

EDITORIAL

# Veterans are neglected but we should care

America has a problem and our veterans are the ones suffering the consequences.

Americans often pride themselves on being the greatest nation in the world. As a matter of fact, 23% of Americans agree to the sentiment according to Pew Research Center.

With patriotism so heavily emphasized in the United States, this percentage checks out. Drive down a road in almost any rural area in the country and you are bombarded with American flags and its various iterations. Children are taught to pledge allegiance to this country and songs revering the beauty of America are sung in choir classes.

For the fifth of the population that so heavily believe in the greatness of America over other countries, any action that may resemble a form of protest or put into question the supremacy of the United States sends them into a red, white and blue rage.

Take Colin Kaepernick, the NFL player who kneeled during the national anthem to protest police brutality against Black Americans. The act was labeled as disrespectful to veterans and shortly thereafter, he faced death threats and outrage from the media.

Veterans are highly regarded among Americans, with a national holiday celebrated annually to commemorate their service. Nearly half of discretionary spending is allocated to the military, yet



Tj Favela/The Collegian

veterans make up a third of the homeless population.

Surely in the greatest country where so much effort is spent on protecting our freedom, we would devote more care to our veterans.

But alas, that is not the case.

There are definite perks that come with service. A pension, insurance and of course a military ID that will get you the occasional discount. Paired with the well-

deserved thanks and praise, it seems like a sweet gig. But unfortunately, it is often the people that have risked their lives for this country that receive the worst treatment in return.

With the dangerous and traumatic situations those enlisted may face, veterans are often predisposed to developing post-traumatic stress disorder. The trauma is often so debilitating that working is no longer, rendering the individual to homelessness.

While we do in fact offer insurance and amenities such as Veterans Affairs, they lack funding. The VA has historically missed the mark on providing assistance to veterans. Whether it's a lack of accessibility to veterans in rural areas or excessive wait times for appointments, the people who deserve medical care have a harder time acquiring it than civilians. And veterans with PTSD are often unable to secure counseling due to insurance only giving a few providers.

We are so quick to encourage our youth to join the military to live a fulfilling life of service, yet we fail to recognize the neglect we give to them post service. A fancy license plate and a parade of pickup trucks with American flags are not alleviating the years of neglect we have imparted.

America was built under the belief that we are all entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The ones that have fought so valiantly for the right should be entitled to the same. Our hypernationalism is hypocritical and it is time America corroborates the claims of its dominance.

VIEWPOINTS

## Perfect ratio of standing your ground: Does it exist?



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The amount of times people let things go just because there's finally some peace is astonishing, but I don't blame them.

There's an eerie feeling that creeps up from nowhere when you fail to stand up for yourself. It's like you know you should and have to for your sake but everyone seems to like the climate now, so why change it?

It may seem smooth sailing to everyone else, but when you go back home or are alone it is anything but.

The fact of the matter is and as corny as it sounds, you have to love yourself enough to stand up for yourself. So you change the climate, no matter how calm or collected everyone else is, because you matter.

We are human and we crave being so utterly important to someone that they'd do this for us, but it isn't the same. At the end of the day we will be alone more often than with a particular person, because, well, they have their own lives.

Waiting for someone else in a romantic situation is very different from waiting for someone in a situation where you have to defend yourself, or stand your ground. When you don't wait, that is when

self love enters the chat and all hell breaks loose.

How dare you say something that riles everyone up, are you that selfish?

The answer should be yes, you are.

Selfishness is considered as something wrong but I beg to differ, it is the one thing that prevents you from being a doormat, a "yes person".

Sure, if you're in the middle of the desert and you're the only one with food to feed two people don't be selfish. But we aren't discussing food, were discussing self worth and what it could possibly do if you aren't selfish once in a while.

So whether its saying no to going out to the movies or defending yourself in an argument, selfishness' absence is detrimental.

There's no perfect recipe of selfishness to self love ratio when it comes to standing your ground, but one thing's for certain, it needs to be done and it needs to be done by you.

The consequences of not standing your ground are unique to everyone because every situation is different, but they have the underlying theme of seeming like a doormat to others.

And subconsciously, they will put down a mental note that tells them that you're okay with it because you didn't do anything that one time someone treated you badly.

Other people's opinions don't matter. Feeling good about your decisions, feeling good about yourself is something no one can take away from yourself, so own it.

## Our future approaches with swiftness, but don't you fear



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The future always seems so far away and so unattainable, until you realize that it's right at your doorstep.

There's a certain terror in getting older. In making decisions for your life that feel like you can never go back on, and college is a perfect breeding ground for those insecurities. In this fast-paced world made faster with every piece of technology invented, how can we not feel the pressure to face the future as soon as we can and contribute to society?

Many say it's incredibly presumptuous for the younger generation to have such a fear of getting older and starting out in the world as an "adult", but that's the kind of world that we've found ourselves in.

There's an expectation for students to just jump into society and contribute to it as soon as possible, but we still don't know what classes to take next semester more than likely.

With every semester that passes we're supposed to have an idea what we want to do with the next one, but for most it's not so simple. Many come to college to find themselves and the things they love to do, but have to deal with the constant guilt of not contributing to the system that brought

them to this point.

The further I get in my degree program, the more I realize that I really can't imagine what I'm going to do 10 years in the future. I get my degree and then what? I am more than happy to face it, but it's finding the first place where you can put your foot into the door of what's supposed to be "your future" that's the hardest part.

Because what if I open the wrong door? The concept of "my future" seems like an impossible certainty, but I have no idea how I will get there and that terrifies me.

But there's a certain beauty in it as well, because time is the main thing that is unstoppable. Being paralyzed with fear is always the first step in starting a great adventure where you may trip and fall, but you can still get back up.

It's important to remember that you still have to live through the days to get to years down the line, and every day is a new opportunity to find yourself and with it, your direction. That's the main concept that has been pushing me to keep taking my classes, keep looking for internships and opportunities and keep trying to do the best I can everyday.

The future will always be approaching, and there will always be expectations to live up to its full potential. What matters is the mindset that you approach it with, and that you can push yourself to see it through, even if it doesn't quite match what you thought.

### Letter Policy



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