

11-7-2012

How Can You Change the World if You're Not Paying Attention?

Alexandra Pittman
University of Central Florida



Part of the [Communication Commons](#), and the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/ucf-forum>

Information presented on this website is considered public information (unless otherwise noted) and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credit is requested. We recommend that UCF data be acquired directly from a UCF server and not through other sources that may change the data in some way. While UCF makes every effort to provide accurate and complete information, various data such as names, telephone numbers, etc. may change prior to updating.

STARS Citation

Pittman, Alexandra (2012). How can you change the world if you're not paying attention?. UCF Today, 2012-11-07. Retrieved from <https://today.ucf.edu/how-can-you-change-the-world-if-youre-not-paying-attention/>

This Opinion column is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in UCF Forum by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.



How Can You Change the World if You're Not Paying Attention?

By **Alexandra Pittman**
UCF Forum columnist
Wednesday, November 7, 2012

It's depressing to see many of my fellow University of Central Florida classmates, friends and coworkers so unaware of their own surroundings.

Many of them I've spoken with recently seem more interested in the latest video-game release of Assassin's Creed or where the biggest parties will be this month, instead of topics such as the presidential election, the storm that recently devastated the northeast, or what's going on in their own student government.

Some of the people were barely aware this year's election just finished up, and others wondered who I was referring to when I mentioned Sandy – as in Hurricane Sandy.

The college mindset in some has seemed to drastically shift in focus, and not in a good way.

Many students live in a frame of mind that positions Michael Jackson's family as "American royalty," and where our source of information and news comes from YouTube and The Daily Show.

At least the students at Beloit College seem to think so. Every year the Wisconsin university publishes a list, the Mindset, which details how each class of first-year students pictures the world. These students say we live in an age when people are famous not for their theories or their philanthropic actions, but simply because they're famous as "self-proclaimed" stars.

I often find myself embarrassed that I dare to read a book in public, let alone watch the news in the morning and tune in to mobile updates throughout the day.

With Yahoo News as the closest source of reliable information for many in my age group – discounting YouTube and *People* magazine, of course – I question our generation’s ability to positively impact our future – unless we change our mindset.

The simple reality is: If you aren’t aware of your surroundings, if you don’t know your own world, how on earth do you expect to shape it?

We need to remind ourselves of the responsibility that an education – both inside and outside the classroom – gives us.

Instead of focusing on social trends and celebrity gossip, we need to go back to basics.

We need to start tuning in to the news, instead of tuning out and losing ourselves in a cyberspace filled with more nonsense than information.

Find a way to become a part of this society and learn how to change the world we live in. Future generations will be glad you did.

UCF Forum columnist Alexandra Pittman is a University of Central Florida junior majoring in creative writing and journalism, and can be reached at apittman@knights.ucf.edu.