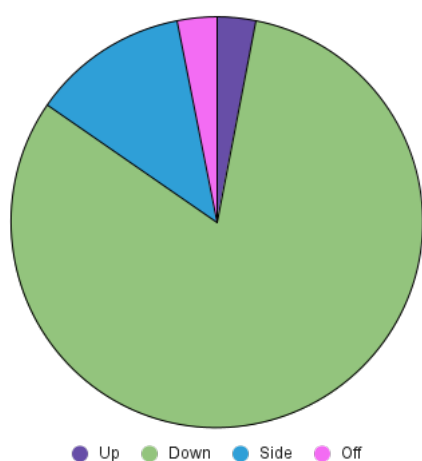


## What's Your Opinion?

We asked our followers on Instagram which direction they prefer to pull their mask when they need to remove it for something brief.

Out of 65 responses:  
Up - 2  
Down - 53  
To the side - 8  
Off completely - 2



● Up ● Down ● Side ● Off

### Next Poll:

#### The Slapping

Who do you think was in the right in the Academy Awards slapping incident: Chris Rock or Will Smith?



Scan the QR code above to see previous poll results.

Students can answer polls on Mondays by visiting The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](https://www.instagram.com/astateherald).

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.

## The Slap Heard 'Round The World – An Overview And Thoughts

LILY CABIBI-WILKIN

OPINION EDITOR



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

It was, as a freshly-slapped Chris Rock described it, the "greatest night in the history of television." The Academy Awards on Sunday led to an incident between Chris Rock and Will Smith that shocked live and internet audiences.

Let me give you a full timeline. In 2021, Jada Pinkett Smith was diagnosed with alopecia areata, an autoimmune disease which causes hair loss, and she decided to shave her head.

On Sunday night during the 94th Academy Awards, shortly after mentioning the play "Macbeth" by name, Chris Rock began presenting the nominees for Best Documentary Feature.

During this presentation, he made an off-script joke about Pinkett Smith's shaved head, saying, "G.I Jane 2, can't wait to see it." Though Will Smith initially appeared to laugh at the joke, he suddenly approached the stage, walked

straight towards Rock, and slapped him across the face before returning to his seat, where he began screaming at Rock to "keep (his) wife's name out your f\*\*\*\*\* mouth."

Rock appeared to prepare for another joke before changing his mind and proceeding with the presentation, managing to keep his composure.

Jaden Smith tweeted, "And That's How We Do It. (sic)"

Less than forty minutes later Smith won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Richard Williams in "King Richard." During his speech, Smith apologized to the Academy and colleagues (but not Rock), cried, said "love makes you do crazy things" and that he was "overwhelmed by what God is calling on (him) to do and be in this world."

Smith has since apologized for the slapping incident. A fake statement from Rock has been posted, but there have been no actual statements from the comedian.

In the immediate aftermath of the incident the internet exploded, especially after uncensored clips of the incident were posted on Twitter. I've seen several different opinions on this, from "Smith was aggressive and over the top and should not have been allowed to keep his Oscar" to "Rock was ableist for making

fun of Pinkett Smith's medical condition and deserved to be slapped" to "Pinkett Smith encouraged Smith to slap Rock, she's controlling him, especially after the whole 'entanglement' thing" to "The Smiths are scientologists so they suck anyway." I can't say I wholly disagree with any of those points of view. Rock shouldn't have made that joke, and Smith shouldn't have slapped him. I'm honestly surprised Smith was allowed to stay for the rest of the show.

**"My behavior at last night's Academy Awards was unacceptable and inexcusable. Jokes at my expense are a part of the job, but a joke about Jada's medical condition was too much for me to bear and I reacted emotionally."**

- Will Smith

The other thing about it is that if Smith had just kept his cool, the incident would have blown over. I wasn't watching the Awards when it happened, and a lot of people I've talked to about the incident weren't watching, either. But that burst of violence caught the world's attention. (Hey, at least the Awards got the ratings they wanted.)

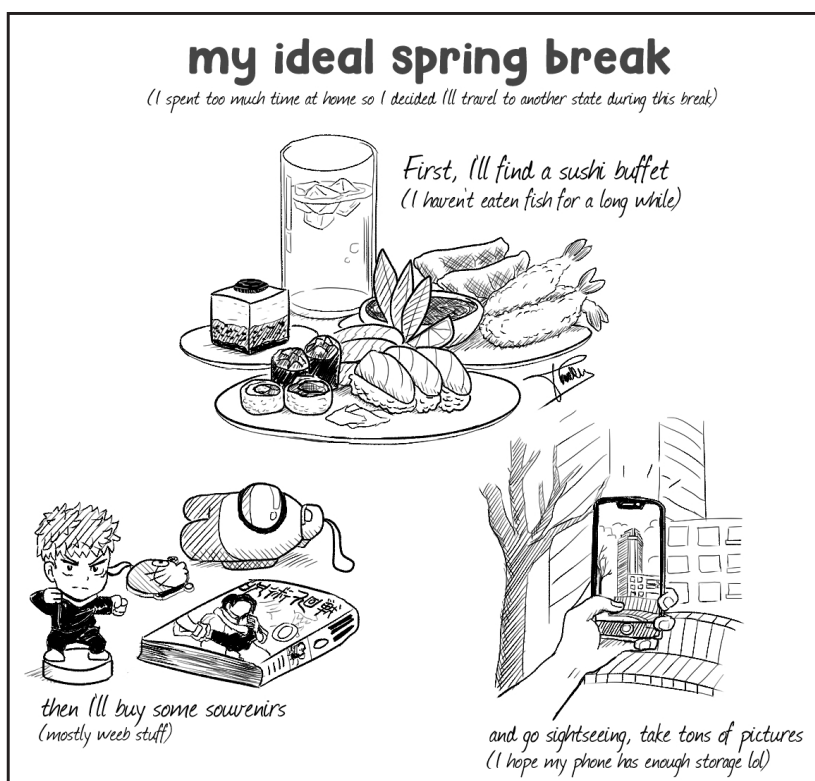
Several celebrities have already spoken out about the incident, including celebrities I don't think we needed to hear from, like Alec Baldwin and OJ Simpson. I get that everyone is talking about what happened, but I'm really not interested in what Tim Allen thinks about The Slapping. It just seems like they're trying to capitalize on the drama for attention, and it's not a good look.

There's also an issue of a double standard. Celebrities have assaulted people before and gotten less of a focus. Ezra Miller was arrested for disorderly conduct and harassment on Monday morning, and they were only trending on Twitter about it for an hour. Yes, Smith's incident being captured on live TV at one of Hollywood's biggest events gave him more attention, but I haven't seen hardly anyone criticize Miller as much as they've criticized Smith.

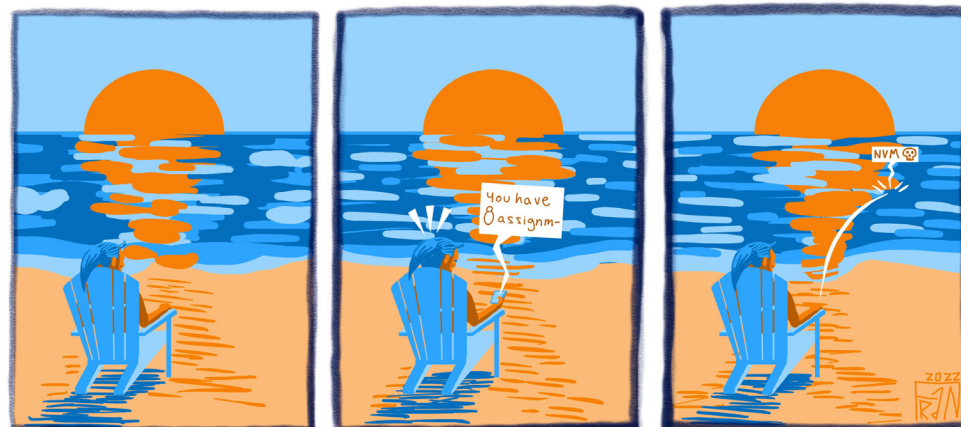
Overall, there are so many layers to this situation that it seems wrong to be solidly Team Rock or Team Smith. I hope all the celebrities in this situation take a step back to reflect on their actions.

One last thing - March 2020 we had the Spring Break That Never Ended. March 2021 we had the Ever Given in the Suez Canal. And now, in March 2022, we have The Slapping. What bonkers event awaits us in March 2023?

## Art Block: Our Ideal Spring Break



Art by Think Vu | Content Creator



Art by Fran Bollinger | Content Creator

For this semester's Art Block, I asked our content creators Think Vu and Fran Bollinger to draw their ideal Spring Break vacation.

For photos of real Spring Break vacations, check out the Photo page.

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