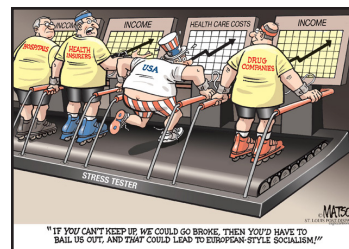


Comics



COMIC BY EXTRAFABULOUSCOMICS



COMIC BY RJ MATSON



COMIC BY RANDY BISH

Due to technical difficulties, polls are put on hold.

JACK BOND

OPINION EDITOR



Jack Bond is a senior English major from Marion

In early 2020, the world changed. Millions of people worldwide were ordered to stay indoors and only go outside if necessary. Many people worked from home, and those who did go to work in public had to wear a mask. COVID-19 had come.

Those unlucky enough to catch the virus ranged from showing no symptoms at all to being put on a ventilator. In the wake of all the cases popping up around the country, the U.S. spent over \$4 trillion on battling COVID.

Although the virus has significantly died down since 2020, it is still a part of our lives. In Arkansas alone there are hundreds of new cases each day. On Oct. 1 there were 248 new cases, on

Sept. 27 there were 545 and on Sept. 29 there were 343. With so many people being potentially hospitalized for this disease, one has to ask: how many of these people are insured?

Even more important than asking that is asking why do they need insurance in the first place? Imagine if you or a loved one was struck with COVID and suddenly had severe difficulty breathing. Assuming you don't have insurance, the trip to the ER is going to cost over \$1,000. For a lot of people, that's not exactly pocket-change. This isn't even considering the cost of being on a ventilator or seeking long-term treatment.

But why does this money have to come from the patient's pocket? Many argue that it increases the quality of our healthcare, but that is seriously untrue. Countries around the world are already using a free healthcare system for their citizens, and it works just as fine if not better than the U.S. system.

In fact, the U.S. actually has some of the worst health problems in the world according to research done in 2019 by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

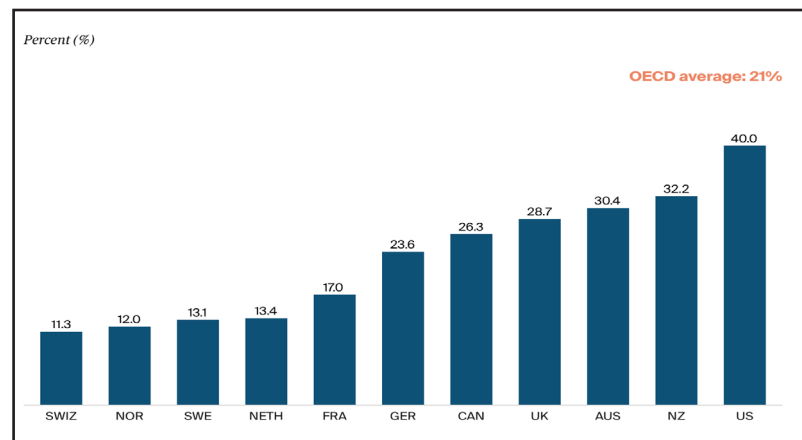
(OECD). The research looked at health trends for 10 other high-income countries such as Australia, Canada, the UK and compared them to U.S. trends. The study found that the U.S. had the lowest life expectancy, the highest suicide rates and the highest obesity rates – and that's just a glimpse at their findings.

The most likely reason for such disastrous numbers is that Americans don't visit the doctor as frequently as citizens of other countries. Most likely due to the high cost of a doctor's visit. Insurance may cover this, but it won't cover everything. Most visits will require a co-payment of some sort.

Many people can't even afford insurance – over 30 million to be exact.

While this data can be attributed to any number of factors, is it not the job of the healthcare system to effectively treat or prevent these issues from being so prominent? It is the duty of a nation's healthcare systems to keep its citizens healthy, and the U.S. system fails to uphold its duty.

The cost of this system is simply not worth it. It doesn't increase the quality of healthcare, and it doesn't improve the overall health of U.S. citizens. Having to pay thousands of dollars for a potentially useless treatment is a spit in the face to Americans across the country.



GRAPH COURTESY OF OECD
Graph showing the obesity rates of various countries

The age for selective service is too low

JACK BOND

OPINION EDITOR



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

It's not something you think about often, but the selective service is always there. Methods of drafting in the U.S. have existed since before the Civil War, but the draft we know today came about in 1917 – the midst of World War I. Originally, it inducted men aged 21 – 31, but was changed to draft men aged 18 – 45.

The draft still exists to this day, but

has not seen use since the Vietnam War. Instead, it remains on standby in the case of a national emergency.

Tensions continue to rise between Russia, Ukraine and each country's respective allies. The U.S. and other countries have to consider the possibility of Putin escalating the conflict to global levels. Depending on the scale of this war, this means we could potentially see the draft come back into play.

Currently, the selective service requires men to register within 30 days of their 18th birthday. If a man is still completing high school or in college, then their conscription would be postponed until the completion of high school or the college semester. If the person is a senior in college, until the end of that academic year.

In other words, young adults fresh out of school could be sent to the battlefield with a rifle in hand and bullets in the

chamber. This raises major problems with morality and judgment.

My first issue I'll only touch briefly since it's not my main concern. Young adults should not be sent to war. They're fresh out of high school. They're lives are just getting started and already the government wants to put these young men at risk. Already, the potential to strip away their future is ever-hanging over them. It seems just a little cruel to put a young life on the frontlines so that it could likely be cut short so quickly.

My main issue with this criteria is the lack of consistent logic behind it. The human brain does not fully mature until mid to late 20's. You've probably heard this before to justify the restriction of alcohol and tobacco to people 21 and older. So why then is a man allowed to be the judge, jury and executioner before he is allowed to take part in something that might just make him a little stupid

for an hour or so?

No, I'm not arguing that the drinking age be lowered. I'm just pointing out a very inconsistent line of reasoning. How does the decision to kill another human being have less weight than the decision to drink? If a man's brain is not fully capable of mature decision making, then the lives of others should absolutely not be put in his hands under any circumstances.

I understand that the draft is there for a reason, but its requirements for registration don't make sense. If anything, the age requirement should be raised to 25, 21 at least. A man should have at least a little slice of the life ahead of him and the ability to make mature decisions before he has a machine gun put in his hands.

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