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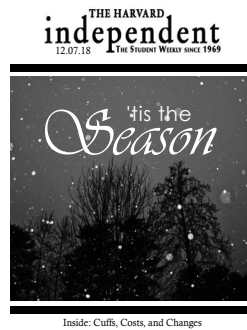


Inside: Cuffs, Costs, and Changes

The Harvard Independent

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The Indy is ringing in the Holiday Season!

Cover design by
Isabelle Blair '21

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As Harvard College's weekly undergraduate newsmagazine, the Harvard Independent provides in-depth, critical coverage of issues and events of interest to the Harvard College community. The Independent has no political affiliation, instead offering diverse commentary on news, arts, sports, and student life.

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Finding Larry

Office Hours with President Bacow

By ANA LUIZA NICOLAE

On Thursday, September 27 and Monday, November 19 at 3pm, President Bacow held office hours to give students a chance to meet him. However, these opportunities to get to know our new president, unfortunately, were not taken advantage of by most students. And while this may have been because the announcement of these office hours were hidden under the Contact tab of the President's Office official website.

But, if ever one does stumble upon the information, (whether it be) through relations of student groups, friends or even alumni, here is what one could expect. Delving through a crowd of visitors serenaded by Harvard tour guides with the tragic story of this oldest relic of Harvard's beginning, Massachusetts's Hall, one would make their way to the West entrance of the building starting at 1:30 PM. It is first come first serve after all. Inside a waiting room with

beautiful carpets too often walked upon, no student could remain indifferent to the gentle character of the welcoming committee.

At the front desk, they would be asked to register, through their ID and that of any other affiliates joining them, and to describe the reason for their visit. Upon inscription, they would leave, only to come back before their allotted time, anxious for once about punctuality. Here, hands most certainly moist, students could not escape self-consciousness before Bacow's brilliant Chief of Staff, Patti Bellinger, bearing a large, energetic, and intelligent smile. Led by Bellinger, previous Executive Director of the Center for Public Leadership as well as previous Executive Director of Executive Education at Harvard Business School, the student would discover a moderate meeting room. Greeted by Bacow, they would take a seat at the wooden oval table, close to its head, where "Larry" considers each

student's propositions.

Now how does the busiest man on campus divide his time between the sometimes frivolous, sometimes stern considerations of Harvard College students? These so called "office hours" are in this case aptly named so. On both occasions, in September and November, Lawrence S. Bacow has dedicated exactly one hour to host students from all years. For all, save his few advisees living in Massachusetts's Hall, the opportunity is phenomenal, yet rarely taken up. For efficiency's sake, each student, or group of students, is allowed only ten minutes, in and out. However, as would experience any student visiting the President's Office, embarking on such a strange journey as this seems to discard all conception of time. For determined students, the period seems to fly by, as they are promptly dismissed by the civility of President Bacow and Patti Bellinger, upon completion of the ten minutes. For more flexible ones, time seems to expand, as Bacow may share a personal anecdote and Bellinger some of her world-class advice. For those who wish to enact this experience truly, more office hours will be held in the coming semesters. As long as one doesn't forget to check the Contact tab...

Ana Luiza Nicolae '22 (analuiza_nicolae@college.harvard.edu) looks forward to the next OH as hosted by the one and only President Bacow



Francesca Cornero '19

News Briefs

By SEGAN HELLE

Lawsuits Filed Against Harvard Over Social Group Sanctions

This Monday, December 3, two lawsuits were filed alleging that Harvard's sanctions against single-gender social organizations violate sex-based discrimination laws on the federal and state level.

The first lawsuit, filed by two Greek organizations in Massachusetts court, alleges that Harvard's sanctions violate the Civil Rights Act and Massachusetts Constitution and is demanding that Harvard discontinue the policy and pay reparations for what money they believe they have lost due to the penalties created by the sanctions. The second lawsuit, filed in federal court by

five separate sororities and fraternities and three unnamed Harvard students who are members of all-male social organizations, alleges that University sanctions violate Title IX—the federal anti-sex discrimination law—and the US Constitution.

The sanctions in question were originally devised in May 2016 under former President Drew Faust's administration and were meant to discourage the prevalence of single-gender social organizations in the University's social spaces, which University officials have argued promote exclusivity. The policy, which was set to be applied to the Class of 2021 and following years, restricts members of single-gender social organizations from leadership positions in varsity sports, recognized

student organizations, or from receiving College endorsements for fellowships.

Plaintiffs in the two lawsuits are alleging that Harvard's sanctions are discriminatory because they punish students for wanting to associate with other individuals of the same sex and that they perpetuate the view that male social organizations are likely to commit acts of bigotry and sexual violence. Plaintiffs also allege that Harvard's policies promote an "anti-male bias" that pairs all-male social organizations with primarily negative characteristics.

The University has yet to respond to the lawsuits.

Students Mobilize to Oppose Title IX Changes

In a joint effort with Know Your IX and the Graduate Women at MIT (GWAMIT), Our Harvard Can Do Better is leading a sit-in at Boston City Hall Plaza, this Thursday, December 6 at 1 PM in protest against Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos's proposed changes to Title IX rules. The sit-in is part of a national series of actions led by survivors of sexual assault and their allies during the first week of December against DeVos's propositions.

According to an email sent out by Our Harvard Can Do Better, DeVos's proposed changes to Title IX would require schools to hold live hearings with cross-examinations of survivors and witnesses that the groups

involved with the sit-in argue are "extremely likely to re-traumatize survivors" and would employ such a limited definition of sexual harassment that survivors would have to endure severe, repeated, or escalating harassment before they can file a Title IX complaint." These changes would also take away the requirement for schools to investigate assaults involving students that happen off-campus—including spaces like social organizations, programs abroad, or online—and would no longer hold schools accountable to completing investigations within a specified time frame. Our Harvard Can Do Better argues that these changes would "make it easier for schools to sweep cases of sexual violence under the rug," which would disproportionately affects students who come from identities that are already

traditionally marginalized and subject to sexual violence, like undocumented students, LGBTQ+ students, and students of color.

In addition to the sit-in, Our Harvard Can Do Better is also planning on delivering an open letter to the Department of Education with over 450 signatures that argues that the proposed Title IX changes are unacceptable.

Segan Helle '20 (shelle@college.harvard.edu) is news writer interested in campus and domestic politics.

Francesca Cornero '19

Cuff Me Harder

Thoughts on sex and relationships during the holidays

By ALAYA AYALA

As the holiday season rolls its way into Harvard's campus, I find myself wondering how different the holidays will be for me now that I'm dating someone.

I already know that the whole shopping-for-presents thing has suddenly gotten three times harder. How does one find the perfect gift for the person they have romantic feelings for? My solution has been to just buy and make as many small, funny gifts as I can for him and call it a day.

I also already know that I'll probably be spending at least a good chunk of my winter break with my boyfriend, and at least one holiday. That's really weird in and of itself because of the fact that I have always spent the holidays with my family.

But I have to wonder how it's going to feel to be with someone during this time of year. Will I be more sappy than usual? Will the festive feelings get too overwhelming? How does one work around seasonal depression while trying to make the most out of the the most wonderful time of the year?

I don't have all the answers, but I do know one thing, and it's that I'm looking forward to cuffing season regardless of the weirdness.

And I'm not the only one, it would seem.

Naturally, when I'm thinking about romance and holiday cheer I'm also wondering what intimacy feels like during this time of year. Is the sex better because everyone's feeling merry? Or is the stress of having to be around family members you don't like a major turn off? Will we be too full of holiday dinner to even want to have sex?

The one thing I'm not questioning is whether or not we'll be having safe sex, because that's non-negotiable.

This past Tuesday, Harvard SHARC addressed that topic during their Cuffing Season event. I was only able to go for the last hour, but what I did witness there was really enjoyable. They had set up a table full of food, another of crafts, and yet another with a condom display. What truly stole the show was the lottery table that was littered with all manner of sex toys and sex-ed pamphlets. It was incredible to observe how SHARC had managed to through together an event that encompassed holiday cheer and sexual health and wellness so entirely.

I had a chance to ask some Sharc members their thoughts on the event. Peyton Benac '21 from Leverett House said "Harvard has a weird dating culture

that's a weird mix of hookups and serious dating. Sharc's job is teaching people how to have safer, more pleasurable sex. We have a ton of resources from good vibrations and HUHS. This event is just part of keeping up Sharcs larger mission."

While talking to Peyton I definitely had to admit to myself that Harvard's strange dating culture definitely contributed to me not having a great holiday season last year.

There's something to be said for having healthy relationships with the people you're interested in, whether it's serious or just a casual hookup. I wish I had learned that sooner instead of letting the negative aspects of some hookups-gone-wrong affect me so strongly.

I also had a chance to speak with Leah Marsh '19 about the event. "I think for me part of the goal of this event was to provide a space to raise awareness about sharc. We included things that don't have to do with sexual health to provide a more comfortable space to educate people about what sharc does."

And make it comfortable they did, I walked away with a combination of free condoms and a rad picture frame that I painted to look like snow. Everyone at the

INDY FORUM

Cuff Me Harder, continued.

event seemed happy enough to transition from crafting friendship bracelets to entering into lotteries for vibrators.

In the words of Brandi Moore '19 from Kirkland, "This event is just generally really cool, we have crafts in the same room as sex supplies and hot chocolate. I think it's a great way to De-stigmatize

sex by making the space comfortable. It's also really amazing that it's in a Main campus location because it provides an accessible space for people to learn about sex that isn't hidden away in a basement or office."

I look forward to attending more events like this during my time at Harvard. It's amazing to have a space where I can ask all the questions I want about healthy

sex and relationships while still feeling comfortable and welcomed.

Alaya Ayala '21 (alaya_ayala@college.harvard.edu) is looking forward to being officially "cuffed" this holiday season.



Alaya Ayala '21

Getting In

How one student got his spot at Harvard

By SAMBUDDHA
CHATTOPADHYAY

When I was twelve, I saw a little Asian girl in a pink dress play Meditation from Massenet's Thais. It was the most beautiful thing.

As the melody rose and fell like the crests and troughs of an ocean wave, I felt mesmerized. After the music stopped, a hush fell over the crowd that had gathered around the screen. Suddenly, an imperial voice, a voice full of authority, sounded out of the crowd.

"Well, that sounded nice. But it felt fake. She played the right notes in the right places, but there's clearly no passion there. I mean look at her, look at her eyes. I just don't see the emotion there."

I agreed. When I was twelve, I saw a little Asian automaton in pink play Meditation from Massenet's Thais. It was the most perfect thing.

When I was sixteen, I walked past the vines of ivy that writhed along the acid-stained stone buildings, grotesque gargoyles perched on the towers of the secular cathedral, solemn black iron gates adorned with baroque gold leaf.

As I walked across Harvard Yard, I saw the typical Tiger Mom chase down the sophomore schmuck who was leading us, pouncing at him with question after question on how competitive the academic atmosphere here was, if the food was appetizing and filling in the dining halls, if the past winter was harsh, if the social life here was inclusive. She was snarling, my daughter is so little, so, so small you see. I saw her daughter following along three

steps behind her with machine precision, mechanically looking away, blushing at each and every question.

I saw a few salmon-panted boys, their school sweaters adorned with gaudy letters in crimson and white, saw them walking effortlessly, unbridled and proud, saw them laugh at the mother. I joined them. I too laughed at the mother.

She reminded me of my mother. You know, the one who'd always remind me how she'd stopped her career to raise me. The one who'd always remind me how she'd frantically rush through the hellfire of rush-hour traffic to pick me up before 6:30, rush past the lady at the counter who gave her that look, the look that people of "our color" know only too well. My mother, the one who'd part her arms like Moses and smother me, the one who'd pick me up time after time as I fell from that little bike until I finally was able to pedal, pedal, pedal, far, far away from her.

My mother, the one who told me a few weeks ago, "Mani, shona, tui to ar Bangla bolish na."

To which I said, laughing, "Mom, I don't feel Benh-ghali at all, wh-hy wh-ould I ever speak it?"

She is the one who I told a few weeks ago amidst a trickle of tears burning like booze, through a newly learned, newly conjured voice of indignation, "no, I can go alone now, I have, no, I've had eyes and ears of my own, you stay here. Please."

I too laughed at the mother.

When I was seventeen, I tried to get in. "Tell your story," they say. When I sat down in front of the blank canvas to paint the story of my life in broad strokes, I imagined all that I could paint. I imagined my parents coming to this alien land one crisp, wintry November night, the frost biting their sun-kissed, pagan faces. I imagined them carrying three pieces of luggage, three return tickets, and me bundled in layers and layers of all the warm clothing they could imagine.

I imagined the shame burning in my cheeks as I sat in the Reception Room, fork and knife slipping on the hollandaise-lathered chicken breast, as I plunged at it like a savage, later as I sat docile wearing a borrowed three-piece coat, wearing borrowed feathers, indeed looking much like Aesop's crow.

But I didn't paint any of that. I painted a passionate portrait of a young artist struggling with his privilege. At heart, it was an act of transformation, of emancipation, an act of escape. Somewhere sitting in a hearth-warmed New England office on a crisp, wintry November night, boiling fair-trade coffee in hand, someone must have smiled a bit and thought, this one, this one belongs. That's how I got in.

Sambuddha Chattopadhyay '21 (chattopadhyay@college.harvard.edu) is a Sophomore in Winthrop. In his free time, he rakes to avoid forest fires.

A Truly Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

The Experience of taking a class with Professor Michael Sandel

By TUSHAR DWIVEDI

This morning, Harvard hosted a ceremony for new members of congress, allowing a limited number of Harvard students access to the nation's leading politicians and business leaders. In a different venue, and seemingly a different world, Travis Scott (aka La Flame), an industry leader in his own right, made his presence known at the Science Center. Studying at Harvard is billed as a once in a lifetime opportunity, not only because of the education and career opportunities, but because of the access to another world of successful politicians, artists, thinkers, and altogether celebrities.

Growing up, I thought of celebrities less as reality TV stars or pop artists, but rather as those individuals completely out of reach. They existed in a fantasy world, one that encompassed everyone from NFL stars to Actors and major politicians. The chance to attend Harvard felt like a magic key, one that unlocked the door that at one time seemed permanently out of reach.

This semester, I had the opportunity to take Ethical Reasoning 39 ("Money Markets and Morals"), taught by Professor Michael Sandel, and for the first time, watched my parents mouths drop when they heard who I would be learning from. They were quick to rebut, however, claiming that such classes were rarely truly taught by the professor. Instead, it was often the teaching fellows who handled the bulk of the work, with the professor's name only headlining the course. Nonetheless, I was excited; this was my first introduction to philosophy and who better to

be learning from.

For the first time since CS50, after attending the first lecture, it truly felt as if I had that key sought so long ago in my hand. From a lecture hall packed to the absolute brim, overflowing into another classroom, to photographers capturing Sandel's first words, the class hummed with an energy of its own, one that rarely died even as we dove deeper into Kant and Aristotle. After attending the last class today, I can look back and say that my parents were 100% correct, albeit not in the negative way they imagined.

With regards to actually learning philosophy, engaging my mental faculties and growing my interest in the subject, the entirety of that burden and responsibility fell on my TF - and he did an absolutely excellent job in doing so. Constantly probing, countering, and facilitating, for the first time, section became something to look forward to, and I learned just as much, if not more, from my classmates than I did from the readings themselves. The true class and knowledge building played out in section, while the lectures in class themselves seemed to play out more like a TV show.

Sandel starred in each episode using a combination of monologue, inquisition and standard lecturing to coherently and succinctly package huge amounts of information. Whether it be the rules surrounding lateness and technology or the sheer difficulty to lottery in, there was an air that I was part of something bigger while in the class. While at times the supporting actor analogy might be apt, it felt more like something out of Dead Poets Society, albeit

with a group size orders of magnitude larger. There was a wisdom being imparted during lecture that surpassed that of any text or reading and the only comparison could be to listening to one's father or grandparent tell stories steeped in meaning.

When Sandel and Mankiw faced off in debate, near the end of the class, the entire lecture hall waited with significant anticipation. As Jose Espinel, a Junior at Harvard put it, "watching Sandel debate Mankiw is exactly the type of thing I came to Harvard for," and the class shined in that exactly that regard. With numerous quotables, ideologies, and snippets, the class hummed and it was clear that the debate was the peak of the class for most.

In the last lecture, however, the surprise was unveiled in a monologue by Sandel that the entire class was a microcosm-like representation of the manner in which political and moral discussion should exist in the modern world, in direct agreement with his own moral philosophy. The takeaway being that what we had done thus far was not simply sit, absorb, and take notes, but rather participate in a way of life constructed by Sandel such that we saw its true value from the inside. The value in such a construct was not uniformly shared across the lecture hall or class, but for myself, it was the eye opening experience I hope to have many more of here at Harvard.

Tushar Dwivedi '20 (tushar_dwivedi@college.harvard.edu) hopes not to have peaked at ER39.

Isabelle Blair '21



Untitled

A Poem

By JOSE ESPINEL

Forgive me,
Gentle paramour,
For showing you how
Soft lead remains yet lead
And how iron at a distance
Appears liable to indention,
Welcoming a hand to an altogether
Unpliable surface.

My deceit made so similar
By unwilling nature of the thing,
I hope you are merciful enough to realize
No hard thing means to feel soft
At distance.

*Jose Espinel '20 (espinel@college.harvard.edu) writes
poetry for the Indy.*

Isabelle Blair '21

The Price

A Poem

By REMEDY RYAN

The tourists trampled
the sunflower field
for the perfect Instagram shot
The field reduced to useless,
golden ruins

Remember when we were born?
Our mothers cried for us then
Little fools
To think that beauty could exist
Without pain

One winter night
we rubbed each other's hands
until they turned raw
I didn't know it then
But you were already gone

How much time will I spend
in front of the mirror?
Becoming something
worth ruining—
again

*Remedy Ryan '21 (remedyryan@college.harvard.edu)
writes poetry for the Indy.*



INDY SPORTS

Sports Briefs

By JP VIEIRA

Crashing the Boards: Women's Basketball

Coming in on a 2-game win streak, the Harvard women's basketball team was hoping for a hat trick in their home game this week against Quinnipiac. In an extremely close game, which saw both teams playing in double overtime, Harvard led Quinnipiac 32-30 at the end of the first half. As the second half began, Harvard tried to pull away multiple times, but Quinnipiac stayed in the game. Down the final stretch, Harvard gave up their lead, but managed to send the game to overtime with a buzzer-beating shot from captain Madeline Raster. The first overtime almost ended on a 3 point lead to Harvard with seconds left on the clock, but Quinnipiac managed to score a buzzer-beater 3-pointer to send the game into a second overtime.

Ultimately, in the second overtime, Quinnipiac managed to pull away from Harvard and win the game by 5. Junior Katie Benzan finished with 27 points and 6 assists. Despite their loss, Harvard shot better from the field compared to the Bobcats (42.9% compared to 35.6%). The Crimson cleaned up the glass with 50 rebounds, while holding the Bobcats to 35 rebounds. Ultimately, Harvard's downfall was in their turnovers (24) and bench points (only 5 compared to Quinnipiac's 34 bench points). Harvard looks to bounce back as they host UMaine on Tuesday, December 4th.

JP Vieira '21 (jvieira@college.harvard.edu) looks forward to watching both teams rebound with resilience.

Lost Shots: Men's Basketball

After a four-game road trip in which the Crimson went 2-2, Harvard returned to Cambridge as they hosted Holy Cross. The game was neck and neck from the start until half way through the first half when the Crimson ran rampant in a 13-4 run over Holy Cross, taking a commanding lead of 11 points with them into the half. In the second half, the Crusaders began to take back the court, and although Harvard led Holy Cross by as much as 19 points at times, both teams scored 33 points in the second half. Harvard ultimately won the game 73-62. Freshman Noah Kirkwood scored a career-high 20 points, leading the way for the Crimson in their home victory. Harvard also cleaned up the glass, out-rebounding Holy Cross 40-21, leading to 13 second-chance points compared to Holy Cross' 0 second-chance points. However, Harvard should look to keep their turnovers down as they turned the ball over 19 times during the game. Had the Crimson not shot 52.8% from the field, the turnovers could have come back to haunt them later in this game. Nonetheless, Harvard looked to build off their momentum as they played at Siena on December 1st.

Coming into a game at Siena on December 1st, riding a 2-game win streak, Harvard were narrowly defeated 67-64. Harvard started off strong with a quick 7-2 lead, but Siena kept up and went into the half leading the Crimson 27-22. In the second half, Siena seemed like they were going to blow the game wide open with a 13-point lead, but Harvard showed resilience and grit as they went on a run of their own to pull back within three points in the final seconds. Unfortunately, the last second 3-pointer didn't fall, but for all that the team showed great determination in working together, nearly pushing the game to overtime. Overall, Harvard's downfall was their turnovers. In such a close game, any turnover is crucial, and the Crimson turned the ball over 15 times compared to Siena's 9 turnovers. These turnovers led to 13 points off turnovers for Siena, while the Crimson could only claim 8 out of the 9 points off turnovers. Harvard men's basketball continues their season by playing away at Vermont on Saturday, in what should prove to be an interesting matchup as the Crimson gets back into gear.

the independent



“Reindeer”

By ISABELLE BLAIR