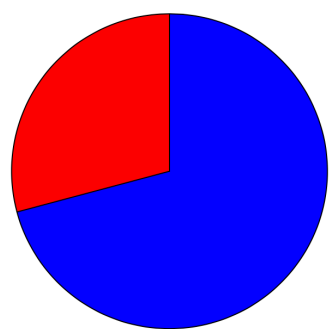


## What's Your Opinion?

Who do you think "won" the presidential debate?

Out of 48 responses:  
Kamala Harris -- 34  
Donald Trump -- 14



• Harris • Trump

### Next Poll:

#### POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE U.S.

Is political violence in the United States becoming a serious concern?

Students can answer the poll on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](https://www.instagram.com/astateherald). Instagram polls are posted on Mondays. Previous poll results can be found on [astatetheherald.com](https://www.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.

## The dangers of "celebrity" role models

ELIJAH TEMPLETON

LIFE EDITOR



Elijah Templeton is a senior English major from Jonesboro.

In American pop-culture, it seems that we cannot help ourselves when discussing celebrities. We hold celebrities to a higher standard and scrutinize their every move then act surprised when they make mistakes and reveal themselves to be no better than the rest of us.

As culture shifts, the internet age brings us into an "attention economy" where views and likes are more valuable than silver and gold and "influencers" have become the new celebrities.

They walk red carpets, they appear in advertising campaigns and commercials and "real" celebrities go out of their way to appear in their posts, videos and live streams because that is where the

audience and attention is.

What separates these new-age influencers from their traditional celebrity counterparts? Access.

Our access to them is far more intimate and personal than it has ever been and we are easily let into their lives and allowed to see them as they are, not as they want to be seen. Or at least, that is what we want to believe.

The problems arise when we feel as if we know these people. We know such intimate details of their personality and lives that they feel more like an online friend than a public figure with the same carefully curated image.

Once upon a time, we would only see celebrities on red carpets, talk shows and other planned appearances that were carefully curated and therefore the version of them we see is only what they wanted us to see.

Now, we can see them in real time from the comfort of our own homes and examine details of their personal and professional lives.

Our tendency to place celebrities on a pedestal and present them as role models for people to look up to is a flawed premise in itself, but there is a larger issue at hand. The internet allows anyone with a Wi-Fi connection to become a household name with direct access to millions of impressionable

young minds.

At least when traditional celebrities were presented as role models, there were teams of people working day and night to ensure that their public persona was one worthy of emulating.

Nowadays, the influencer needs only a phone to generate the same audience but lacks the infrastructure around them to cultivate that image. As a result, we have people like Andrew Tate with massive fanbases who spew toxic rhetoric and create millions of young men who believe that he is someone worth admiring.

The root problem is not one that can be easily addressed. The idea of making celebrities into our role models is one

that is so deeply woven into our cultural identity that doing away with it entirely may not even be possible.

What we can do is ensure that we remain vigilant of the reverence we give to public figures and try our best to not place them on pedestals or treat them as if they are beyond making mistakes and being human.

With the path to celebrity now being easier and more attainable than ever before, we must be careful about who we choose to champion and platform. If we are not, then we run the risk of entire generations in the future becoming the people we revile today.

But of course, that's just one man's opinion.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF ROLLING STONE

A photograph collection of notable social media influencers.

## Why mental health matters as a college student

KATY WALLING

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD



Katy Walling is a first-year communications major from Salem, Arkansas.

Bad mental health plagues the lives of many people on a day to day basis and for college students, it's no different.

Many students have felt this way at some point in their college career, so what can be done to fix this? One solution to this problem could be excused absences: recognized absences that are real problems in a student's life.

Bad mental health can lead to a decline in a student's academic performance and according to Inside Higher Ed's 2024 student survey, "two in five students say their mental health is impacting their ability to focus, learn and perform academically."

With excused absences, mental health days would allow students to do whatever they feel could help them get back on track; whether that includes hiking, yoga or a restful sleep knowing no blaring alarms will force them to get up for a class.

As someone who has struggled with mental health issues, specifically an anxiety disorder, I can understand the burdened feeling of being overwhelmed. Feeling like I can not catch up with everything I have to do, like going to class only to discover I have more assignments to get done. These overwhelming academic responsibilities make me feel worse and ultimately lead to multiple crash outs. So, having these excused mental health days would help me better myself as a student, and it would help get my academic record back on track after a burn out period.

Offered at our campus, another solution to this problem would be counseling.

These services offer students guidance and help to avoid leaving students to deal with their own stresses. However, according to Inside Higher Ed, only 15% of college students sought counseling in the 2021-2022 academic school year.

This can come from a feeling of a lack of confidentiality, feeling like they do not have enough time to go to counseling or feelings of embarrassment with seeking help.

Seeking help comes from a place of vulnerability. Even though our generation has been the most open about their mental health, it can be hard to get started on that journey.

Being too prideful to ask for help can make things worse. Feelings of embarrassment, shame and uncomfortable vulnerability can be harmful, especially if left unattended. However, this does not have to be the case. Students all over campus have struggled, whether it was exactly what you're going through, or something very different. Someone out there has probably experienced what you're going through, especially if you've just started your college career.

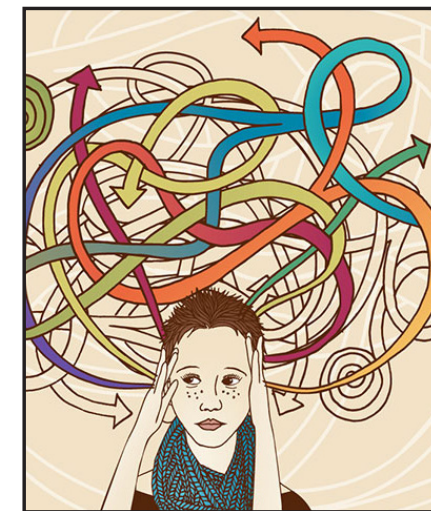
Feeling embarrassed about your mental health is not a feeling one should have. I have been embarrassed about my failing mental health before, but there is always someone who knows what I'm going through and how to help.

In short, offering mental health days to stressed, anxious and depressed students would benefit their well-being.

Even students who are not particularly stressed could benefit just from knowing they have a source that will provide help, if they needed it.

If you need help, do not hesitate to reach out. Someone is more than willing to get you the services you need.

The Counseling Center at Arkansas State University can be found in room 2203 at the Reng Student Center, at (870)-972-2318 or at [counseling@astate.edu](mailto:counseling@astate.edu) to book an appointment.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF RIPPLE FOUNDATION

Illustration of a stressed person.

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Story ideas or news tips may be emailed to [heraldnews1921@gmail.com](mailto:heraldnews1921@gmail.com). The Herald welcomes comments, criticisms or ideas that its readership may have. We encourage you to send a Letter to the Editor to [jerry.burton@smail.astate.edu](mailto:jerry.burton@smail.astate.edu)

### STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

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### CORRECTIONS GUIDELINES

The Herald wants its news reports to be fair and accurate. We correct all errors of fact. If you know of an error, please contact us.

**Correction: "A note from someone born after 9/11" by Benjamin McDowell; "Ticketmaster's reign of tyranny" by Katie Knight; "Club Spotlight: Kappa Pi Lambda Theta" by Ashley Jones.**

### EDITORIAL POLICY

Opinions expressed in personal columns are those of the writers and may not reflect the opinions of the staff as a whole.

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