

## Informed Voters and Civil Discourse

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Have you ever wondered what civil discourse is and who informed voters are? People use civil discourse and informed voting all the time and might not even notice it. You may use it at your house, or maybe at school, daycare, or even at church. In this essay, I'm going to discuss what civil discourse is, who informed voters are, and how they both help our country. You will hear examples of civil and uncivil discourse; you will also hear examples of informed and uninformed voters. I believe that civil discourse and informed voting advance our country by helping us make better decisions for our community by letting discussions happen in a more peaceful way.

An informed voter is a person who knows who they are voting for, therefore they know what a candidate stands for, what their beliefs are, and what they're going to do if they get elected. How does this help the country? Well, it can help the country in many ways. For instance, we would get better elected officials because informed voters know who they are voting for and why they are voting for them. It also helps the country because improving elected officials means a better environment meaning less trash, fewer homeless people, nicer communities, and just overall better decisions. It's really important to be informed because if you're not you could vote for the wrong person and end up not liking his or her decisions.

Civil discourse is a kind conversation, and in a kind conversation it's a lot easier to make decisions, listen, and value others' ideas. Without all the yelling and arguing it's a lot easier not only to make decisions, but to make better decisions and to respect other people's thoughts. Civil discourse is a type of conversation where people can have a peaceful discussion and not get judged because of their thoughts. A civil discourse could range from your family deciding what to have for dinner to colonists deciding if they are going to have war with England.

I described who informed voters are and what civil discourse is and how they both do to help the country. Now, let's look at examples of civil and uncivil voting. For instance, civil voting is telling people who you're voting for and if they disagree not getting mad about it. Uncivil discourse is if someone disagrees with you, they instantly get mad and you don't give them time to explain their reasoning. It's important to be civic-minded when voting because when you are civil you're not yelling and arguing. When people feel safe enough to speak freely they can talk about how the issues might change their lives. They may even change their opponent's mind; if not, that's ok, just don't get mad.

I believe that civil discourse and informed voting helps our country and community by helping people make decisions in a better and more peaceful way. Informed voters know who they're voting for so we can have better elected officials that can make good decisions for our country. Civil discourse lets us have peaceful conversation without anybody getting mad. It helps people listen to and value other's ideas, even in a disagreement. In a conversation, disagreement can lead to knowledge. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Honest disagreement is often a good sign of progress."