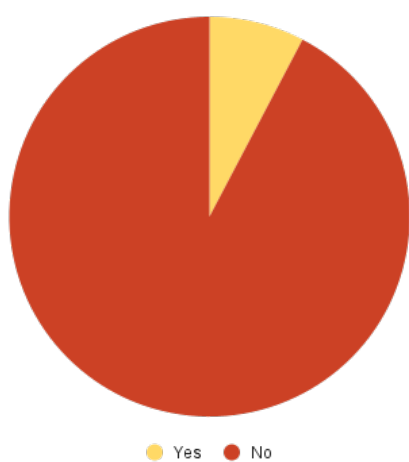


## What's Your Opinion?

This week, we asked students if they thought the on-campus dining options (such as the food court, dining hall or campus stores) should be closed on game nights that happen during the week.

Out of 52 responses:  
Yes -- 4  
No -- 48



## Next Poll:

### Hallo-Wins

What's your favorite thing about Halloween?

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.

## Here's Some Ideas For The A-State Bookstore Space

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR



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

Over the summer, what was once the A-State Bookstore became the A-State Eyesore – an empty room in the student union with bare walls and slowly dying fluorescent lights. As you'll read in this week's news section, we still don't know what's going to go in that space, but I have some funky fresh ideas.

### Game Room

I know what you're thinking. "This is a university, this should be a serious location." But are you gonna tell me you *wouldn't* take advantage of a room with arcade games? Ski ball? A ball pit, perhaps? Maybe some of those little metal-wooden-bead thingies you find in doctor's office waiting rooms? Yes, I am

suggesting that we treat this space like the room they put kids in at IKEA while their parents go shopping (it's called "Småland" which I think is delightful). But college is stressful, and I think it would be a great stress-reliever to be able to pop by the student union and sit in a ball pit for half an hour while I do a coloring sheet. I'll bring my own juice box.

### Haunted House

This one's a bit more time-sensitive, but I think it would be really cute if we could use the empty space as a haunted house this year. It wouldn't be too hard to set up some partitions and make a little maze, and the room's already pretty spooky now that it's empty.

### Cafe/Dining Area

Anyone who has ever tried to eat lunch at noon knows that the student union gets *packed* during that hour. Having some extra space to sit and eat would be great. You could just have some tables in there, or you could set up another food vendor or snack bar to make extra revenue. I think it would be nice to be able to sit in a space like that and munch.

### Performance Space

As a music major, I think it would be fun if students could have some sort of public performance space. We could have concerts there, or just have small chamber ensembles sign up to play for a few hours. Having the experience of playing in public would be very fun, and you could even get some of the other groups on campus to use the performance space for flash mobs or dance showcases. You could even have karaoke nights there sometimes.

For some student-submitted suggestions, check out the "Empty Bookstore Space" article on the front page.

### Bookstore Auxiliary

This one is probably closest to what's going to happen anyway, but I think it's worth saying. While Textbook Brokers is cool and has a lot of cool stuff, it happens to be on the other side of a very busy street where cars drive very quickly, and as a pedestrian it has always spooked me. I got this semester's textbooks mailed to me so I wouldn't have to cross that street. Having the campus bookstore space be a place where students can order and pick up their books would be great as a

basic safety measure, especially for other students who are scared of crossing East Johnson Avenue.

### Small Store

The old campus bookstore had a number of necessities you can't find at the campus stores or at Textbook Brokers -- umbrellas, tissues, medicines, makeup and even some electronics. Now that the campus bookstore is gone, students have no place on campus to get those items, which sucks if you don't have a campus P.O. box or a way to drive to a store. Putting some sort of store with those types of items in the space would be a little redundant, but it would still be nice.

### Miscellaneous

The room could also be or have:

- \* A study space
- \* A lounge
- \* An event space
- \* A computer lab with a printer
- \* GrubHub food pickup (especially for the new Ghost Kitchen)

I'm very interested to see what the space becomes, even though it may not become anything until after I graduate.

## Gabby Petito and Missing White Woman Syndrome

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR

Gabby Petito's name has been in the headlines every week since her disappearance back in September.

With no disrespect meant to Petito and her family, I can't help but wonder: why did her disappearance and death capture so much national attention? Yes, Petito had an Instagram and a YouTube channel that were popular, but not that popular. I had never heard of her before the disappearance, and I'm sure I'm not the only one. I'm not saying her death doesn't deserve to be looked into, but what sets her apart from every other missing person in this country?

Young, white women have a history of exploding into the headlines when they go missing. The phenomenon has a name -- Missing white woman syndrome. Pretty young white women get tons of media coverage, while people of other genders or races do not. This obviously has negative repercussions -- for every case of a white woman's disappearance, there are many more not getting the same level of attention.

I'm not the only one frustrated by this disparity. Amongst the #FindGabby posts, there are #FindJelaniDay posts and #FindLaurenCho posts. Jelani Day was an Illinois State University graduate student who reported missing on Aug. 25, and his body was discovered and identified in September. Lauren Cho was a high school music teacher in New Jersey before she went on a cross-country road trip to California. An unidentified body has been found.

Social media has been a large aspect of all three cases: TikToks have been promoting and investigating each case. While this means that each case has received focus, it also highlights a harsh reality: the internet has become a place where people beg for attention to save their lives or the lives of others.

Why should internet crusaders have to lobby to solve missing persons cases? Why should people of color have to rely on hashtags to have their cases looked into?

Petito's family is fortunately also aware of this issue. On Sept. 28, the family

announced a foundation in Petito's name which will help families of other missing people.

"Social media was amazing and very influential, but...it should continue for other people, too," said Petito's father, Joseph Petito. "It's not just Gabby who deserves (help)," he continued.

Issues of bias like missing white woman syndrome run deep in our society. It's obviously not fair that a person of color needs a social media presence and a hashtag to be found. While social media can help put pressure on authorities to act on a case, it is truly sad that this needs to happen.

There are probably more cases of disappearance that weren't covered in this

article because they haven't appeared in the news. We can only hope that the cases of Day and Cho are resolved with the same justice and attention Petito is receiving.



Art by Fran Bollinger | Content Creator

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