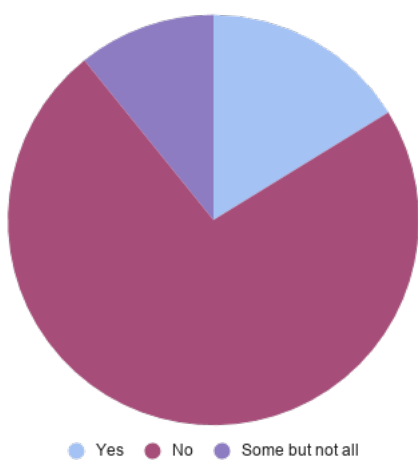


What's Your Opinion?

This week, we asked students whether they had received any of the stimulus checks sent out by the U.S. government since March 2020.

Out of 37 responses:
6 - Yes
27 - No
4 - Some but not all



Next Week's Poll:

Valentine's or Parentine's?

Will you be celebrating Valentine's Day with your significant other, or Parentine's Day with your friends?

Students can answer the poll and find previous poll results on The Herald's website, theherald.home.blog, or on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](https://www.instagram.com/astateherald). Website polls are posted on Wednesdays and Instagram polls are posted on Mondays.

These and future articles can be found on the Opinion section of The Herald's website. All comics and memes can be found in the Comics section.

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR



Lily Cabibi-Wilkin is a junior music composition major from Hot Springs.

Editor's note: The following story discusses details of child abuse and may be distressing to some readers.

Claudia Conway, 16-year-old daughter of former Trump Senior Counselor Kellyanne Conway, has been featured in news articles before for her TikToks, some of which feature her talking about political topics, such as Black Lives Matter and Trump. Her views on politics directly contrast her mother's, which has brought a lot of ire from Trump supporters -- and from her parents.

Claudia has said her mother asked her to take down some of her TikToks, and that her family members have been dismissive of her political views. Last summer her father, George Conway, tweeted to journalists demanding they "desist" from interviewing his children, particularly Claudia. Claudia wrote on Twitter that, "my parents, particularly my mother, are trying to silence me by getting me to delete my social media." This tweet, along with others, was deleted that day, apparently by George.

Unfortunately, silencing political

views isn't the only way Claudia has been hurt by her parents. On Jan. 19, Claudia posted a series of videos on her TikTok that showed Kellyanne fighting with Claudia, swearing, calling names and shouting phrases like "if you only knew what people thought of you." The next day, Claudia posted a now private TikTok where she wrote "I'm not even kidding if any of you live in this area come pick me up."

On Jan. 25, YouTuber Tana Mongeau livestreamed a FaceTime call with Claudia on Instagram Live which showed a fight between Claudia and Kellyanne. In the video, Kellyanne accuses Claudia of being a phone addict, and at the end a police officer appears, hanging up the FaceTime call. Later that night, Kellyanne posted photos to her Twitter Fleet (similar to Instagram Stories) that appeared to be nude photos of Claudia. Claudia later confirmed in a TikTok that the photos were indeed of her.

"I don't know if this is a joke or not but I'm really scared," she said. In another TikTok, she responded to comments in Morse code, saying she was OK but scared and begging her followers to "spread awareness (about) this since I can't."

Later, however, Claudia posted videos on TikTok asking her followers to stop spreading awareness about the issue. She explained that she was "taking a break from social media" to work on her relationship with her mom, and asked people to "stop sending hate to my family" and "stop calling authorities."

"I shouldn't have made this all public," she said. "Please do me a favor and stop spreading it because it hurts me more than it helps me."

Many, however, are still unconvinced that these most recent messages were

posted of Claudia's own accord. Twitter user Leah Mcelrath said, "I consider them the equivalent of hostage videos, given the situation she's in."

In one of the videos posted, Claudia said she "posted those hoping I would get some sort of help. But nothing is gonna happen so I deleted them in fear of getting gaslighted and manipulated." Claudia also has previously said, "in terms of what can be done, there's nothing that can really be done. I've tried everything. My parents are too powerful and nothing happens. I'm probably going to get in a lot of trouble for this."

"I'm not looking for attention, I'm not looking for anything, I'm just in a situation that's really physically, mentally, and emotionally abusive and I think it's important that everybody sees that," she said in one video. "My situation is a mess but I know it isn't my fault," she said in a comment. "I will continue to post about my experiences as a way to spread awareness."

**"My situation is a mess but I know it isn't my fault."
- Claudia Conway**

The videos posted after the situation on Jan. 25 and 26 show a Claudia repeating that she and her mother love each other, that there is more to the situation than what has been posted before, and that she believed that Kellyanne's phone had been hacked when the topless photo of her was posted to Kellyanne's Fleet.

Some have interpreted Claudia's "vent post, then panic and delete and say nothing happened" TikTok trend as attention-seeking, but I believe that this is far from the case.

I had an abusive mother growing up. The violence was physical for the first half of my childhood, and then later became primarily verbal and emotional. The two times I posted something vaguely negative about my mother on social media, I was yelled at for an hour, told I was bringing shame to the whole family, and made to delete the post and post something else to cover up the situation.

Because of this, I didn't have the courage to say anything about what was going on at home to anyone until I left my household for college. In every situation where my mother would have faced consequences for her abuse, she manipulated and lied her way out of it. My youngest brothers, who still live with her, know their most trustworthy means of escape is to turn 18, when they can decide where to go for themselves. In that sense, they're in a similar boat to Claudia, who still has two years away from being an adult.

Claudia's situation is no doubt magnified by the fact that her abuser is a woman of immense power. In one of her TikToks, Claudia mentioned that she was tired of everything she and her mother did becoming a headline. Though I know I contribute to this by writing this article, I think it's important to look at situations like this because I cannot possibly be the only person that has resonated with Claudia's story.

Our experiences as a whole are not exclusive. They are not OK. They are not a sign of love, and they are not normal. Kellyanne's treatment of her daughter is vile, and I can only hope that eventually Claudia is able to escape. I hope she eventually gets to a place where she can live a safe and uninteresting life, because I believe that's the freedom she deserves.

JoJo Siwa: LGBTQ Visibility

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR

Last month, influencer and "Dance Moms" alumnae JoJo Siwa came out as a member of the LGBTQ community through a combination of social media posts. It started on Jan. 22, when she posted on Twitter that her cousin had gotten her a shirt that said "Best Gay Cousin." She then posted a video on TikTok of her lip-synching to Lady Gaga's "Born This Way," and later posted a picture to her Instagram of her wearing a Gucci jacket with pride colors on it. She eventually posted a video to her IGTV (Instagram videos) confirming that she was coming out.

Siwa has not officially placed a label on herself as to her exact sexuality, but has said that, "I always believed that my person was just going to be my person. And if that person happened to be a boy, great, and if that person happened to be a girl, great!"

Siwa's parents have been supportive,

and she has gotten support from fans and celebrities on social media. Lil Nas X posted "If you spell 'swag' backwards, it's 'gay'. Coincidence??"

Twitter user @sapphicbisexual posted "If you don't think jojo siwa coming out as gay is a big deal, just remember that there are lgbt kids that watch her videos that may have felt so alone with their identity and seeing the person they look up to coming out makes them feel safer and more comfortable with themselves."

There have been some parents who have reacted negatively to the news, including one parent who commented "My daughter will never watch you again" on Siwa's coming out video. Siwa cheerfully responded with "Okay!"

There has also been an incident where Siwa was swatted. Swatting, a federal crime, refers to a tactic where someone (or a group of people) call the police and make a false claim about a serious crime to get the police (such as the SWAT unit, hence the name) to appear at a particular address. In the past, swatting

has been used as a means of harassment or violence against others. In Dec. 2017, when two Call of Duty players got into an argument over a bet, one of them swatted the other, which resulted in the death of a third uninvolved party. In Siwa's case, however, the swatting was done by paparazzi in order to draw Siwa out of her home, presumably so that she could be photographed or interviewed.

I'm a bit too old for Siwa's demographic (despite only being three years older than her), but I wish her the best. As a minor and someone who works in children's media, there is a lot of pressure on her to stay quiet about topics like the LGBTQ community for fear of upsetting parents. I'm glad that she's been able to express herself despite that. Like @sapphicbisexual said, seeing someone you look up to express their identity as a member of the LGBTQ community can be helpful for young people who may be questioning their sexuality, For

those who aren't, the presence of people like Siwa helps to normalize the presence of LGBTQ people. All in all, I expect Siwa to continue on in her rainbow-and-sparkle-decked glory, and I'm glad she can do it from her platform.



ART BY THINH VU | CONTENT CREATOR

THE HERALD

KRISHNAN COLLINS: EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
krishnan.collins@smail.astate.edu

TRISTAN BENNETT: NEWS EDITOR
heraldnews1921@gmail.com

REBECCA ROBINSON: SPORTS EDITOR
heraldsports1921@gmail.com

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN: OPINION EDITOR
heraldopinion1921@gmail.com

ALEX CLARK: LIFE EDITOR
heraldlife1921@gmail.com

HANNAH RISKER: PHOTO EDITOR
heraldphoto1921@gmail.com

DREW MORGAN: GRAPHIC DESIGN EDITOR
heraldonline1921@gmail.com

SANDRA L. COMBS: ADVISER; ADVERTISEMENT SALES
scombs@astate.edu
astateherald@gmail.com

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The Herald is printed every Wednesday during the semester, except during finals and holidays. Copies of The Herald are free.

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