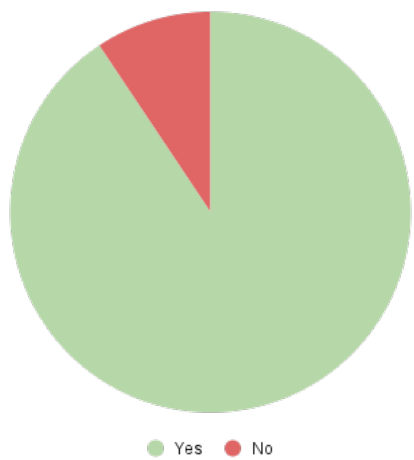


## What's Your Opinion?

This week, we asked students if they were fully vaccinated or planning to become fully vaccinated.

Out of 96 responses:  
Yes, I am -- 87  
No, I'm not -- 9



## Next Poll:

### Pregunta de Idioma

Were you required to take a language in high school?

Students can answer the poll on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](#). Instagram polls are posted on Mondays. Previous poll results can be found on [the-herald.home.blog/category/opinion/poll/](#).

Have an idea for a poll? Send your ideas to [heraldopinion1921@gmail.com](mailto:heraldopinion1921@gmail.com).

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 senior music composition major from Hot Springs.

Last June, the Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library put up a display for Pride Month, featuring several different books about the LGBT community for all ages. Books included titles like "GayBCs" by M.L. Webb, "The Boy In The Red Dress" by Kristin Lambert and "Stay Gold" by Tobly McSmith.

This display has raised concerns about whether LGBT books are appropriate for children. CCL Board member Mark Nichols proposed policy changes at a meeting held on Aug 10 regarding library displays, both of which were defeated. The changes would have given the board more responsibility over what books could appear on library displays and what guest authors could speak at the library, or would have given the board voting power over what books would be allowed to be purchased for the children's library.

## No One Is "Forcing" Your Child To Be LGBT

Nichols specifically pointed at the "GayBCs" book as evidence of LGBT content that is confusing or inappropriate for children. "GayBCs" is an alphabet board book which uses each letter of the alphabet to name an aspect of the LGBT community (for example, B is for Bisexual, or T is for Transgender).

I'm not sure how an alphabet book, a genre commonly reserved for toddlers, could be confusing. I don't remember being too confused by "B is for Baseball" or "T is for Tiger." They're just words, after all.

But, clearly, it's not just about the words: Those who believe books like "GayBCs" are inappropriate for children are concerned that their children might learn about the LGBT community in a way that they as parents have no control over. This, I can understand: a major facet of parenting is deciding what information and world views your children should have. A person who sees a book with the word "transgender" in it as inherently sexual and inappropriate would certainly not want their child learning about the LGBT community. But to pretend that this information would traumatize children at base value is misguided.

LGBT people are normal. They are completely normal human beings in all ways regardless of their sexual or gender identities. They file taxes. They read books. They own pets. Just because someone has a different sexual preference than you

does not mean they are automatically hypersexual and inappropriate. The opinion that anything related to the LGBT community is inappropriate or sexual is one that creates a misplaced fear of normal people.

Exposing children to the LGBT community is not "indoctrinating" them, or "forcing" them into an identity. Nobody in the LGBT community is insisting that every child be gay or trans. In fact, common knowledge in the community is that discovering your identity takes time. You may believe you're straight until you're middle aged, and then discover you're gay or bisexual. You may identify as trans as a teenager and then later decide you're cisgender or gender fluid. You may one day discover that you enjoy being referred to with a particular set of pronouns, or that you're more romantically attracted to a particular gender over another. Understanding LGBT topics from a young age can make this process smoother.

At the same time, the normalization of LGBT identities can make it easier or safer for young people in the community to discover who they are. Reading about LGBT people will not inherently make you LGBT, but it will help people who

may be LGBT discover their identity sooner.

This is why the Pride Month book section is so vital and important -- it aids in the normalization of the LGBT community. It helps people of all ages feel safe in exploring who they really are.

If you don't agree with me, feel free to restrict what media your children have access to, as parents across time have done when faced with issues they disagree with. But attempting to restrict what media ALL children have access to is incredibly selfish. Whether you believe LGBT issues are "appropriate" for youth should not affect how other parents choose to raise their children. Forcing your views on people like this makes you no better than the LGBT people you complain won't "keep all that to themselves," doesn't it?



ART BY THINH VU | CONTENT CREATOR

## Theranos: A Brief History And Some Thoughts

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR

In 2003, 19-year-old entrepreneur Elizabeth Holmes founded medical technology company Theranos. Theranos claimed to have developed blood testing methods that used smaller amounts of blood and took less time to analyze samples than regular blood test methods.

Specifically, Holmes claimed that Theranos' technology could analyze data with just a few drops of blood from a fingertip. Through her connections with influential public figures such as Henry Kissinger, Rupert Murdoch and Betsy DeVos, Holmes brought Theranos' value up to nine billion dollars by 2014. A year prior, Theranos was brought to the public eye through a partnership with Walgreens.

Holmes became notable for her peculiar appearance: she spoke in a baritone voice, stared unblinkingly at cameras during interviews and always wore Steve-Jobs-esque black turtlenecks and slacks. She was featured on the covers of magazines Fortune, Forbes, T: The New York Times Style Magazine and Inc, where she was lauded as the world's youngest self-made female billionaire.

However, this boom of fame and money was built on rocky foundations. In October 2015, John Carreyrou of The

Wall Street Journal published an extensive story on Theranos. In this report, former Theranos employees claimed that the company had exaggerated the capability of their technology.

Indeed, the majority of Theranos' tests were done on machines from other companies. In some cases, the "few drops of blood" were diluted to increase their volume, which caused the inaccurate test results. Other tests were done with larger samples drawn from patients' arms -- not much of a "fingertip."

In 2016, Walgreens suspended its partnership with Theranos after a lab inspection revealed problems with staff proficiency, procedures and equipment and led to a two year ban on operations.

**"The questions they were asking me made it sound like it was my fault."  
-- Maureen Glunz, former Theranos customer**

In 2018, Holmes and Balwani were charged with fraud by "raising more than \$700 million from investors through an elaborate, years-long fraud in which they exaggerated or made false statements about the company's technology, business and financial performance." Holmes was removed from the CEO position, though she remained on the company's board. By September 2018, Theranos announced

that it was ceasing operations.

The case of the U.S. v. Elizabeth Holmes, et al. finally reached the courtroom on Aug. 31. Holmes' trial is currently taking place, while Balwani's trial will begin in January 2022. Both are being charged with two counts of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and nine counts of wire fraud. If convicted, they face a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 (plus restitution) for each of the 11 total counts. Both have pleaded not guilty.

All of that is undeniably bad. The false promises made by Holmes and Theranos affected the lives of every patient whose blood was analyzed with the Edison machines.

A potential witness in the Holmes trial, Maureen Glunz, received a blood test result from Theranos that showed levels of glucose, calcium, protein and liver enzymes that were so high that her doctor sent her to an emergency room. When Glunz reported these results, five Theranos employees called her, drilling her about her emergency room visit and her preexisting health conditions. "The questions they were asking me made it sound like it was my fault," Glunz said in a recent interview with The Wall Street Journal.

As a defense, court documents from Sept. 4 reveal that Holmes might accuse

Balwani of mental and sexual abuse during her time at Theranos. The two shared a relationship from 2003 to at most 2016, and former employers have said Balwani "enforced a corporate culture of secrecy and fear," "disappearing" employees who displeased him.

"Mr. Balwani encouraged her to leave school and pursue (Theranos)," said Holmes' attorney Lance Wade in his opening statements. "In this case, you'll learn that certain aspects of that relationship had a big impact on Ms. Holmes."

I'm no stranger to the effect abuse and toxic relationships can have on a person's psyche, and I would normally discourage shaming abuse victims for taking their time to speak up about their abuse publicly. But the timing of these accusations, and the way they're being used to frame Holmes' defense, seems much too convenient to me.

Again, people's health was placed in Theranos' hands, and no matter what the underlying circumstances of Holmes' mental health were, the fact remains that Theranos' patients were lied to and harmed by her actions. Both Holmes and Balwani deserve to be brought to justice for their actions, and for the harm those actions have brought to those they were supposed to be helping.

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