

# Opinion

## Letter from the editor: Thank you

**RACHEL RUDD**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Rachel Rudd is a senior creative media production major from Beebe, Arkansas.

I might be breaking tradition by writing this, as normally newspapers take letters to the editor. But considering this is my last Herald ever, I figured it would be OK to break tradition just this once.

Working at The Herald for the past three years has been one of the most rewarding experiences I could ever ask for. I have learned and gained so much experience I couldn't have gotten anywhere else.

Despite all the stress, sleepless nights, crazy deadlines and wanting to pull my hair out on more than one occasion, I wouldn't trade any of it for the world.

Looking back on previous Herald memories, I remember all the fun I had covering stories, the wacky late-night production talks, and all the inside jokes more than the stress.

I cannot thank the previous staff enough, all of you taught me so much about journalism and reporting, and were willing to teach me all your tips and tricks.

It was so scary at first and I was terrified I would fail. You showed me it was OK to mess up, and when I did, you made sure I learned from my mistakes.

I want to give a shoutout to former Herald editor-in-chief Rebecca Robinson, who taught me everything from reporting, interviewing, page design and more. You molded me into the journalist I am today, and I can't thank you enough.

To the current staff, thank you so much for learning and growing with me as we tackled this crazy year together. Between the multimedia journalism program deletion, a small staff and more, you guys rose to the challenge and made sure your pages and stories were the best they could be.

I know this year has been hard on you, but I looked to you guys for strength and inspiration more than you know. Whether it was finding a way to make light of any situation like Elijah,

being easygoing Jerry, having something unhinged (but also really funny) to say like Laila, having good writing advice like Caroline, or anything else, all of you inspired me so much in your own ways and kept me going when I thought I couldn't go any further.

To Ms. Combs, thank you for always being my rock. Even though you were tough on me, it came from a place of genuinely wanting to see me get better. You always knew exactly what to say when I was in a tough spot, and your dry wit and sass were such a light during difficult times.

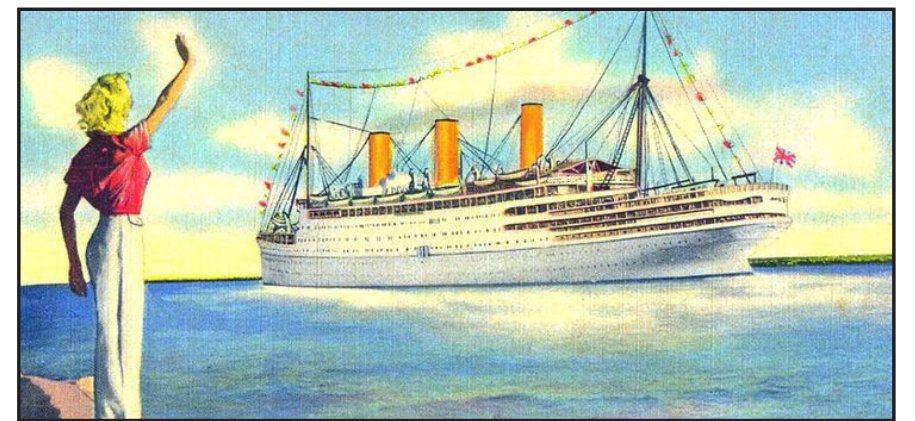
To the upcoming staff, I have so much faith in you. You are going to take

what's been done this year and make it even better. I'll be rooting for you, wherever I end up.

And to the readers, thank you so much for reading our stories, reposting us on social media, looking at our photos, and so much more. We do all of this to keep you informed, so thank you for continuing to grab our paper week after week.

Thank you all so much for an incredible three years. It's been an honor to be your editor-in-chief, and I can't wait to see what's on The Herald's horizon.

-Rachel Rudd



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF JOHN ERDMANN'S PINTREST  
Artistic depiction of Rachel as she leaves The Herald to continue without her.

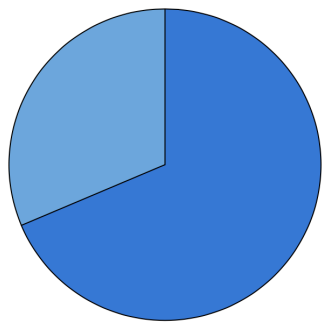
### What's Your Opinion?

Is water wet?

Out of 51 responses:

Yes -- 35

No -- 16



• Yes • No

## A reflection of the "college experience" from a graduating senior

**CAROLINE AVERITT**  
LIFE EDITOR



Caroline Averitt is a senior multimedia journalism major from Jonesboro.

Four years ago, I walked across a stage in a cap and gown and received my high school diploma. I would be attending Samford University to study marketing and accounting. Now, I am graduating in less than two weeks from Arkansas State University with a degree in multimedia journalism.

A lot has changed for me in the past four years and hardly anything went as planned.

When I graduated high school, I had a specific idea of what the college experience was supposed to be. You're supposed to move away from home, go to parties and pick a school and major that you stick with for exactly four years.

Four years and one college education later, I can now safely say there is no such thing as the "college experience."

I started college in 2020 at a school about five hours from home. The campus had a strict COVID-19 policy and being a devout rule follower, I took social distancing and turned it into complete social isolation.

After one semester, I decided to transfer to A-State so I could live at home, even though doing so did not fit into my idea of the college experience. It was a difficult decision, but now I consider transferring to A-State one of the best decisions I have ever made.

I went from a child who thought she had it all figured out to an adult who understands life is about constantly figuring things out.

Maybe you are like me and transferred or changed your major a lot. Maybe you won't finish college in four years, or you expected it to be like the movies where you go to parties every night and class is a second thought. Maybe you just feel like something isn't right.

Whatever the case may be, I want to give some advice based on what I learned through my unconventional college experience.

First, don't compare yourself to others. College is a place where people

from all different backgrounds and stages of life converge, so it's OK if you aren't on the same path as someone else.

Second, don't be afraid to change your mind. I chose the wrong school and major at first, but because of that, I am now confident I am in the right place.

Finally, you don't have to have the "college experience," but you should enjoy it. I honestly hated college until I started getting involved in organizations (like The Herald) and making friendships that would last a lifetime. Do whatever you need to do to make these years fun and memorable.

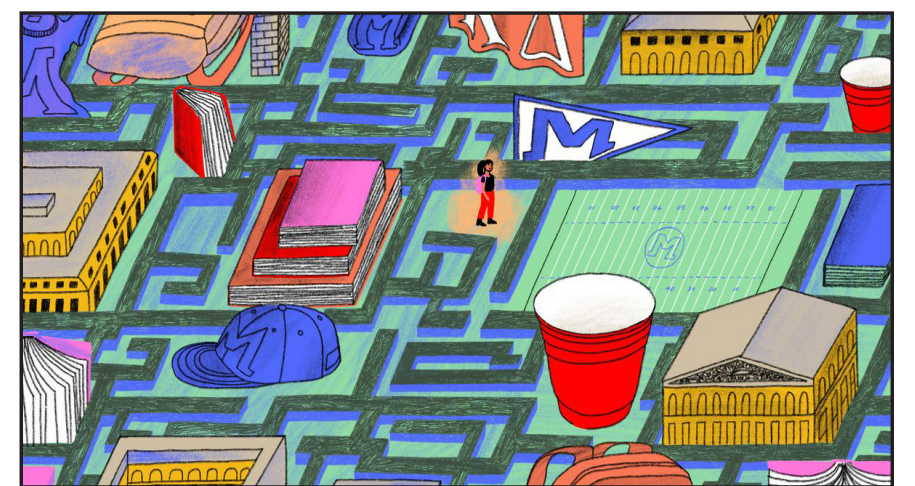
I am so grateful for the ups and downs I have experienced. I often

wish I could go back in time and tell my 18-year-old self "You will make it! It will be terrifying, but then it will be overwhelmingly joyful!" Since I can't, I am telling you, dear reader, instead.

I have learned so much in college. I have learned the kind of stuff you see on a test, but I have also learned so much from the people around me and so much about myself.

I used to be so afraid; I was so shy and insecure. But now, because of all the trials, all the mistakes and all the lessons learned, it's not so scary anymore.

As one of my professors, Dr. Sitton, says, "Be good and be good at it. Wolves Up!"



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF PAIGE VICKERS | VOX  
Artist depiction of things typically associated with the "college experience."

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 [astatetheherald.com](http://astatetheherald.com). 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.

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