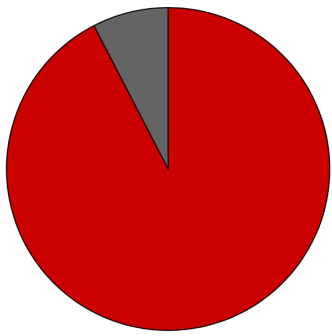


## What's Your Opinion?

Should the Red Wolves play an in-state opponent every football season?

Out of 79 responses:  
Yes - 73  
No - 6



• Yes • No

## Next Poll:

### Back to School

Is attending high school events embarrassing after you graduate?

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.

## Why Gen-Z should vote in primary elections

DAVID CART

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD



David Cart is a senior plant and soil science major from Cary, North Carolina.

While it may seem distant in the future, the political primaries of the 2026 midterms will soon be upon us. For those unaware, the primaries are an occasion where each political party chooses its respective candidate for the upcoming election cycle.

As a student, I have heard the far too often gripe amongst many of my peers of the lack of adequate representation of their interests and views, even going as far to display the sentiment that the system is "rigged" and that real change in our political system is impossible.

"Why don't they represent my

interests?" is a common sentiment I hear. I'm far from the naive, starry-eyed, doggy-wagging-tail optimist, but the simple fact of the matter is there is no reason for this pessimism within the prospect of enacting positive change on this front.

Studies on this topic have consistently shown that participation in primaries correlates strongly with age. According to a 2024 study by the National Vote at Home Institute, voters 65 and older had a six-times higher turnout rate (36%) than those aged 18-34, who had just a 6% turnout.

One of the principal reasons young people often feel so alienated by our political system right now is that the interests and views represented in our system are downstream of the "vetting process" of primaries. Those who participate, such as the older generations, are disproportionately more likely to hold not just contradictory, but diametrically opposed views, values, and even interests compared to those less likely to participate in the process such as the younger generation, particularly Gen Z.

The truth is, there is more that unites us as a generation than divides us. We were unknowingly "guinea pigs" being

exposed to a technology at far too young an age, with proven deleterious effects on a multitude of cognitive and psychological functions.

We lived through COVID during some of our most formative years and took the brunt of the crushing effects of lock downs and were blindsided by the consequences of the move towards the virtual at the expense of the personal.

We also inherited the most unaffordable housing market in all of human history, to name only a fraction of the highlights and challenges we collectively faced and will continue to face in the future.

Are you tired of our pay-to-play political system in which the

ultra-wealthy and influential have a disproportionately undue impact?

Or maybe you're sick of a regime that refuses to rein in the growing influence of private equity firms that are simultaneously driving costs up and reducing quality in whatever they touch?

Or perhaps it's the current administration's refusal to go after pedophiles and human traffickers.

If Gen Z turned out in mass at primaries, which I believe is the single most effective way of turning this country around, watch how quickly a political system emerges, or at least is forced to capitulate on a couple of issues, that serves us.

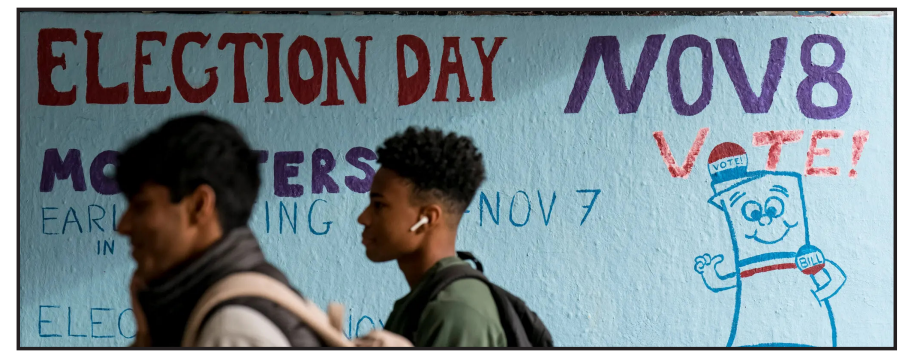


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

A hand-painted sign promoting voting at Washington University in St. Louis.

## Violent crimes are more than political spectacles

ELIJAH TEMPLETON

LIFE EDITOR



Elijah Templeton is a senior English major from Jonesboro.

Last month, a brutal stabbing took place on a light rail car in Charlotte, North Carolina and it has since become the newest national talking point in the Trump administration's ongoing efforts to 'clean up' crime in cities all over the nation.

Iryna Zarutka, a Ukrainian refugee, was allegedly stabbed to death by a man named Decarlos Brown with a pocket knife minutes after Zarutka boarded the light rail, where she was later pronounced dead at the scene when medical personnel arrived.

Why has this particular case drawn so much attention and conversation?

Especially considering the fact that according to data from the CDC, there were 22,830 confirmed homicides in the U.S. in 2023, the most recent

year that a comprehensive study of homicide deaths in the country has been published.

The answer to that is two fold, one being that it took place in a 'blue' city and the other being that a white woman was allegedly killed by a black assailant.

This is a double whammy for the Trump administration in their ongoing efforts to 'clean up' liberal-run cities and decrease the rates of violent crime while also allowing online 'news' organizations and podcasters on platforms like X to spread the message that there is a 'war on white people.'

Obviously, cases like this are nothing new to the realm of political spectacle.

The use of real life tragedy to push narratives and stoke the flames of division in our country is a real problem that breeds further mistrust and fear in American communities and creates the type of national conversations that result in 'strong-man' candidates like Trump being elected on the promise of keeping American citizens safe from those who seek to harm them.

While not purely a racial issue, it is a common theme to see the murder of white citizens, particularly white women, at the hands of black or brown men being especially heightened in their coverage by certain publications and further amplified by members of the administration that most closely align themselves with those publication's ideologies.

It is obvious to anyone that senseless violence is wrong and perpetrators should be punished accordingly, but the reality of cases like these is tragedies quickly becoming hyper-politicized anecdotes that are hammered home over and over as justification for the policies and legislation that must be enacted soon in order to prevent further tragedies in the future.

Online personalities and politicians can occupy the 'moral high-ground' by denouncing acts of violence to further their own agendas and continue to stoke division and easily defend themselves from any potential pushback by accusing those outspoken critics for being 'pro-crime' or 'woke' which only furthers the aforementioned division.

These conversations often center around the 'care' that pundits and politicians have for the victims, only for their names to stop being mentioned once the news cycle moves on to the next topic.

The nature of the 24 hour news cycle serves to create a media frenzy that works itself up, further isolates Americans from their communities and ultimately does little to address the underlying issues that result in violent crimes like poverty, poor mental health services.

It is much easier to make blanket statements of liberal cities being hellscape where the residents walk around in war zones in constant fear for

their lives than it is to accurately portray the reality of these often nuanced situations.

We live in an algorithm driven world and the headlines that get the most clicks are the ones that will be published, no matter the context.

Victims of violent crimes should not be solely used as talking points and later cast aside, because they are people, not pawns.

For every anecdote, there are grieving families and loved ones who must field calls, messages and harassment online and in person.

This is not to say that violent crimes should not be covered at all, but rather that more careful and responsible coverage must be applied if we ever wish to see a return to a time when things in this country did not feel so divided along political lines.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CBS NEWS

Security footage captured before Decarlos allegedly stabbed Iryna.

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