

Stud Life Dems Op Ed

Since 2008, [less than 25%](#) of Americans have consistently believed that the government is a trustworthy institution that can help them with their problems or their lives. Their beliefs make sense; also since 2008, our political parties have grown increasingly polarized and hard-line, and the rise of social media and digital advertising has allowed for our political messaging to become insular and targeted. Presidential candidates no longer have to appeal to a broad swath of Americans, but rather to their base and a bizarre mix of 120,000 or so infrequent voters in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Georgia who are largely unplugged from the political sphere. If we're being entirely honest, our two-party system is outdated, pisses a lot of people off, and has created a government that isn't always representative of the preferences of their constituencies.

Why vote then? Why participate in a broken political process in which both parties seem unable to get corporate money out of politics, seem complicit in foreign genocides and atrocities, and seem largely uncaring about the preferences of large swaths of their constituencies? My short answer is because it can get a lot worse for a lot of people over the next four years. Harm reduction is, rightfully, an unpopular argument to convince people to vote. It's not exciting to vote for someone that doesn't inspire you and give you a bold, radical new vision for the world. However, the choice this time isn't between two un-exciting candidates. That implies that they are equally bad in some way. This time, the choice is between someone who wants to dismantle large swaths of our current government, including the Department of Education, and someone who believes that government can be used to make people's lives better.

[Nearly 125 people in North Carolina](#) have died after Hurricane Helene demolished roads, flooded towns, and devastated areas previously thought to be ["climate safe havens."](#) Rapidly warming ocean waters created the preconditions for the formation of Hurricane Milton, known to be [one of the strongest hurricanes](#) to hit Florida in over a decade. This past summer, cities across the world saw deadly heat waves and record highs, as they do every year. Climate change is a terrifying reality, yet Donald Trump continues [to deny its existence](#). His presidency would see reversals in US climate goals and a subsequent increase in our emissions per person. Kamala Harris is not God and cannot magically cool the oceans, but she has promised to [continue investing in carbon-neutral technologies](#) that will slow the pace of global warming and stave off the destruction of entire cities. In the 900 page Project 2025 playbook written by key players in the former Trump administration, conservatives have expressed their desire to abolish the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the organization responsible for monitoring climate change, and to privatize the National Weather Administration, meaning that a low-income Floridian's weather alert could be placed behind a paywall in the future.

In terms of housing, cities across the United States are experiencing a "housing shortage" as unhoused populations continue to rise. Though there are technically enough homes across the nation to provide shelter for every unhoused person, the issue at hand seems to be building enough homes for people in areas in which they want to live. The Harris campaign has detailed [billions of dollars worth of investments](#) in housing to make basic living more affordable for

Americans. The Trump campaign's current housing plan is to deport more immigrants from American cities. They used the [housing crisis in Springfield, Ohio](#) to claim that Haitian migrants were eating animals, directly inciting a wave of hatred and unrest in the city. To be totally clear, the Trump plan for fixing a housing crisis was targeted state violence against anyone identified as an immigrant.

At the end of the day, one of two people will be sitting in the White House with full command of the most powerful military and surveillance complex in the world. Should that person be Kamala Harris, who will try to make incremental positive changes for the American people, or Donald Trump, whose plan to solve homelessness in the United States involves taking [mass amounts of people away to tent camps](#)? Should that person be Kamala Harris, who doesn't want to deploy the US military on protestors, or Donald Trump, who recently said that maybe they should be used to take care of ["the radical left"](#)? Should the person with control of the CIA, NSA, and our nuclear codes be Donald Trump, who called a crowd of neo-Nazis "very fine people" after their demonstration in 2017 where Heather Heyer was killed or should it be Kamala Harris, a normal human being? The choice should be clear.