

ISSUE 28

HARVARD

independent

OCT. 27, 2022

THE STUDENT WEEKLY SINCE 1969

the halloween issue

MASTHEAD

October 27, 2022

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HEAD OF THE CHARLES 2022

Local and international Harvard affiliates gathered to celebrate the school's most historical event

by Cami Kotouc '26 and Marbella Marlo '24



October 21st commenced the Head of the Charles Regatta, marking the beginning of the 57th annual gathering along the Charles River. The world's largest three-day rowing event transformed the Cambridge area into an agglomeration of athletes, tourists, and spectators from all over the world. 200,000 combined attendees of the regatta overflowed the city to partake in or experience the championship event.

11,000 athletes participated in 55 various events, spanning across the roughly three-mile-long river and requiring just over 1,700 volunteers. The course typically starts at Boston University's Boathouse in the Charles River Basin and finishes by Northeastern University's Boathouse. Spectators included people from all over the world, from Texas A&M Aggies to Ukrainian National Team rowers, to our own Crimson crowd. Races lasted all day, from Friday through Sunday, and competitor's ages ranged from youth, collegiate, and adult athletes. The diversity in skill level and age contributes to the regatta's prestige and appeal, as it has grown to attract thousands of spectators and visitors since its inception in 1965.

One spectator stated that his favorite part of the event was "all the people," and that the regatta welcomed a "sense of community," as "people from around the world" revolutionized the Cambridge area and helped the entire city "get out on a nice day."

For the first two days of the event, the temperature soared into an atypical October climate: nearly 65 degrees and sunny, but not without strong wind. The last day of the Regatta—covered with smatterings of rain—tested the resilience of the crowds, yet still managed to supplement the plethora of shops, named "Reunion Village." Pop-up shops along the riverbank included Vine-

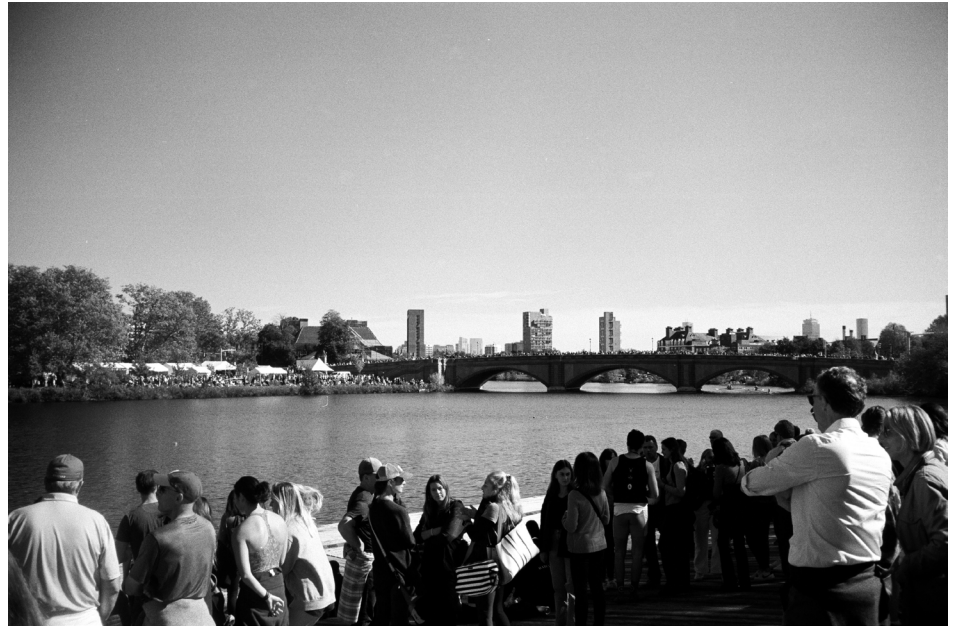
yard Vines, local ventures such as Boston Burger and Clover Food Lab, and international chains including Moderna, Verizon, and DoorDash. The regatta typically generates upward of \$70 million each year for the Greater Boston economy, stimulated by tourism, apparel, and numerous street food options.

Other clubs that lined the banks of Reunion Village included local college, high school, and club teams, as well as non-athletics Harvard affiliates. Marcus DeFlorimonte, the president of the Harvard Club of Boston, expressed the importance of attending the regatta in order to connect students and alumni into the "intergenerational and multidisciplinary" network of Harvard affiliates. DeFlorimonte viewed Head of the Charles a key time to recruit, engage in the international Harvard community, and continue to network with existing members.

In addition to its endless opportunities for spectator socialization, the regatta provides competitors with a racecourse that lines the Boston skyline, passes through MIT and Boston University's campus, and runs under six bridges. Whether or not a product of home court advantage, several of Harvard's men's and women's rowing teams reached victory this past weekend.

"It was pretty surreal to win the Lightweight 8+ at home," said Ryan McCarthy '24, member of Harvard's Varsity Lightweight Team. "The training plan changed a lot from last year and there was a lot more buy-in and competitive nature which contributed to the win. We had no idea we won until we got back to the dock which made that feeling even better."

"This season, our team has committed to a culture of excellence and growth. Our practices have become more competitive, more purposeful, and more energetic, which reflects every rower's dedication to making the boats go as fast as possible" said Morgan Blind '23, captain of the Radcliffe Varsity Heavyweight Team. "Our results



at Head of the Charles were both a reward for our hard work and a motivator to keep grinding. We have big goals for the spring racing season, and our current momentum is super exciting."

For the first time since 2012 and 2016 respectively, Harvard Lights and Radcliffe Lights both took wins in the Championship Lightweight 8+s, with both boats edging their Princeton competitors by several seconds. Harvard University Boat Club won the Club 8+ with their second entry following close behind with a fourth-place finish. HUBC's Champ 8+ finished 3rd overall, and their second entry posted the fastest time of all the Junior Varsity 8+s. RVH also contributed to the medal count with a second-place finish in the Women's Club 8+ and a fourth place in the Women's Club 4+.

As one of Harvard's few large annual athletic events, the Head of the Charles continues to perpetuate the history and significance of rowing in Cambridge. Whether you are enjoying the regatta from the rowing shells or the sidelines, the weekend provides enjoyment options for everyone.

Cami Kotouc '26 (camikotouc@college.harvard.edu) and Marbella Marlo '24 (mmarlo@college.harvard.edu) write Sports for the Independent.

Photos taken by Mary Julia Koch '23



DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS: A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON DEATH

For members of Harvard RAZA, Halloween means a celebration of lost loved ones

by Layla Chaaraoui '26

Halloween typically signals a time for candy, costumes, and spooky rituals, but for members of Harvard-Radcliffe RAZA, a Mexican social, cultural, political, and professional organization on campus, the holiday is not the only thing to celebrate in the coming week.

On November 1st through November 2nd, Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, encourages those of Mexican heritage to honor their deceased loved ones. “The Day of the Dead is essentially a celebration of life and the afterlife,” expressed Mariana Haro '26, president of RAZA. “I think oftentimes people think it’s about celebrating death, but it’s really celebrating the life that people had.”

For Coby Garcia '25, treasurer of RAZA, Día de los Muertos allows him to explore his roots. “It’s an opportunity to recall the great sacrifices that my ancestors took in order to enjoy the quality of life I have [and] reconnect to my heritage and remember the faces that make up my culture and identity,” he said.

The holiday was historically celebrated by the Aztecs in Mexico as a way to honor the dead in a month-long event, guided by the goddess Mictecacihual. When the Catholic church rejected the holiday, the Day of the Dead was transformed by those of Mexican heritage into a prominent event in which it is believed the living and the deceased reunite.

Members of the Mexican community celebrate all over the world by hosting parties and parades where they dance, sing, wear bright-colored makeup, and dress in vibrant costumes. The symbol of the “clavera,” or the skull, decorates the altars that families create for their loved ones and people’s faces in paint.

Displayed in homes or public gathering places, altars bear gifts for the deceased. “The idea is that by putting this offering, which typically is food, next to a picture of them,” explained Haro, “they come back and visit. That’s us honoring them.”

Each year, RAZA hosts a get-together to celebrate Día de los Muertos. “We also bring Pan de Muertos, which is a traditional Mexican sweetbread that’s eaten during that time,” said Haro.

Celebrating the holiday with the RAZA community provides members with support while they honor those they lost. “It’s very special to be able to come together with a lot of friends and com-

memorate and remember our passed loved ones,” explained Karla Avalos '24, a board member of RAZA. “Bringing that community together reminds me so much of home, and regardless of the event, has made my experience here, being so far from home, so much easier.”

RAZA gives students a way to bring their family traditions to college. “Our board is made up of individuals who represent a diverse community here at Harvard and through that, we attempt to celebrate all aspects of Día de los Muertos,” Garcia stated. “RAZA allows students to connect with their homes and roots through celebrations and outings in Boston.”

The Peabody Museum will also be hosting a celebration on October 29th, which will feature altars, arts and crafts, music, dance performances, and food. “That’s something nice that I also like going to and seeing, and a lot of students can go to that as well,” Haro commented.

Haro will be celebrating and honoring her grandfather this Día de los Muertos. “He passed away in Mexico during the height of Covid-19 so we couldn’t go back and travel. He is someone that has been on my mind for the last two Dia de los Muertos. He’s someone that I will be thinking a lot about for this year, too.”

While Garcia will be celebrating his grandparents, he also will be honoring the lives that were lost due to gun violence, as the holiday is not restricted to just celebrating close family and friends, he explained.

“This year, I will make an active effort to celebrate the souls we’ve lost to school shootings and gun violence, especially the children lost during the Uvalde shooting and the tragic deaths in the San Antonio Trailer by keeping those individuals in my prayers, creating ofrendas to remember their faces, and actively support productive discussions around their deaths all while maintain their dignity and peace,” Garcia said.

Avalos will be remembering

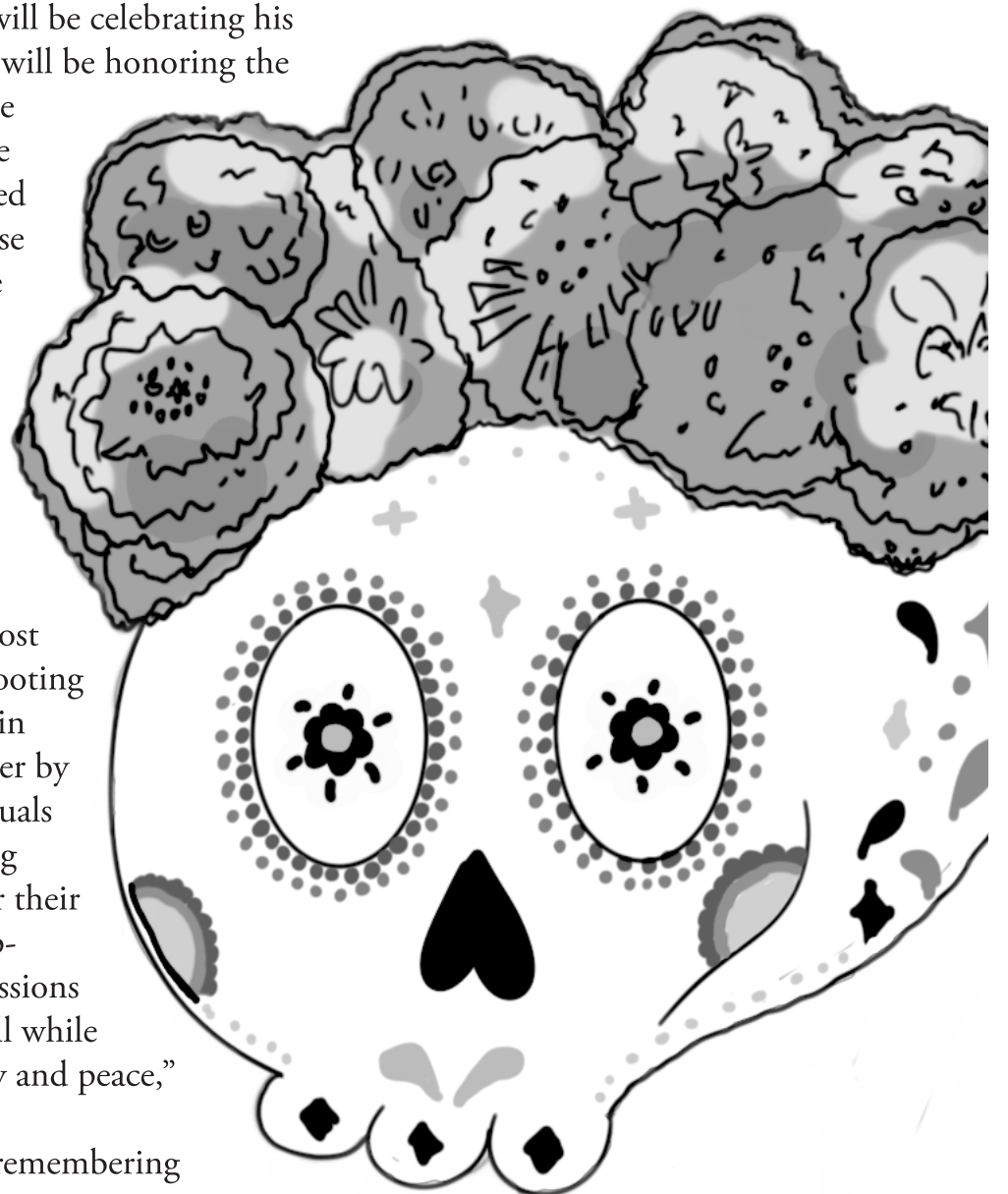
her great-grandmother and explained that the holiday is a way for her to get closer to the values of her family and friends. “My family and I take a chance to reflect on our family’s origins and the upbringing our great relatives had. In celebrating with others, I enjoy hearing about others’ family histories/origins and the unique ways they choose to remember their families, whether that involves food, photographs, [and] story telling.”

For students of Mexican descent, the end of October calls for two celebrations: one more light-hearted, filled with candy and spooky traditions, and the other, more significant and personal.

“Día de los Muertos for my family is a day of reflection, gratitude, community, and tradition,” RAZA member Katherrin Billordo '26 expressed. “We look back at memories shared with our passed ancestors, promise to continue their legacy for years to come, and pray that their souls have found peace.”

Layla Chaaraoui '26 (laylachaaraoui@college.harvard.edu) writes News for the Independent.

Graphic by Adedoyin Adebayo '26



FROM DEFUND TO REFUND

The HUA's revamped funding process has had mixed results

by Ryan Golemme '23

After a near-collapse last spring, Harvard's club funding process has begun anew under the Harvard Undergraduate Association (HUA). Although they secured a record amount of money from the Dean of Students Office (DSO), funding delays and concerns from clubs present new challenges as the new student government looks to earn the trust of its constituents.

The HUA is responsible for ensuring that hundreds of clubs on campus receive sufficient financial support from the Harvard administration. When a campaign to "defund the UC" last spring resulted in presidential and constitutional turnover, students and members of the former Undergraduate Council (UC) raised concerns about how club funding would operate. A split amongst members of the previous council led to conflicting communication and a sudden shutdown of the entire process, throwing clubs into uncertainty as their financial pipeline dried up. The crisis was only resolved after an impromptu transition meeting created a temporary team to cover for the rest of the semester.

The HUA hoped to launch a more consistent club funding process this fall as its first major initiative and a test of its task force-based approach to governance. "We heard from a lot of student organization leaders that the previous process was somewhat confusing and disorienting," said Xander Zurovec '25, the Finance Chair of the new student government. He said the HUA hoped that implementing an early info session, centralized requests on the Airtable software platform, and comprehensive funding spreadsheets would alleviate the more ad hoc approach of the UC.

One of the most drastic changes between the two funding approaches was in the application timeline. While the UC required clubs to apply for funding on an as-needed basis, the HUA split the grant request process into a semesterly and monthly system. Clubs that planned their events and expenses at the start of the semester could apply for funding on a semesterly basis, whereas those seeking retroactive grants can apply for them every month. Request sheets were itemized for all planned expenses and individual ten-minute interviews for clubs applying were conducted in a two-day window by the Finance Chair and the two HUA co-presidents. At the time of publication, the HUA website lists three members on the Finance committee, although the HUA stated that thirteen people in total from both the taskforces and other HUA members helped with the process.

"The HUA hoped to launch a more consistent club funding process this fall as its first major initiative and a test of its task force-based approach to governance. 'We heard from a lot of student organization leaders that the previous process was somewhat confusing and disorienting,' said Finance Chair Xander Zurovec '25."

The original semester schedule required completed applications by September 14th, interviews by September 21st, and final funding recommendation to club leaders by the 28th. The finance guidelines stated that funding would become available five business days after receiving the allotment from DSO sometime "in late September."

However, while interviews were conducted and finished on time, the DSO meeting, funding recommendation dates, and final updates were pushed to weeks later than anticipated. An email from the HUA stated that the full funding determination would come on October 3rd, but one a week later, another email stated it would be "sometime after October 3rd."

Zurovec explained that the delays were due to restructuring within the DSO. "Student Activities Fee Proposals were pushed to September 29th so that the SAFAC could involve the newly hired Executive Director for Administration in the DSO," he said. "This was not anticipated on either the DSO or the HUA's end and is not a delay that we anticipate will occur in the future." After receiving the funding allotment from the DSO on the 29th, the HUA finalized the allotments over the next few days.

On October 6th, the Finance Team emailed all of the applicants that every club would receive a cutback from what was initially requested. "Due to the fact that 200+ student organizations apply for more than \$550,000+ in funding with only \$157,500 to disburse during this semesterly cycle, we could not fulfill anyone's request in its full amount," the email stated, with each club getting a "provisional" amount of funding.

According to data provided by the HUA, the average semesterly funding request for a club was \$4,725.36 while the median funding request was \$3,050 (though the average was somewhat skewed by clubs with particularly large amounts). The HUA requested \$682,000 from the Student Activities Fee Advisory Committee (SAFAC) and received \$550,000. The total was \$225,000 for each semester, with \$157,000 for semesterly funding and \$22,500 for each of the monthly funding cycles per semester.

While the funding announcement email noted that this was still \$50,000 more than the prior UC had secured, the result was unexpected given that the HUA had not announced any expected value during the application process, leading many clubs to budget without knowing if their requests would be fulfilled.

Although the HUA had estimated that they would likely receive around \$135,000-\$150,000 in funding given past semesters, they chose to not give a maximum funding estimate for any of the individual clubs—save a maximum for club sports and some individual items carried over from the UC funding guidelines—given the uncertainties they faced from the DSO on how much funding they would get.

Zurovec stated that the interviews were meant to clarify the eligibility of

funding requests made on an application, rather than indicate how much they would receive from their request. "I think that definitely could've been more clearly communicated, because I heard from some clubs that they were a bit confused and thought 'this is your full funding amount.' In part, I think that was something we could have probably done better."

While funding distribution went mostly according to plans, clubs requesting checks did not receive them until October 18th, over a month and a half into the semester. Moreover, the HUA did not initially have a second account signer ready during the first day of check distribution, which was required for any banks to accept them.

Despite the record amount of funding, some individual clubs expressed concern to the HUA that their request had fallen short, though they declined to speak on the record about details. The applications did not differentiate which expenses were essential for club operations at a minimum, which led to some confusion after the post-interview funding cuts. The HUA provided additional sources of funding on their website and promised to work out any help needed, but several clubs are actively petitioning for assistance.

Zurovec also mentioned that budgeting was challenged by the increasing number of opt outs from the Student Activities Fee, a \$200 fee that is used by the DSO to provide both HUA funding but also funding house homecoming committees and other student life expenses on campus.

"This semester, we saw a little over \$200,000 worth of opt outs (~1,000 students) from the SAF. In previous years (around more than 4 years ago), when there were less opt outs, student governments saw around \$600,000 or more in funding from the SAFAC," commented Zurovec. He also encouraged student organizations to credit the HUA for funding on any promotional posters in the hopes of convincing more students to pay the fee for future clubs.

Funding remains ongoing, with the November applications remaining the last batch of the semester.

A Harvard Political Review poll in September revealed that the HUA's approval rating was 14.6%, up from 9.6% the prior winter. The HUA is optimistic that the club funding process will only improve in future semesters. "I'm hoping that our continued and ongoing efforts to refine finance in our student government will help build this trust back up again," Zurovec said.

Disclosure: I am the treasurer for HUGG (Harvard Undergraduate Gaming Club), and was thus involved in the club funding process and participated in a funding interview meeting.

Ryan Golemme '23 (ryangolemme@college.harvard.edu), who knows to pick a cheaper pizza place next time, writes news for the Independent.

HIDDEN HORRORS

Exploring the history and Halloween features at Harvard Square's Brattle Theater

by Amiy Tiwari '26

Along a small alleyway on Brattle Street, a tiny glass box office and a red awning reading *CINEMA* cue passersby into a hidden wonder of Harvard Square. Nestled underneath the bustling restaurant Alden & Harlow, The Brattle Theater is a gem that is easy to miss—until, however, one notices movie posters for its latest feature adorning the exterior walls. This month, a large skull on the poster for *Evil Dead II* peers at onlookers from outside the theater entrance.

Inside, staff members ushering eager moviegoers into a theater rich with history.

Built in 1890, “The Brattle” is the most accessible venue in Cambridge for Harvard students to watch eccentric movies. While the theater walls feature a couple years’ worth of built-up paint, it is still a striking cozy space with a historic feel, complete with a top-floor balcony that overlooks the rest of the crowd. A stage sits in front of the movie screen where live performances took place before The Brattle shifted to showing movies in 1953.

Unlike a first-run theater that headlines new weekly films, The Brattle is a repertory theater and each week highlights films under a particular theme such as a particular genre, a common idea, or produced by the same director. Each film series is accompanied by an episode of “The Brattle Film Podcast” in which Creative Director Ned Hinkle, Executive Director Ivy Moylan, and Development Manager Alissa discuss film selections.

This November, The Brattle is showing sequels of famous films in its “Sequel-itis: Terrific Twos” series, as well as Noir films through “Noirvember.”

Theater Crew member Ryan Curtin has been working at The Brattle for a year and a half and described the theater’s showings as “the syllabus of a history of film course.” Before working at The Brattle, he was an avid attendee and even attended the last show before the theater’s closure due to Covid-19.

The Brattle’s unique programming attracts all types of visitors. Curtin said, “[we have] diehard regulars that come to pretty much every show,” as well as “people that will drive down from New Hampshire just to see movies.”

Unfortunately, Harvard students have remained largely absent from the ranks of Brattle attendees since its 2021 reopening. Curtin said, “when [Harvard students] do come here, they’re a bit lost. It’s pretty clear they’ve never been here.” Before the pandemic, upperclassmen would direct the younger students towards their favorite niche spots on campus. Many current upperclassmen lost out on key opportunities to connect with local businesses in the Square over the past two years, resulting in a tangible disconnect between Harvard students and the Cambridge community.

Will Kissinger '25, a frequent attendee of The Brattle, is attracted to the theater’s “old school charm.”

“I didn’t think it was initially a movie theater. It is super cool and different,” Kissinger said. “I’ve seen many films there: *Cha Cha Real Smooth*, [where] it was a full house, *Uncut Gems*, *Mad Max*, *Russian Ark*, *Titane*, and many others... Sometimes they will have an amazing week of programming where I feel like I want to go to every movie. It is such a cool and convenient theater that more Harvard students should definitely utilize.”

Every December, The Brattle shows the 1946 Christmas film *A Wonderful Life* with Jimmy Stewart, and on Valentine’s Day, it screens the 1942 dramatic romance movie, *Casablanca*, “an important movie to the history of the theater,” Curtis said. “One of the things that really [historically] popularized The Brattle with Harvard students was playing Humphrey Bogart movies during finals week.”

The Brattle doesn’t have a strict annual lineup for Halloween. Instead, Ned Hinkle chooses different chilling movies each year. This October, the theater is showcasing an otherworldly theme of alien invasions for the days leading up to Halloween, *Strange Invaders*, featuring six alien movies including The Brattle premiere of *Slash/Back*, a 2022 indie horror film by up-and-coming Inuit director Nyla Innuksuk. On Halloween, The Brattle invites viewers to a showing of *Evil Dead II*, a blood-curdling comedy/horror film from 1987.

The Brattle chose to show widely-well-reviewed cult films this Halloween season. For those looking to find the perfect level of fright, here are each of The Brattle’s scary showings ranked by order of ascending terror.

arts | 6



Men in Black (1997)

Two government agents keep close watch over aliens who have taken over human bodies. When an intergalactic war threatens Earth, the agents must work together to stop the aliens and save the world.

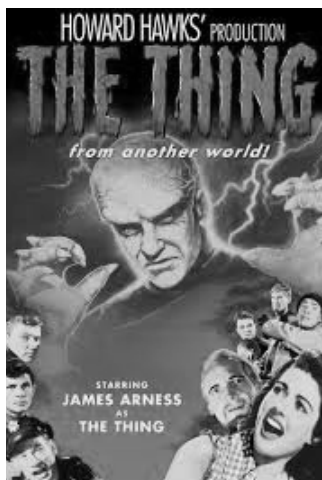
An alien invasion classic, *Men in Black* is The Brattle’s most lighthearted Halloween choice. By no means does this take away from the movie’s appeal—

Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones make for a fantastic duo, and the movie’s trippy ending may leave you with some existential dread.

The Thing from Another World (1951)

An Air Force research team deployed to the North Pole finds a humanoid alien trapped in a block of ice. When the alien accidentally thaws, the men do everything they can to survive.

As the very first “talkie,” or film with spoken words, featuring an alien, *The Thing from Another World* shows the origins of the alien-invasion genre. To modern eyes, it is difficult to be terrified of the film, but it is an essential watch for any viewers interested in the horror genre’s history or wanting to see how early films looked.



The Faculty (1998)

When alien parasites infest the faculty at an Ohio high school, a group of high school students must fight back against the invaders before they all become infected.

A cult horror classic, *The Faculty* is a Sci-Fi version of *The Breakfast Club*: the gang of main characters is filled with every high school stereotype one can think of. It’s a fun watch with plot twists that will keep you

guessing and is more entertaining than scary, despite a few gory moments.

Slash/Back (2022)

A modern horror/comedy inspired by *The Thing from Another World*, *Slash/Back* focuses on a ragtag group of Inuit teenage girls who discover an alien invasion in their arctic town.

A champion of representation, the movie features young, indigenous Canadian actors. *Slash/Back* benefits from modern CGI and thus caters better to 21st-century audiences. As a diamond in the rough with an indie feel, the film is a unique take on themes from *The Thing from Another World* and does have its terrifying moments!

Slither (2006)

A small town is victimized by sentient parasites bent on consuming all forms of life. Infected residents are turned into zombies and monsters, and a married couple becomes the center of the infection.

Another cult horror classic, *Slither* is one of The Brattle’s more gory picks for this season. However, as a comedy/horror film, the bloodshed is offset by moments of hilarity and odd moments of romance. This movie definitely has shock value and would be a fun watch with friends,



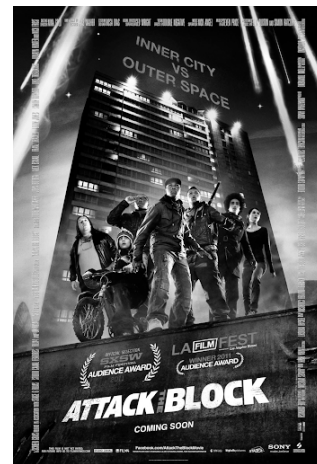
but if one were to watch it alone, they might feel a bit unsettled.

Attack the Block (2011)

When a rough neighborhood in South London is attacked by aliens, a street gang teams up with a nurse-in-training to defend themselves from the predatory invaders.

Attack the Block was a special film at The Brattle this Halloween. Instead of the Digital Signal Processing (DSP) method commonly used in the 21st century, the film was shown on 35mm film, a historically popular film medium that is rapidly becoming obsolete. The Brattle showcases many 35mm films and keeps this method alive.

Attack the Block film perfectly marries action, adventure, horror, and comedy. A fast-paced plot, culminated with a suspenseful and adventure-filled climax, will keep you engaged. The aliens in this film are the scariest out of the bunch. The ending of *Attack the Block*, as well as the fact that it tackles social and ethnic divides, makes it a film that will leave you feeling satisfied.



The Thing (1982)

As a newer adaptation of *The Thing from Another World*, a group of American research scientists in Antarctica are confronted with a shape-shifting beast. Paranoia and a desperate battle ensue as the alien relentlessly targets the group.

Considered one of the best science fiction/horror films of all time, *The Thing* is also a cult classic. The scare factor is much more intense than in the original 1951. It is more psychological than the other alien movies on this list—it brings human nature into question. This film will leave viewers with a sinking feeling and is a great Halloween watch with a retro feel.



Evil Dead II (1987)—

Screening at The Brattle at 9:30 PM on Halloween!

A couple on vacation to a secluded cabin in the woods find a tape that, when played, unleashes a demon. Difficult decisions must be made to survive.

Evil Dead II is a complete change of pace from the movies in the *Strange Invaders* program. While 1980s CGI capabilities might not terrify modern viewers, the feelings of suspense, dread, and terror that permeate this film will. Demon movies are on another level—the presence of an evil, unseen force makes them unsettling in a different way than alien films. This movie is a perfect Halloween pick and will undoubtedly have you



feeling anxious as you walk back to your dorm after The Brattle’s showing on Monday October 31.

Amiya Tiwari '26 (amiyatiwari@college.harvard.edu) has tickets to a Halloween viewing of *Evil Dead II*.

THE SUNDAY SCARIES

From vampires to zombies, what kinds of horrors lurk on campus?

by Kate Kadyan '26 and Gauri Sood '26

As Halloween rolls around, Harvard's most terrifying fiends are not hiding under your bed. Instead, they are the "Sunday Scaries," the anxiety-fueling monsters that rear their heads after the shining euphoria of Saturday night fades away. This October season, the Sunday Scaries wreak havoc on Harvard campus.

It all begins around 2 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, when the Harvard student awakens with a raging headache. After a long, lukewarm shower—the plumbing in Wigglesworth is faulty again—they sense movement behind them. As they turn slowly, heart pounding, they catch a glimpse of an eye peeking out from behind the shower curtain.

What could it be this time? The creature's eye is piercing and calculating, anticipating every action of the student. The enemy is impossible to foil or avoid. It is a many-headed hydra, ready to strike at any moment. Suddenly, the figure unveils himself and unleashes his weapon of destruction: a selfie stick.

"No!" screams the student, strug-

gling to pull up their slipping towel. But it is too late. The footage is already on YouTube.

The Omnipresent Tourist is only the first "scary" that students risk meeting on a Sunday (or any day, for that matter).

If they muster the energy to enter a library, they risk undergoing a strange and frightening transformation. In the dark corners of Lamont, the **Lamonsters** are born. These new creatures are hunch-backed, nocturnal, brown-teethed students, begging for another Brain Break to fuel their substandard coffee addiction.

At Harvard, it isn't the bright light of the moon that triggers a metamorphosis; rather it is the dim lighting of Cabot basement, where professors surreptitiously attempt to induce vampirism in their students. Cobwebs of math equations cover the walls. **Cabot Vampires** become as pale as their p-set pages, silent study cubes entrapping them in glass aquarium confines where they spend their nights. If a student manages to escape, they will have to

wait until morning for sunlight and food. Let's hope that's enough to reverse the vampiric transition.

If there's one Harvard horror that Lamons and Cabot Vampires share, it's **The Phantom of the P-set**, which traps unwitting students in a dark, gloomy lair of STEM.

Students have tried to evade this ever-present Phantom using a variety of tactics. "Last Sunday, my teacher emailed me and said I submitted the wrong p-set. I did indeed purposefully submit the wrong p-set; I needed more time for my real one," said Aditi Kona '26, a Cabot Vampire.

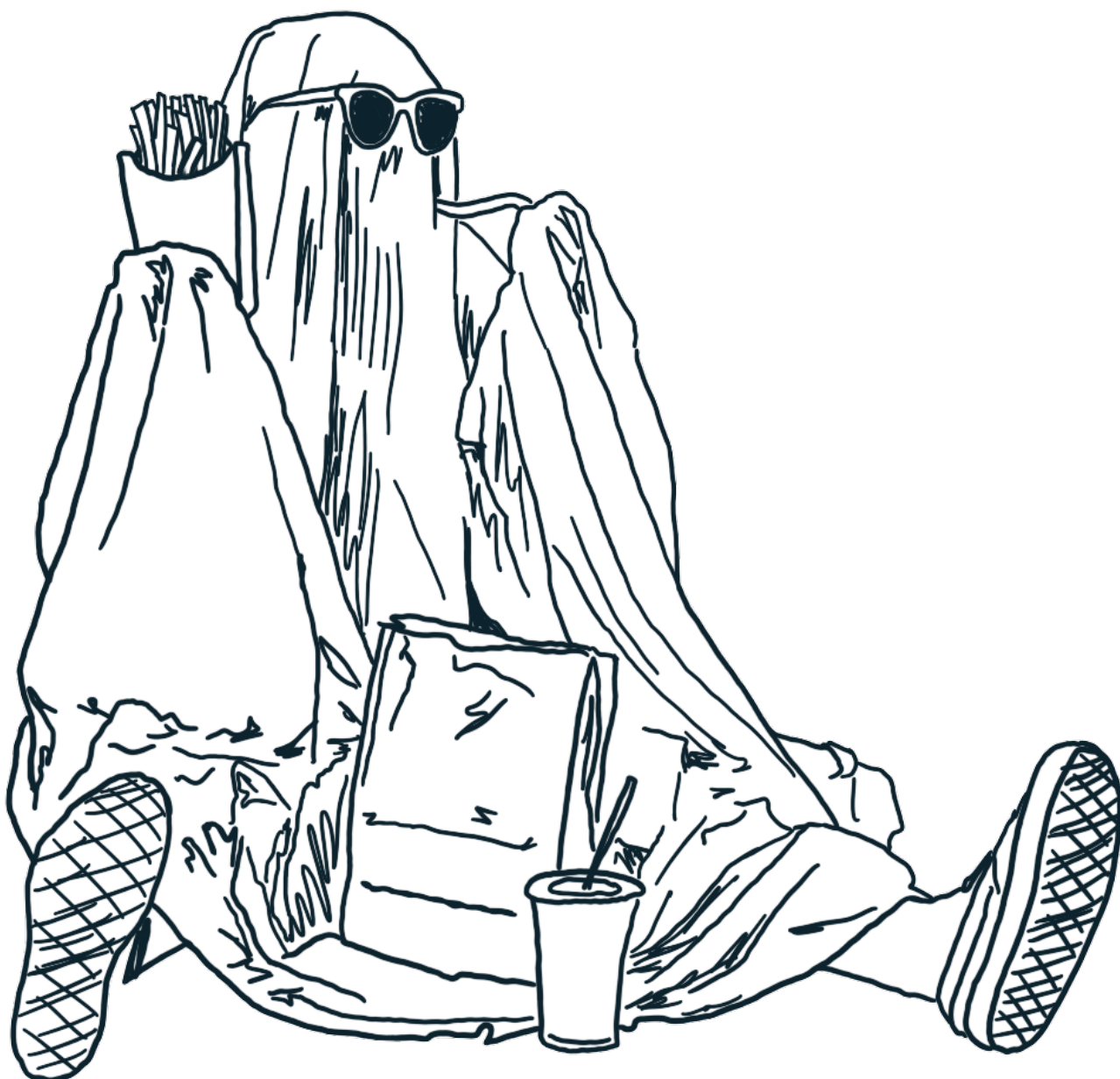
Sometimes, however, there is no eluding this horror. "It was a three-problem p-set. There were no parts to the question, but somehow each problem still took me an hour. It would be impossible to do myself without the Math Question Center," explained Oscar Bocelli '26, a local Lamons.

The **HWCD (the Harvard College Walking Dead, for the uninitiated)** also remain a looming Sunday Scary threat. These students appear just like everyone else—although a bit peppier and preppier—but have been so drained of all hopes and aspirations that only one thing remains: an unquenching thirst for Goldman Sachs. These creatures entrap you by generating such a fervor of FOMO and anxiety around your own professional future, that you seemingly voluntarily agree to join them. There's only one dark path ahead: a consulting club.

This Halloween weekend, to ward off the Sunday Scaries skulking in your classrooms, dorms, and most dangerously your brain, make sure to take care of yourself. Remain hydrated, stay away from the libraries, and keep your eyes open for any terror the Sunday Scaries could bring.

Kate Kadyan '26 (katekadyan@college.harvard.edu) and Gauri Sood '26 (gaurisood@college.harvard.edu) are Cabot Vampires by choice.

Graphic by Seattle Hickey '25



HARVARD HAUNTS

Apply and attend Harvard at your own risk
by Lauren Hyomin Kim '25

Harvard students usually fear stolen laundry, getting quadded, coffee shortages in the dining hall, fire alarm tests in the dead of night, and the freshman flu. . If these are the only types of horrors you have experienced at Harvard, consider yourself lucky because campus is a much spookier place than most people think.

Harvard may be one of the most haunted places in greater Boston. With Halloween just around the corner, it is about time some of Harvard's untold tales of horror are brought to light, because knowledge of which buildings and Houses to avoid venturing alone in at night might be what saves you. Here are a couple of campus ghost stories (based on true events) to remind students that things like midterms and clubs should be the least of their concerns this October.

The Haunting of Amy Lowell

You jolt awake. It's 3 AM, the bedroom is chilly, and your roommate is sound asleep. There's no clear indication of what disturbed your sleep. All you know is that you are now wide-awake and unable to slip back into the sweet soporific state. Restless, you get out of bed and grab your coat. You decide that a night-time stroll might be what you need to get yourself tired and ready to sleep again.

You descend three flights of stairs in a flurry and stumble out the door of your entryway. Outside, you enjoy the cool, crisp October air. You hear the door to your entryway close behind you with a resounding click, and the silence of the courtyard begins to echo in the empty air.

The chilliness of the night drives you into the warmth of the Lowell dining hall. The oblong tables seem to go on forever from where you are standing. The light from the kitchen casts a faint glow on the many portraits that decorate the flaxen-colored walls. The faces of former President Abbott Lawrence Lowell, his wife, his brother Percival Lowell, and his sister Amy Lowell stare back at you. As you saunter down the center aisle, all four sets of eyes follow you in unison .

You hear the faintest whisper. "Beloved, do you see those orange lilies?" It is the voice of a woman, gravelly. You whirl around. No one. Just you, the lemon-yellow walls, the portraits, and rows upon rows of empty chairs and tables. You catch the faint whiff of cigar smoke.

Someone is in the dining hall with you—watching, waiting.

How Long Have You Been a Freshman?

It's approaching 1 AM when your roommate finally walks in the door. Judging from her wearied expression and the backpack slung across her shoulders, she is coming home from a late night at the library. As you begin to ask her how her studying is going, she interrupts you to ask whether you know a guy that lives on the floor below.

"What's his name?"

"Hol," she says.

"I don't know him. Why?"

"I left my ID in our room, so I couldn't get back into our dorm. I was going to text you to see if you were awake, but

then through the window I see someone pacing up and down the hall of the first floor."

She tries to take a deep breath to calm herself, but her words come out shaky.

"I knock on the door to get the man's attention, and it works. This guy comes to the front door to let you in. You say thank you and are starting to head up the stairs to our room, but notice he's pacing again. You ask him whether he needs you to call Securitas, but he gives you a confused look. You ask him what his room number is, and he says he doesn't remember, which is odd because it's already been two months since students have moved in. You ask him who his roommates are, and he says he doesn't have any. Then you ask him how long he's been waiting in the hallway, and he says since 1914.

You thought he was joking, but then he pulls out his Harvard ID: a battered, yellowing card, and right next to his name, 'Holbrook Smith,' is, 'Class of 1919.'

Widener Willies

Goddamn it. You check the time on your laptop: 2:33 AM. You kick yourself for thinking you could pull off a power nap at your desk after sleeping

only two hours the night before. It's your first time seeing Widener Library after closing. The moonlight spilling from the large windows and onto the wooden floors.

You stand up from your chair, confused why the guards didn't kick you out. You chalk it up to pity. You roam through aisles and aisles of books, leaf through their pages, and run your fingers across the oaken wood of their shelves. You have Widener all to yourself with no one to stop you. You pause in front of the portrait of Harry Elkins Widener, the renowned businessman and bibliophile whom the library was named after. You recall hearing that he died during the sinking of the Titanic and that his mother, Eleanor, built the library in his honor. Gazing into his portrait, you get the sense that Widener continues to live within the frame—that he might just shift his arm or blink at any second. You are so entranced by the realism of the portrait that you don't hear the footsteps nor the mournful whimpers of a woman coming to see who has disturbed the peace of her son's shrine.

Lauren Hyomin Kim '25 (lauren_kim@college.harvard.edu) is looking for horror movie recommendations.

Graphic by Annelise Fisher '26



EAT MORE CANDY

Trash your case of Red Bull and eat chocolate instead

by Sachi Laumas '26

Harvard students likely do not reach for a Snickers in times of stress, opting instead for a tried-and-true cup of joe. But should they? Small amounts of chocolate and sugar are proven to reduce perceived stress levels by reducing the production of the hormone glucocorticoid. Small doses of sugar present a viable alternative to consuming caffeine, but not one that Harvard students presently consider.

When asked to compare students' attitudes toward caffeine at her high school and here at Harvard, Gabi Poniz '26 said, "more people at Harvard drink energy drinks," as opposed to the lattes and less caffeinated drinks many at her high school drank. Harvard students are utilitarian coffee consumers: they prioritize caffeine content and efficiency over taste.

I advocate for the replacement of Red Bull with a mini Snickers bar. Whereas caffeine accelerates heart rate and often leads to increased productivity, it also increases stress and anxiety. At high doses, caffeine may do more harm than good when it comes to Harvard students' mental well-being and stress levels.

Poniz herself drinks one to two Celsius energy drinks a day. "Psychologically, it makes me think that I have a substance in my body that can keep me awake. I get a little more energized in terms of a placebo, but it's not effective at reducing stress." Similarly, Zuzanna Kowalski '26 said: "I'm under the impression that if I get coffee, I'm going to be productive." But she went on to say "I do end up getting pretty anxious when I drink a lot" of caffeine. The Placebo effect seems enticing enough to drive Harvard students to drink more caffeine, despite the clear adverse effects on stress and anxiety levels.

Caffeine seems physically effective for keeping students awake and productive, but at the cost of stress and sometimes even their mental well-being. Though most Harvard students appear to rely on caffeine to keep them awake, not all do. When asked about her caffeine intake, Hayden McJunkin '26 said "I drink absolutely nothing," though she seems to be the exception instead of the rule. She is one of the only students she knows who does not drink caffeine.

Sugar—a suitable alternative—grants students an extra burst of productivity without negative cardiovascular effects and increased stress levels. Chocolate contains low doses of caffeine, but supplements the caffeine with sugar, which boosts brain function temporarily and can also increase productivity. Chocolate has also been found to reduce perceived stress levels in medical students. Small doses of sugar could be the answer to curbing the consumption of other energy drinks that contain unknown ingredients and chemicals. But Harvard students seem skeptical about the merits of sugar as a caffeine alternative.

Students' lack of interest in candy as an alternative is much more apparent during the month of October, as Halloween approaches quickly. There is little embrace among the student body of using Halloween as an excuse to buy and eat more candy. "People here are wary about what they eat..they have this preconceived notion that sugar is bad," said Poniz.

A renewed embrace of sugar as a means of boosting energy and productivity in the short term could mean less stressed Harvard students. As Halloween rolls around this year, it could also mean more spirit around campus regarding the holiday. Candy often connects students and children to the Halloween spirit. It offers us back the nostalgia of trick-or-treating as kids and the strong childhood memories associated with it.

"I personally think that HUDS should also have a trick or treat bowl at the end," proposed Poniz. I would agree. A new embrace of the Halloween spirit through candy among the Harvard student body could also mean the discovery of a new, less stress-inducing way to study: one that replaces a case of Red Bull with a bag of Kit Kats.

Sachi Laumas '26 (slaumas@college.harvard.edu) plowed through a bag of mini Snickers to write this article.

Graphic by El Richards '26



HOW TO LOOK HOT THIS HALLOWEEN

Tips and tricks to help you shop your closet

by Alexandra Dorofeev '25

The clock is counting down to your first Halloween party of the season, and you haven't decided what to wear? We understand the need to impress, and we are here to help. The end of October is the only time of the year when you are given the opportunity to be someone you are not—so why not be hot!

1. Ambiguity is key.

Make sure your costume of choice is not easily identifiable, so that people must ask what you are. This is a great conversation starter at any party. Your love interest will thank you for making yourself so approachable down the line.

2. It's all in the name.

When your friends ask what you will be dressing up as this Halloween, it is important to have a name at the ready. Just add "sexy" in front of whatever it is you plan on being: "sexy doctor," "sexy cat," "sexy nun," the list goes on. While ambiguity is key, you should leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to your motives this Halloween. Just how sexy of a mouse will you be at the upcoming costume party? They will have to wait and see for themselves.

3. Always have a lollipop with you.

This tidbit of advice will complement any look and can boost your confidence expo-

nentially if you're trying to flirt. Picture this: you're standing on the side of the dance floor. You look to your left and see a dashing Napoleon Dynamite. If only you knew how to step in... here is where your lollipop will serve you. Catch their eye, take a nice long lick, and you'll have them hooked. All that's left for you to do is to beckon them over (bonus points if you're wearing paws or claws).

4. Incorporate animal ears.

When asked what you are, a simple pair of ears gives you the opportunity to quote one of the most iconic movies of all time: "I'm a mouse, duh..." (Mean Girls, circa 2004).

5. Your costume should look DIY, but not too DIY.

Your costume should not look like your mom made it, but it also shouldn't look like you grabbed it off the rack at Party City. Throw together a few well-picked items, and go for the classic, "I-just-threw-this-thing-together-with-whatever-I-could-find-in-my-closet" type of look. This will imply that you will not just be looking sexy on Halloween, but rather, all year round. It also shows that you are spontaneous. And that's hot.

6. But at the end of the day, do not forget to be classy.

If there's one cardinal rule of Halloween, it's to always be tasteful. Sometimes it's sexier to leave things up to the imagination. "Modest is hottest" ...not.

Alexandra Dorofeev '25 (alexandradorofeev@college.harvard.edu) is dying to have a hot Halloween.

Graphic by Seattle Hickey '25



HARVARD'S GORIEST SIGHTS

The top ten scariest places on campus

by Samantha Mosconi '25

If you've ever taken a Harvard tour, you know the storied highlights: Lovers' Gate, the Statue of Three Lies, even El Jefe's Taqueria. But straw-hatted tour guides are not trained to tell you about the places to avoid. In honor of Halloween season, the *Independent* is here with the scariest, spookiest, most haunted places on Harvard's campus. Read on if you dare.

10. Lamont Basement

Forget the musty smell of the Lamont basement, the flickering yellow lighting, or the shapeless sleeping bags clustered around the basement floor. Venture into Lamont, and you won't even be able to find a place to sit without the habitual stares of people who haven't muttered a word in hours. Lamont is home to the people who wish they had the opportunity to be "studying" in Widener's Stacks.

9. Pusey Tunnels Door

Venture down the Pusey steps to the electrical room, and you'll find a looming, cobwebbed door that appears to not have been opened in years. It begs the question: who is locked in there controlling Harvard's electricity?

8. Mather House

The Concrete Jungle by day—but at night, the rodents come out to play. If you're scared, sleep it off, but if you're unlucky like me, you might wake up from a deep slumber to find cockroaches climbing on your boyfriend's wall.

Forum | 10 **7. Dewolfe 20**

Dewolfe 20 sounds like magic: your own kitchen, common room, and bathroom, all as a sophomore? But once you win the lottery, you will have to confront the furry little roommates that you didn't expect you'd have in your bedroom when you sleep and in your commo room when you wake up. But you can all grow to be a family. Leave sweet little treats for them, like rat poison. The more the merrier in your blocking group.

6. Math Question Center

When I go to MQC, the real horror I encounter is the crankiest, moodiest version of myself. It reminds me of one of my childhood traumas: sitting at the kitchen table crying while my Dad tried to teach me basic math. TFs will tell you "you need to figure it out on your own" while you pull your hair out in tears. No one shall go here unless they are truly desperate.

5. Annenberg

Like the Harry Potter Dining Hall, Annenberg has potions of its own. Students are forced to distinguish what is mold and what is uncooked food all by their lonesome. If the dark interior isn't frightening enough, Annenberg leaves students with grumbling and unsettled tummies guaranteed.

4. Pinocchio's

It might be a hot take, but after a long night shoving for a breath of air in Tasty Basement, Pinocchio's isn't any great respite. The long lines are frightening as distressed Harvard students

zigzag out the door. In this state of extreme hunger, people fight to get the last slice of tomato basil pizza.

3. The Malkin Athletic Center

The basement weight room at the MAC is by far one of the spookiest places a student could go on their own. The smell of musk and sweat only intensifies the deeper you plunge into the building. If you dare to go venture to the basement, beware.

2. Lamont Bathrooms

Not only does the radiating stench of human flesh fill the air of Lamont's Bathroom but is also known to be a place for people to get "freaky." Be wary of how long you spend in these bathrooms. A minute or two is advised.

1. Hicks House

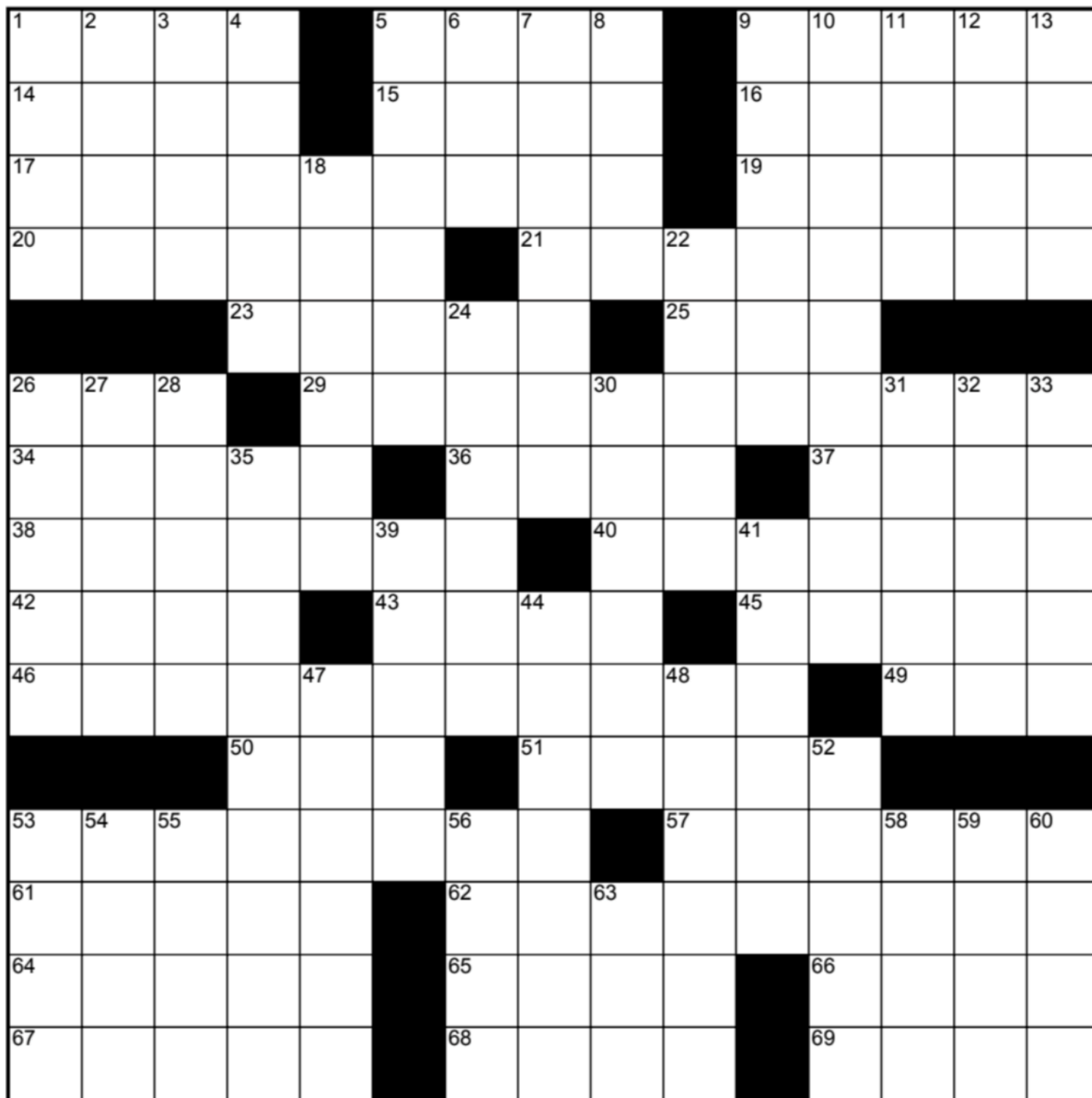
The pride of Kirkland residence, Hicks House Library is not all it is made out to be. The House despises anyone over 6 feet, punishing them with low ceilings. If you sit there too long, you will start to hear voices echoing from the third floor. Whether they are ghosts or people, the windy setup of Hicks House makes it impossible to easily find your way out. Remember, if a Kirkland resident insists you enter Hicks House, they might not be your best friend after all.

Samantha Mosconi '25 (smosconi@college.harvard.edu) is a former Lamonster.

Graphic by Seattle Hickey '25

OUTERWEAR

by Peter Laskin '23



- 24 German songs
- 26 “___ You Were Trouble” (Swift song)
- 27 Aotearoa natives
- 28 Occupied, as a desk
- 30 Big city of Basque Country
- 31 “Golden” tune
- 32 Brandish
- 33 Homes for
- 35 “See if I care!”
- 39 Fredricksen’s voice in “Up”
- 41 Theater guides
- 44 Monarch’s placeholder
- 47 Actress Staunton
- 48 Hot drinks for the caffeine-averse
- 52 Abominable snowmen
- 53 iPhone predecessors
- 54 Seat in Parliament?
- 55 “Broccoli” that’s actually a different species from broccoli
- 56 Domestic surveillance brand
- 58 Trashy location
- 59 “The Wire” character portrayed by Michael K. Williams
- 60 Modifier for many a Halloween costume that maybe shouldn’t be
- 63 GoPro, for short

ACROSS

- 1 Amorphous B-movie monster
- 5 Boots whose name may derive from “ugly”
- 9 Vikings’ fans, maybe
- 14 Actress Chaplin
- 15 Shape for some diamonds
- 16 Sonia and Ketanji’s colleague
- 17 *TV fill-in
- 19 67-Across, in 30-Down
- 20 Canonized pope dubbed “the great”
- 21 Italian mathematician who worked with Euler
- 23 Actress Reese
- 25 ___ publica
- 26 Inter-house competitions, for short
- 29 *Responded to cries of “that’s too high,” maybe
- 34 Holy object in Islam
- 36 Mahabharata or Beowulf

DOWN

- 37 Tennis champ Nastase
- 38 Reporter’s reference, maybe
- 40 Spring break destination?
- 42 Part of QED
- 43 Croat’s neighbor
- 45 Avocet’s cousin
- 46 *Easily retrieved
- 49 39-Down and others
- 50 Protestant denom. founded by Richard Allen
- 51 Like freshly-poured asphalt
- 53 Seating area on the ground floor of an auditorium
- 57 Statements of belief
- 61 Accent feature that rhymes with “y’all”
- 62 Dressed for Halloween, like the starred clues
- 64 Equally terrible
- 65 Women’s Frozen Four org.

DOWN

- 1 Cranberry
- 2 Oaf
- 3 Turow memoir about Harvard Law School
- 4 “The opposite of cringe,” per Urban Dictionary
- 5 Direction for Sisyphus
- 6 Prefix with -grapher or -guessr
- 7 Old streetlight
- 8 Miss, in Madrid
- 9 Closed in on
- 10 Antediluvian
- 11 Bridle attachment
- 12 Lock lips, in Leeds
- 13 Lack of effort
- 18 Construction site boot requirement
- 22 Roman leader?

Peter Laskin '23

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