

Great improvements  
could come from  
mandatory service



Mandatory military service for all 18-year-old citizens would improve patriotism and discipline within the United States. Furthermore, by mandating military service the country could virtually assure that it would no longer have issues of insufficient troops for conflicts around the world. A mandatory term of military service would also help create a sense of national identity that the United States is lacking. Mandatory military service would also probably contribute to the health of the nation. Finally, mandatory military service would delay the entry of young adults into college, perhaps reducing the number of people who begin college and immediately drop out because they are unclear about their career options.

Since the end of the Vietnam conflict, the United States has had mandatory selective service registration for men, but has never instituted registration for women. One of the keys to effectively implementing this program is to make certain that it is applied equally to both sexes.

Strangely, this might do more to establish equal rights than the Equal Rights Amendment or pro-women's movement ever did. Many men seem to resent the idea that women want equal rights in the workplace, but are unwilling to demand equal responsibility for the nation's safety. Many men and women feel that if people are going to claim equality then they should face equal lifestyles, so the most important factor of mandatory military service would be that it be for all citizens.

Another way to avoid conflict over the mandatory military service idea would be for the service to be mandatory for all citizens. There could not be National Guard exemptions or exemptions for education or any other reason.

If any hint of favoritism marred the program, it would lose much of its effectiveness. Obviously, not all people would be fit for combat duty, but everyone would have to be assigned duties according to their abilities. Less physically able soldiers might be assigned to kitchen duty or translating or stateside duties, but everyone should have to serve. Perhaps, given the sheer numbers of recruits that would suddenly be available, people assigned to combat regions could be given shorter terms of service than those who for health reasons or skill reasons could not serve in a combat zone.

Finally, once the particulars of the program were ironed out, mandatory military service for every 18-year-old would improve patriotism and discipline within the United States. Currently, many 18-year-olds do not have the discipline necessary to survive a semester of college without parental supervision. Many take for granted the freedoms that have been fought for and won by veterans of previous wars. By making military service mandatory, citizens would be forced to learn to appreciate the way those freedoms came to be.

Generally, people appreciate something more if they have to fight to get it. And, the discipline taught in boot camp would help get many people passed the pseudo-weakness currently inherent in American society. Because of the fear of injury, zero tolerance policies and even anti-bullyingpropaganda across the country, many American citizens do not have any clue how to be competitive or disciplined. In short, they have allowed to become soft. Putting them all through boot camp would make them stronger individuals and better citizens.

One of the drawbacks of the all volunteer military has been the lack of recruits. Several times during the Iraq War the Pentagon has extended the tours of duty of certain soldiers because there were not sufficient replacements available to send in to take their place. With a steady stream of 18-year-olds forced to enter the military, the military could allow all soldiers to serve shorter tours in combat zones and allow the professional military to do their jobs without worrying about the number of soldiers that they have to do the job.

In addition, more people might discover that they like military service as a career option. It would allow high school graduates to put aside money for college with a good-paying job, or begin training for a better career. In some ways, the military could replace vocational schools and persons seeking a career in fields traditionally learned in vocational colleges could get on the job training, saving the country on student loans and creating a new, highly trained workforce.

One of the most recent factors facing the United States has been the lack of a national identity. Persons from New York often have little in common with people from southern California and there is little shared national identity. The problem with being a melting pot is that each individual has a personal heritage that is not necessarily the same as their neighbor's. Mandatory military service might help to alleviate this problem without destroying cultural diversity. People would still have their own state or cultural identity, but an entire generation of American citizens would share the experience of military service. Strangers would at least have their military service in common, creating a bond between all citizens of the country.

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In addition, mandatory military service would probably improve the overall health of the nation. Instead of a generally obese nation, the youth of the country would at least be required to get in shape long enough to pass basic training. And, if military service was mandatory and there were no exceptions, one of the drawbacks of not passing basic training the first time around could be an extension of their service. For example, if a young smoker could not give up the addiction long enough to pass the running and stamina requirements of basic training, instead of being sent home as a “wash out”, he would receive remedial training which did not count towards his service commitment. In fact, the service commitment would not begin until basic training was completed, so a person could spend years getting into shape if necessary, but would know that the cost was the delay in getting on with their lives.

Finally, mandatory military service would delay the college entrance age, perhaps leading to students who are more prepared for the college experience before investing the time and money in their education.

Generally, it is accepted that non-traditional students are more committed to getting their education than the average 18-year-old. If students were forced to have even a two-year mandatory military service, they would be forced to become adults before going to college. As it is, many students entering college are not ready to be on their own. A transition period between living under their parents' roof and sudden and complete freedom might help students be more prepared for the responsibility of college.

In addition, many 18-year-olds entering college for the first time have

absolutely no clue what they wasn't to do with their lives. Many flounder in <https://assignbuster.com/great-improvements-could-come-from-mandatory-service/>

their first attempt at college and because they are so unprepared for the new lifestyle. Mandatory military service might help people to reach the proper maturity level before going on to college to know what they want to do with their lives. It is likely also to help deal with some of the issues facing college campuses across the country, including alcohol use. By requiring mandatory military service, the overall median age of college students would increase and students might be less attracted to the thrill of underage drinking.

It seems unlikely that mandatory military service would be adopted in the United States. Politicians would not have the gumption to make the changes necessary to the military to make the program work, nor would they be willing to risk political suicide by considering such a thing. Opponents of the draft, including conscientious objectors who fled to other countries when the country last had mandatory military service would not be willing to force people into service. Historians would argue that the country was won by volunteer fighters and that conscription was one of the things Revolutionary War veterans were fighting against. Pacifists would argue that military service somehow contrary to the beliefs of some citizens and the politically correct crowd would try to argue that not everyone should have to serve.

Mandatory military service would create the final equality that American citizens have been clamoring for and would improve the health of the nation. Boot camp would help fight the nation's obesity problems and equal opportunity service would help fight the economic disparity growing in the United States. The unifying factors of common service would help establish a national identity and increase the patriotism of the average American.

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Spoiled brat teenagers would learn to appreciate the things that they have been allowed to take for granted and college campuses would become more civil, adult places where students could study and learn instead of simply enjoying drunken parties. Colleges would be filled with students who were ready and eager to learn and military vocational training could lead to an overall improvement in the job skills of the nation.

However, the plan generally goes against every belief in freedom the country was founded on and will never happen.