

*Prompt: What is the most important right you are granted as a citizen of the United States? What are the particular benefits associated with that right? When you exercise that right, what impact do your actions have on those around you?*

The United States is truly a unique country. It is diverse; yet it is homogenous. At times, it is unruly; yet it can be very structured. Some Americans proudly fly their flag as a sign of their patriotism; yet others prefer to demonstrate 'quiet' support of their government and way of life. Many American trace their ancestral roots to the days of the colonies while others are recent immigrants to our shores. The diversity which is one display everyday continues to attract people from all corners of the world. As Americans, we are provided a right to choose. This right is shown to be the most important right guaranteed to all Americans. This right is provided to all American but is not without responsibilities. Everyday Americans make conscious choices. Often the choices are mundane and without consequence. But every choice has a consequence which impacts others. Americans have a responsibility to consider their choices and the impact of their choices in three primary areas.

First, Americans have a responsibility to carefully consider the impact of their choices on the care and welfare of their fellow man. Caring for your fellow man does not stop at our borders. It applies to all human beings on this planet. The health and welfare of the global community is impacted by decisions made by ordinary American citizens.

Everyday decisions can have a lasting impact on our fellow man. Every decision from recycling and energy consumption to HIV or sexually transmitted diseases can have an

impact on the global community. Every American has a requirement to choose carefully and consider the impact of their decisions.

Secondly, every American has responsibility to accept the “melting pot” which is the United States. This responsibility comes with the right to choose which every American is given. This great nation is built on tolerance and acceptance. Without those two factors, America would be an unforgiving environment. Every American is give the right to choose but that right comes with the responsibility to be fair and tolerant of other beliefs, religions, politics, race, or gender. Citizens of other countries are often amazed at the diversity of the United States. And though we may have differences, the citizens of this country must accept the right of others to grow an prosper in a safe environment.

Thirdly, Americans have a right and responsibility to participate in their government. The most visible sign of a patriot is in the vote. Flying the flag does not make one a patriot. Voting and participating in social and political decisions truly makes one a patriot. By voting, one exercises the right of an American as well as demonstrates his concern for this country and its citizens.

In my opinion, there are three rights which every American must honor. These rights are granted to every American whether your ancestors arrived on the Mayflower or crossed the Rio Grand. Every one is equal as demonstrated by the importance of their participation in their government and their care and concern for the human race..