Jay Leno) called Jaywalking, where he travels the streets of Los Angeles filming people's answers to rudimentary questions. The questions are regarded as being at a fourth grade level; however, when asked simple questions about American politics, average citizens fail to come even remotely close to the correct answer. After people failed to correctly answer "Who was the first President of the United States?" or "What was the Gettysburg Address?," retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor believed that the show was scripted. After learning that the participants were genuine, she could only manage to say "this is so very sad."