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# THE HARVARD STUDENT THAT COULD

## Historical success stories of students who left Harvard

BY CLARA CORCORAN '25

Considering the amount of work required for students to enter the Harvard bubble, those who step away from the College before graduation are often regarded with a sort of mystified confusion. However, the stories of success remind us that sometimes stepping away from one world is the only way to excel in another. Examining surprising and lesser-known Harvard dropouts, it's clear that creativity and innovative thinking are hardly symptomatic of a college education.

### R. Buckminster Fuller Class of 1917

The name "Buckminster" has developed into Harvard slang for getting Peet's coffee from the cafe in the LISE building that bears his name. R. Buckminster Fuller was an American architect, philosopher, and writer best-known for his larger-than-life spherical creations and ecological focus in his artwork.

Born in 1895 in Milton, Massachusetts, Fuller harbored an early love for the outdoors and invention, a passion curated through summers spent outside on Bear Island in Maine. Fuller left Harvard when he was only a freshman, according to the Buckminster Fuller Institute, after "excessively socializing and missing his midterms exams." The BFI continues by stating that despite returning to Harvard again in 1915, he was "again dismissed."

Following his expulsion(s), Fuller served in the Navy from 1917-19 and was even "nominated to receive officer training at the U.S. Naval Academy" for his invention of a winch attached to rescue boats that could remove crashed planes submerged in water.

Fuller focused extensively on the fundamental geometries of the objects around him, such as in cars and planes and repeatedly played with the motif of a spherical, net-like structure, especially apparent in his "Geodesic Dome." The piece is not only an innovative, large-scale representation of his style, but a testament to the eye through which he saw the world.

Today, The Fuller Institute, an "international network of Fuller-inspired innovators," memorializes not only Fuller's innovative architectural style and philosophical efforts, but the architect's "pursuit to make the world work for 100% of humanity."



### Bonnie Raitt Class of 1972

Blues singer and social justice and human rights activist Bonnie Raitt entered Harvard's Radcliffe College in 1967 to pursue a degree in social relations and African relations. As

entered Radcliffe compelled by the political and musical spheres in Cambridge during the end of the 60s, "not to mention the four to one ratio of guys to women—which was not lost on me," she said. A sentiment further supported by Business Insider's assertion that Raitt "couldn't wait to get back to where there were folkies and the antiwar and civil rights movements."

During her time at Harvard, Raitt lived in Cabot's Bertram Hall and frequently attended Harvard Square's Club 47 to engage in the musical scene. In an interview conducted with Oprah Magazine, Raitt stated, "I entered Harvard as a freshman, confident—in the way that only 17-year-olds are—that I could change the world... I wanted to help undo the damage that Western colonialism had done to native cultures around the world. Cambridge was a hotbed of this kind of thinking, and I was thrilled."

Raitt grew up in a Quaker household playing guitar as a hobby, something she never imagined legitimizing into anything greater than a pass-time, according to Business Insider. Yet, after connecting with Dick Waterman following his request to interview her for WHRB, Harvard's radio network, this quickly changed. Waterman was a prominent figure in the blues revival movement based out of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Raitt and Waterman soon became good friends, despite more than a forty year age gap. When Dick and a group of musicians left Cambridge to pursue music, Business Insider reports, Raitt felt she had to follow them.

She took what was supposed to be a semester off in 1970 to go to Philadelphia and help out on the Rolling Stones tour before receiving an offer to sign with Warner Brothers, after which she officially dropped out of Harvard. Shortly after signing, Raitt released her first album "Bonnie Raitt," and has since released 18 more.

Raitt has won a total of ten Grammy awards, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2000. She holds number fifty on The Rolling Stone's "100 Greatest Singers Of All Time." Indeed, Raitt told *The Oprah Magazine* that her choice to pursue music and step away from Harvard was "a big choice, a deciding moment, but ultimately either path brings surprises and magic."

### Bom Kim '00

Bom Kim did in-fact receive his Bachelor of Arts and Science from Harvard College in 2000 but dropped out of Harvard Business School after only six months as a graduate student there. He is now the CEO of Coupang, a South Korean e-commerce platform with a net worth of a staggering \$35.07 billion, which is often considered the Amazon of South Korea.

In an interview conducted with CNBC's *Make it*, Kim commented that "I had a belief when I was in grad school that I had a very short window to really make something that had an impact." Kim continues by stating that he noticed a sort of "growing technology opportunity" that he felt compelled to act on and cites this sentiment as a primary force toward his founding of Coupang in 2010.

Kim's inclination toward business and media was apparent even in his early days at Harvard where he founded the student magazine "the Current", and even raised a whopping \$4 million in revenue for Harvard's now begone alumni magazine the "02138."



### Elisabeth Shue '00

*Piranha*, *Karate Kid*, and *Leaving Las Vegas* actress Elisabeth Shue began her career in film as a teenager and gained a reputation for her ads for Burger King and Hellman's mayonnaise as a young adult. Shue dropped out of Harvard during her senior year to pursue acting full time. After originally planning a concentration in government in 1985, Shue returned to Harvard in 1997 to receive a degree in political science.

Shue exited Harvard because her growing popularity in film brought her a "steady stream of roles that ensured her place on Hollywood's A-list," *The Crimson* reported. The University Herald states that, "It was in 1984 however that she made her film debut. She starred in 'The Karate Kid.' Her movie exposure prompted her to make a career decision."

Since her time at Harvard, not only has Shue made appearances in numerous, high-grossing films from the likes of Woody Allen John G. Avildsen, but has been nominated for a Golden Globe, Award, BAFTA Award, and even an Academy Award.

### Robert Frost Class of 1901

Maybe when Robert Frost wrote, "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by," the poet was referencing to his departure from Harvard College in 1898. Originally a San Francisco native, Frost moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1884 following the death of his mother.

In reflection, Frost stated that Harvard "could not make a student of me here, but they gave it their best." Frost left the College in 1898, primarily due to illness, but also to pursue a life as a father and as a poet.

Frost remains a beloved and revered community member and was cited by former Harvard president James Bryant Conant as "the poet of New England". He received an honorary doctorate degree from Harvard College in 1937 and his four Pulitzer Prizes in poetry stand as a reminder of his poetic contribution at large.

These individuals represent a fundamental truth about the Harvard student: no two are the same. Yet no matter what path they follow, they continue to showcase the principle of hard work at the core of Harvard's mission. If you're considering dropping out, keep in mind that you're in good company.

**Clara Corcoran '25 (claracorcoran@college.harvard.edu) recommends a trip to Buckminster's Cafe and a read of Frost's "Acquainted with the Night."**

**Images from Architectural Digest, Movie-Maker, and GoCrimson.**

# TEMPORARY DROPOUTS

**International travel and pre-professional internships give gap year students the advantage of unconventional learning before college**

**BY GAURI SOOD '26**

Harvard College encourages all students to take a gap year. From traveling across the country to working pre-professionally, COVID-19 drove students to take time off and explore through different environments. A year beyond academic restrictions gives gap year students more maturity and clarity towards how to maximize their undergraduate experience.



*Chris Kim '26*

Chris Kim '26 explained his reasoning behind taking a gap year. "I would have been seventeen years old coming to college," said Kim. "I wouldn't have the same level of personal discipline with getting work done or handling myself." Kim believes the daunting aspect of a gap year creates the same adrenalin as the first few weeks of college. "Everyone has a safety net back home. When you take that away, that's when you really realize what you can do by yourself."

Though COVID protocols were strict and travel was partly shut down, Kim was still able to partake in a 90-day excursion throughout Asia, driven by a dream to learn Mandarin and connect with his culture. He completed community service with the local native population and studied oceanography, often through scuba diving.

Like Kim, many gap year students worked pre-professional internships to help direct their academic path at Harvard. Lexi Monk '26 regrets not taking a gap year. "Being premed and having a minimum of eight years of school ahead of me really makes me wish I had taken some time off," said Monk. "I wish I had explored this path of unconventional learning before throwing myself into college."

After his semester abroad, Kim transitioned to two pre-professional opportunities: working as a dermatologist assistant in New York City and later interning at a quantitative fund in Florida.

He delved into two differing but possible career interests—an opportunity that many undecided Harvard concentrators would find useful. "The gap year really allows you to branch out, especially if you are not sure about what you want to do. At the very least, you figure out what you don't want to do," said Kim.

Like Kim, Matthew Thompson '26 segmented his gap year between a pre-professional internship and international travel. He began as an intern for New York congressman Gregory Meeks on Capitol Hill. For Thompson, the most important part of this experience was exploring the Hill, sitting in on intense briefings, and making connections.

For the three months following his internship, Thompson left his phone at home for a Senegal travel abroad program through Where There Be Dragons, a group travel abroad program. The trip consisted of three different home-stays with families that became genuine connections for Thompson, so much so that he still remains in contact with them. "I feel like I have three homes in Senegal. It's a crazily hospitable place, you just show up and people have food for you," he said.

Thompson hoped to solidify an occupational interest field, but rather learned what he didn't want to do. "That isn't a bad thing," said Thompson. "I'm really glad I took on the experience, and I would recommend it for everyone."



*Matthew Thompson '26*

Unlike Kim and Thompson, Grace Bida '26 always knew she wanted to take this time off before college. "Instead of memorizing facts and being confined in a space, I always wanted to learn experientially," she said. "Why do I want to learn? Why did I want to explore different subjects? I wanted to explore my own



*Grace Bida '26*

internal compass."

Grace Bida '26 began her gap year with roughly no planning except clarity in knowing that she wanted to work with kids. After extensive research, support from her father, and a contact from the Harvard Gap Year Society, she came across the opportunity to be an au pair for four families in France, Austria, Scotland, and Italy. Working as an au pair only fueled her budding interests in sociology and early childhood education, and more specifically, reshaping learning opportunities for students both inside and outside of the classroom.

Bida appreciates gaining a footing by yourself before entering college. "Sometimes traveling by myself was incredibly stressful, but in the end, it was really amazing because I could choose what I wanted to do at any given moment, she said, "Always take a minute to examine what is truly the right path for you."

Some salient moments will always stick with the three students. Kim raved about the gleaming bioluminescence when looking down into the ocean and up toward the glittering sky of stars above; two things that we never see on campus. Thompson recalls coming home in the evenings and breaking fast with his home-stay families when the sun went down during the month of Ramadan. Bida reminisced about her first home-stay in a beautiful farm in the alps of Austria during November, coincidentally the same time as Taylor Swift's release of Red, the re-recording. "As the first snowfall began, I put on my headphones and listened to 'All Too Well' while the snow 'glistered as it fell,'" she said.

**Gauri Sood '26 (gaurisood@college.harvard.edu) wishes that she dropped out of Harvard for a year.**

# STUDENT STARTUPS

**Three Harvard students and their experience starting businesses during college**

**BY SAMANTHA MOSCONI '26**

Harvard students are often characterized by their potential to change the world. World leaders, innovators, business leaders, and countless other prominent figures have all graduated from Harvard, paving the way for future generations of notable individuals to come. There are numerous examples throughout history of Harvard students who have famously conceived world-changing companies from their own dorm rooms, and many continue, or attempt to do so, today. Lindsay Reed '23, Fez Zafar '24, and Noah Evers '23 are just three examples of Harvard students that have experienced the duality of working as a full-time student and entrepreneur, attempting to invent something that will change the status quo.

Lindsay Reed '23 is the co-founder and current CEO of KAWAMA, a tequila-soda company focused on whole food ingredients that people, from her own words, “could feel good about putting in your body.”

**DRINK**  
**KAWAMA**  
**TEQUILA & SODA**



“There are so many malt or vodka-based drinks that are riddled with fake sugars and artificial flavors, and I wanted to make a simple, real drink,” Reed noted. “KAWAMA is made with real blanco tequila, real fruit juices, no sugar, lighter carbonation, 4.5% ABV and only 99 calories. Additionally, malt and artificial seltzers drink horribly at room temperature, and we set out on a mission to create a canned cocktail that no matter if you drink it ice cold from the cooler or at a balmy 70 degrees from the store shelf, KAWAMA drinks smoothly because of how simple the recipe is.”

She launched the company in August 2021 exclusively in Massachusetts. Since then, it has expanded to New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Maine.

“One of the most difficult parts of growing the business has been managing how fast we have expanded with such a small team, but we have been working on growing a team to better cover all our markets. I brought on my older brother, Kersey Reed, a St. Lawrence lacrosse graduate, and he quit his job in finance to also take on KAWAMA full time,” she continued. “We have KAWAMA-specific sales reps in NH/NJ/NY, and we recently hired a Chief Marketing Officer, Taylor Kearns, who has years of experience working for and launching marketing campaigns for Diageo brands.”

Noah Evers '23 is a co-founder of the recently sold company Flow, which “optimizes coffee to help

people think better.” Evers claimed he was always intrigued by the cognitive mind as he started conducting cognitive science research at the age of 13.

Evers' startup drink, like Reed's, is set to revamp an already popular drink, yet he focused on coffee. “When I got to Harvard, I really struggled. I didn't have the study skills that many other kids had learned in high school,” Evers noted. “I felt my peers were brilliant, and the teachers expected so much from me. I just kept thinking, ‘If only I could think better...’ And then it hit me that I had the background to find a solution to my problem. Maybe I could think better? Maybe we all could think better?”

Like Reed, Evers started Flow whilst enrolled at Harvard, taking advantage of the nation-wide Covid hiatus to brainstorm recipes from his dorm room. He opted to take a year off where he “brought Catherine Beddingfield '23 on as my cofounder. We both dropped out of school, started raising money, teamed up with Billie Thein, a beverage industry veteran, as our third cofounder, and we're off to the races” Evers recalled.

Fez Zafar '24 is the current head of business development and marketing at Zesti, a company created by a group of students who were inspired by Datamatch. The startup is currently run by Leon Chen '24, the CEO and tech lead, Fianko Buckle '23, the software engineer, Alina Dong '23, the COO, and Zafar '24, the head of business development and marketing.

“Like the popular campus service [Datamatch],” Zafar noted, “our app matched students for the purpose of love or friendship, was only open to Harvard undergraduates, and allowed students to access appealing discounts in Harvard Square by meeting in person.”

He explained that the process of launching Zesti started in spring of 2021, which mainly consisted of finding ways to perfect the software development. A year later, the team managed to “perform the iterative process of user testing in the spring of 2022.” Zafar explained that the app required dozens of interviews to be administered in order to determine which features the app would exhibit. The team created “comedic videos” for marketing purposes, and in April of 2022, Zesti launched a pilot on the Apple Store.

“We also built upon Datamatch's efforts by adding an additional function for users to create a group profile and match with other groups. The restaurants we acquired as partners were El Jefe's, Maharaja, Grendel's, Mr. Bartley's, and Amorino. Just by setting up an account, users could get free chips and guacamole at Jefe's.”

In order to focus on both her academics and growing her business, Lindsay Reed, with KAWAMA, was forced to decide between her sport and her startup. She ultimately quit the Varsity Ice Hockey Team during her senior year at Harvard. “It's common for



*Noah Evers '23*



*Fez Zafar '24*

student athletes to be asked how they balance sports with academics”, Reed replied, dubbing KAWAMA as her new “sport” that takes up all of her time.

“I wish I could spend 24 hours a day building KAWAMA, so the hardest part is striking the balance between business and school, as I pride myself in doing well academically,” she continued.

Evers explained his experience with Flow, which sprouted from an idea he had on a family visit in 2019. “I realized, on a long drive through the countryside, that other people might want the Flow coffee that I had created. I had no idea how to start a company, so I wrote out my thoughts. Between August 2019 and March 2020, when Harvard sent all the students home, I wrote up a 50-page business plan while in school, including extensive scientific research and a product development roadmap. When Harvard sent us home, much to my mother's chagrin, I turned part of our kitchen into a mini-lab, where I kept a detailed notebook and ran my experiments.”

Since then, Flow has been acquired and the products will be on the market soon.

“In five years, I hope everyone will be drinking Flow,” Evers concluded.

When asked where Lindsay sees KAWAMA five years in the future, Lindsay says, “I believe KAWAMA will be the household tequila soda name across the nation and beyond. The RTD (Ready to Drink) category is exploding in popularity, and we know we have the tools, branding, taste, and competitive spirit to come out on top.”

KAWAMA is currently available in seven states and is expanding to other states across the nation, including Bermuda.

Although Zafar explains he is no longer working on Zesti, he stated that his future self will “remain very passionate about entrepreneurship, and hope to one day launch another venture. This is an effort that will require a dedication to learning about new industries and technologies, identifying real problems, and ideating prospective solutions. It's a process that I'm committed to.”

Reed, Evers, and Zafar are just three examples of Harvard students hungry for innovation. As a hub for creative thinking and promising work ethic, Harvard will continue to be home to company startups and product creations, and perhaps a few will grow large enough to change the state of the world we live in.

**Samantha Mosconi '25 (smosconi@college.harvard.edu) writes News for the Independent.**

# THE GIFT HORSE'S MOUTH

## Facebook's evils should disqualify Mark Zuckerberg's money and name from being projected around campus

BY MATTHEW SHUM '24

On September 22, 2022, one of Harvard's most well-known dropouts Mark Zuckerberg '06 and wife Priscilla Chan '07 unveiled the Kempner Institute, a human and artificial intelligence research facility, and an accompanying \$500 million grant. This gift was prorated over fifteen years and comprises over 10% of the total private research funding that Harvard receives every year. Their eye-popping donation is almost enough to forget the thousands of lives lost and the breach to American democracy as a result of Zuckerberg's company Meta (Facebook's parent company).

Harvard, in particular, needs to be careful about the impact of accepting donations from the morally corrupt. Harvard University President Lawrence Bacow endorsed Zuckerberg. "Mark and Priscilla are quite unique because they are among the very, very few philanthropic donors in the world who actually have every bit as much subject matter expertise—if not more—than the people that they are going to be supporting here," Bacow told *The Crimson* last month. "They have given us this incredible opportunity for which

and (in nearly all cases) a massive tax deduction. That influence can be reputational, boosting the donor's image by association. That influence can also be direct, allowing donors to direct funds or gain related advisory positions.

Many charities are categorized as 501(c)(3)s as a way of avoiding endowment taxes in exchange from spending it in a nonpartisan manner. In practice though, the IRS will let the term nonpartisan stretch pretty far. Tax-free donations have been used to promote issues on both sides of the partisan barrier. This includes efforts to ban public education of critical race theory in seventeen states and for legal research again same-sex marriage (by The Heritage Foundation and Tim Gill, respectively).

Private unelected citizens have achieved massive national or international influence based on extremely large donations. The Kempner Institute's funding of faculty positions, computing infrastructure, and student resources will accelerate the pace of research and fund talented students working on important problems. Yet these advances come with the hidden cost of rehabilitat-

confuse [the app] with the internet." This was part of a deliberate Facebook expansion strategy into developing countries where the company preloaded its app onto mobile phones and subsidized the cost of mobile data so that Facebook was free to use. If the only access to the Internet you ever had was on Facebook, it's perfectly natural that you would believe much of the information that was presented to you.

Through Facebook posts, Myanmar's military regime used this convenient pipeline to spread pictures of corpses alongside false claims that they were the result of Rohingya-perpetrated massacres. Along with these fake stories came anti-Muslim hate speech (the Rohingya people are overwhelmingly Muslim) which incited riots and ethnic violence. As late as 2018, Facebook didn't have a single employee in the country of Myanmar, and less than ten moderators able to speak Burmese despite millions of users. A report by Amnesty International found that Facebook "substantially contributed to the serious human rights violations perpetrated against the Rohingya." It wasn't until 2021 that Facebook banned Myan-

## Harvard's name and reputation shouldn't be for sale.

we're enormously grateful."

In 2015, Zuckerberg and Chan founded the Chan Zuckerberg Institute (CZI) and pledged 99% of their Meta shares would be directed towards this charity. While Zuckerberg's ill-gotten gains are helping to fund scientific research, criminal justice, and immigration reform, Facebook's evils should disqualify his money and name from being projected around campus. Glorifying the Zuckerberg name gives students a poor role model of the priorities between morals and the power of money.

Meta and the Chan Zuckerberg Institute are separated by little more than a thin layer of plaster. The bulk of CZI's funding is pledged Meta stock, causing CZI's budget and ability to effect change to be tied to Meta's tumultuous fortunes. The foundation's first few hundred employees had nearly all worked at Facebook before. It built a significant amount of its software through existing or former Facebook products. The most fundamental connection is that the foundation and company have the same co-founder who actively directs both initiatives. The decisions of one branch are explicit endorsements of the actions of the other.

Charitable donations have become incredibly popular in recent years, with total foundation assets in the United States totalling over \$800 billion by 2018. These donations don't come entirely free of charge. Instead, they buy the donor a

ing Zuckerberg's reputation. We must be careful about the asking price of philanthrocapitalism. It's certainly not free.

Harvard has a history of endorsing morally corrupt people in exchange for donations. Convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein laundered his reputation through institutions like Harvard after donations to the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics, where he maintained an office and key card access. After his 2008 arrest, a Harvard lab continued to display his photo and links to his website.

Epstein's crimes are simple to condemn. Zuckerberg's actions have a lot more nuance to them and certainly a broader reach. It can be easy to dismiss some of Facebook's controversies as simple missteps by a company that intends to do good or maintain freedom of speech. Once you begin to really list them out, that position quickly becomes difficult to maintain.

Thousands of deaths underestimates the human cost of Facebook. According to the international aid group Médecins Sans Frontières, 6700 Rohingya (a minority ethnic group throughout Southeast Asia) were killed in a month through an ethnic cleansing organized and incited in large part on Facebook.

There's a clear and direct link between Facebook's actions in Myanmar and the resulting violence. According to the *New York Times*, Facebook "is so broadly used [in Myanmar] that many of the country's 18 million internet users

mar's military government from its platform.

Closer to home, Facebook has been repeatedly found endangering American democracy and contributing to ideological polarization. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, internal Facebook research has shown that seeing radicalized content from friends gives users psychological permission to reshare and post such content. Facebook employees proposed an alteration to the social media that was rejected by Zuckerberg due to fears that the fix would negatively impact growth. In 2020, Facebook refused to suspend former President Donald Trump's Facebook account after he infamously posted: "When the looting starts, the shooting starts." This came despite Twitter's conclusion that the same message from Trump's account was in breach of their rules on glorifying violence.

With all that Facebook has done under Zuckerberg's leadership, we shouldn't allow him to patch holes in his dinged-up reputation through a massive donation to a leading research university. While the Kempner Institute's funding will allow it to solve important problems in the quest to understand artificial intelligence, there are consequences that we simply can't ignore. Harvard's name and reputation shouldn't be for sale.

**Matthew Shum '24 (mshum@college.harvard.edu) writes Forum for The Independent.**

# WHAT'S THE COST OF OPPORTUNITY?

**A Harvard dropout building a blockchain startup encourages others to take hold of their futures**

BY MARY JULIA KOCH '23

**A** Harvard diploma is the golden ticket to career success—at least that's what many people on campus believe. But dropouts like Mark Zuckerberg have paved a new path, as more and more students are pausing their college careers to pursue innovative ideas and create companies that just can't wait till after graduation. One example is Karl Oskar Shulz '23, who unenrolled from classes and moved to Brooklyn, New York this year to found the decentralized blockchain oracle Empiric Network with his classmate, Jonas Nelle '23. As “the leading oracle on Starknet, built to empower native protocols to realize their ambitious potential,” Empiric raised \$7 million in its first round of funding led by web3 investing fund Variant. Yet behind every startup is a founder with even more “ambitious potential.”

**Koch: Why did you take time off from Harvard? What was that decision process like?**

Schulz: My co-founder Jonas and I both worked at startups during our Covid-19 gap years. He was at a machine learning startup, and I was at a blockchain startup, and we thought, this is actually much better than working at a big company. You have so much freedom. You can choose who to work with, what to work on, and where to work on it.

We came back to Harvard wanting to start a company ourselves. We ended up with one idea that we're doing now, which is financial data analysis for smart contracts, applications that run on blockchains. We learned more about it, then built a prototype, a first product, and got a bunch of customers. It turned out that we, Empiric, were first with a couple of things no one had done before. It coincided with the rise of ZK rollups, a particular technology that uses zero-knowledge proofs to make blockchains very fast, so we had this positive traction, and the timing was right. This was not something we could have waited for another year.

**Koch: Given that about 90% of startups fail, it's often perceived as a risk to leave school to build one. Was it a difficult decision for you?**

Schulz: I was thinking, if the startup does work out, I will have done something very interesting and then I can build another company. If it doesn't work out, I can always come back to Harvard and I will have learned a lot in the process. The cool thing about Harvard is they tell you you can come back whenever. There's maybe some small risk, but the upside is huge. Entrepreneurship and company-building are what I want to be doing long-term.

Even if I never get a degree, I'll be totally fine. I think this is due to a development that we've seen in the last four or five decades: a single person can nowadays build a huge company within a decade. That was not the case for most of human history. Now individuals can

achieve so much and ideas can spread around the world.

**Koch: Also, I imagine the skills you're acquiring in building a company—how to manage people, incentivize their productivity, work efficiently, make connections, and earn profits—are easily transferable to other jobs.**

Schulz: I'm operating in the real world, where no one tells you anything and you just have to figure it out. I've now talked to so many entrepreneurs who said it's almost easier to get finance jobs when you don't go through the analyst route. The head fund manager Bill Ackman told me he's more inclined to hire people who, say, study philosophy in college, or have a more diverse background because he wants employees who have different experiences.

**Koch: The traditional Harvard career pipeline into finance or consulting offers so much stability and comfort. Straying from that path and jumping into the startup world is scary for many. Would you say you are less risk-averse than most students?**

Schulz: How you grow up really shapes your risk-taking profile. When I was in high school, I decided I should go to the US for college because behavioral economics seemed like a great thing to study and I couldn't do it in Germany. No one I knew went to the US. At Harvard, there are three or four Germans every year.

So when it worked out, that was a great learning experience because it taught me that if I really want to do stuff, if I work for it, I can actually do it, even if it seems super unlikely. That gave me the confidence and motivation to try lots of new things. It might be delusional, but I think on average people should be a bit more confident that things can work out.

When it comes to entrepreneurship, Harvard students confuse opportunity cost with risk. You might say, if I spent 10 years at Goldman, I might become a partner. But that is an opportunity cost. You will certainly get more information about how to work Excel, but if your passion is climate tech, you will not learn anything about that. You won't be able to test your hypotheses around that. Arguably you'll be in a worse position because Goldman will be a 14-hour job every day, and you will have no time to do anything else.

**Koch: And once you've begun to pave your career path, it would be much more intimidating to challenge it when you've already been working and making connections in that industry.**

Schulz: The

problem is that we always think in the future, somehow things will be wildly different and we'll have way more information. There's this idea that by going to McKinsey or Goldman, you are preserving optionality. But if you never decide what you want to do two years from now, and you just wait for it to happen, your option set collapses. It doesn't become easier—in fact, it becomes much harder to figure out what you want to do. You may end up doing what your parents did or the next safest thing. If you're just passive, then really you have no options at all. When you're thinking proactively about your long-term future, however, that is when you have all the options.

If you can't figure out what you want to do with your four years of college, surrounded by thousands of other young people and the smartest professors on the planet, then *when can you?*

*This conversation was lightly edited for brevity and clarity.*

**Mary Julia Koch '23 (editorinchief@harvardindependent.com) dreams of building her own startup one day.**

**Graphic by Marina Zoullas '23**



*Karl Oskar Shulz '23*

# THE DROPOUTS



*Steven Wang '24*



*Alexa Von Tobel '06*



*Grace Bida '26*



*Mark Zuckerberg '06*



*Matt Damon '92*



*Bom Kim '00*





Bonnie Raitt '72



Karl Oskar Shulz '23



Noah Evers '23



R. Buckminster Fuller 1917



Bill Gates '73



Elisabeth Shue '00

Graphic by Marina Zoullas '23

# THE LONELINESS WE FEEL TOGETHER

**How elite institutions like Harvard trigger collective feelings of isolation—and what we can do about it**

**BY PROOF SCHUBERT REED '25**

College admission reaction videos never fail to make me cry. When I was applying to college, I would watch them surreptitiously in the dark of my bedroom, as if pressing repeat on the shaky glow of my phone screen would will my own acceptance into existence. Even now, it's cliché, but I find them cathartic—in 15 viral seconds, capturing an authentic moment of critical, captivating release in which someone opens an email, an audience of three or four breaks into sobs, and everything falls into place.

Of course, that's not really what happens.

For one, many reaction videos are faked, either entirely contrived, or played up and dramatized for viral likes. But perhaps more importantly, what they symbolize—this moment of final release, the happily-ever-after at the end of a well-fought journey—is an illusion. Though arguably an issue and irony of its own, the pride and relief of admissions is real. But there's also something else. When I recall my own moment of acceptance, I remember a joyful burst, muddled by a sinister confusion: *where do I go from here?*

It's the question that ultimately casts a shadow over many students who fight through high-pressure pre-college environments to secure coveted spots in the Ivy League. Eighteen carefully curated years dedicated to the admissions of highly regarded institutions often falsely prepares us for what we believe is the pinnacle of success. It isn't until we arrive that we realize the journey does *not* end with admission. And that is when the panic sets in.

Last week, I spoke with Bill Deresiewicz, author of hundreds of essays about elite education, including *Excellent Sheep: the Miseducation of America's Elite*, and most recently, *The End of Solitude*, a series of essays on the death of alone time in society. I told him about the sense of drift I've seen in my peers and myself. A common refrain among my friends is that they dread being alone. Another is that they feel like they can never slow down.

"It's like you don't know who you are," Deresiewicz said. "You don't feel yourself, in a way. And that's because you've always been doing the hoop-jumping thing. You've always been responding to other people's demands, and you haven't had the chance to develop any rich inner life."

From high school and earlier, the pressures of elite admission and social media—two sides of the same warped mirror—trap students in a cycle of constantly seeking validation, never slowing down.

Abby Fennelly '24 described the constant pressure she feels to fill up her time. "It seems like every interaction I have with a peer begins with a 'how are you?' 'Good. Busy! Busy, but good. How are you?' Or 'Tired. I barely slept last night. But alright,'" she explained. "It's a brag masked as a complaint, and I find myself doing it, too. More even, expressing that you have free time seems like a guilty admission."

High school taught me that the price of busyness is exhaustion and stress, yet I have always justified that busyness with the value it adds to my life. Fennelly implied as much, explaining it is hard not to fill your calendar at Harvard when

there are so many "once in a lifetime" opportunities available to students. But what happens when you are so busy you don't have time to really experience anything—even the things you love? The price of being busy isn't just exhaustion: perhaps it's a loss of meaning, too.

"You're simply *too* busy," Deresiewicz said. "You're simply too busy accumulating credentials, in the same way that you're too busy to engage on a deep intellectual level with your coursework because you just don't have time, you're also too busy to engage on a deep emotional, social level with your friends."

Of course, some people thrive being busy. Robert Lawrence '25 said he sees two paths at Harvard: either students "put their heads back down and keep jumping through the hoops, or they really become ungrounded by it. If it's a spectrum, I definitely find myself on the latter side of it."

Indeed, the problem is that eventually, most of us slow down. (Sometimes, a pandemic forces us to.) And in those moments, things come apart.

A 1963 *Crimson* article identifies this critical moment as the "sophomore slump." "Throughout high school the student was probably under constant pressure to get into a good college," wrote Andrew Beyer '65. "In freshman year he was preoccupied with surviving at Harvard. But in the sophomore year there is usually no 'next step' to serve as a motivation—graduate school, three years away, is still remote. With his two most familiar impetuses removed—error and a concern for the future—the sophomore is frequently struck with an overpowering apathy toward his academic work."

With the added variable of social media, and the continual decline of admission rates, the problem has only gotten worse since 1963. Lawrence explained that the urge to exist outside of conventional academic and professional tracks leaves him with a sense of "restlessness and uncertainty." Fennelly said she has felt apathetic towards her work at Harvard, her relationship between school and life "tenuous at best." When the sophomore slump sets in, whenever it does, so does the ungroundedness we never had a reason to feel before. Ungroundedness leads to apathy or burnout—and ultimately, loneliness.

A 2020 study conducted by healthcare company Cigna found that more than 79 percent of young adults ranging from 10 to 25 years old reported feelings of loneliness, an eight percentage point increase from two years before. Accelerated by the pandemic, college campuses around the country are experiencing a worsening mental health crisis, with nearly three quarters of college students reported experiencing some mental health crisis at school, and almost

a third of college students reporting having felt so depressed that they "had trouble functioning."

"Being part of a herd is very different than being part of a community," Deresiewicz explained. At Harvard, we are surrounded by each other. Our Google Calendars are rainbow-blocked. Our communal living spaces are, well, communal. We hate being alone. And yet, whether we talk about it or not, Harvard can be a lonely place.

Deresiewicz says there may not be systemic solutions. Students feel little support from the network of resources designed to help them—it takes months to schedule an appointment with Counseling and Mental Health Services, and Lawrence said the advising and career systems at Harvard "do a poor job of acknowledging this is a reality that a lot of their students face."

But Deresiewicz emphasized that "individuals have the capacity to conduct their lives differently." He urges students to find opportunities for true privacy, which he says is key to developing a "rich inner life."

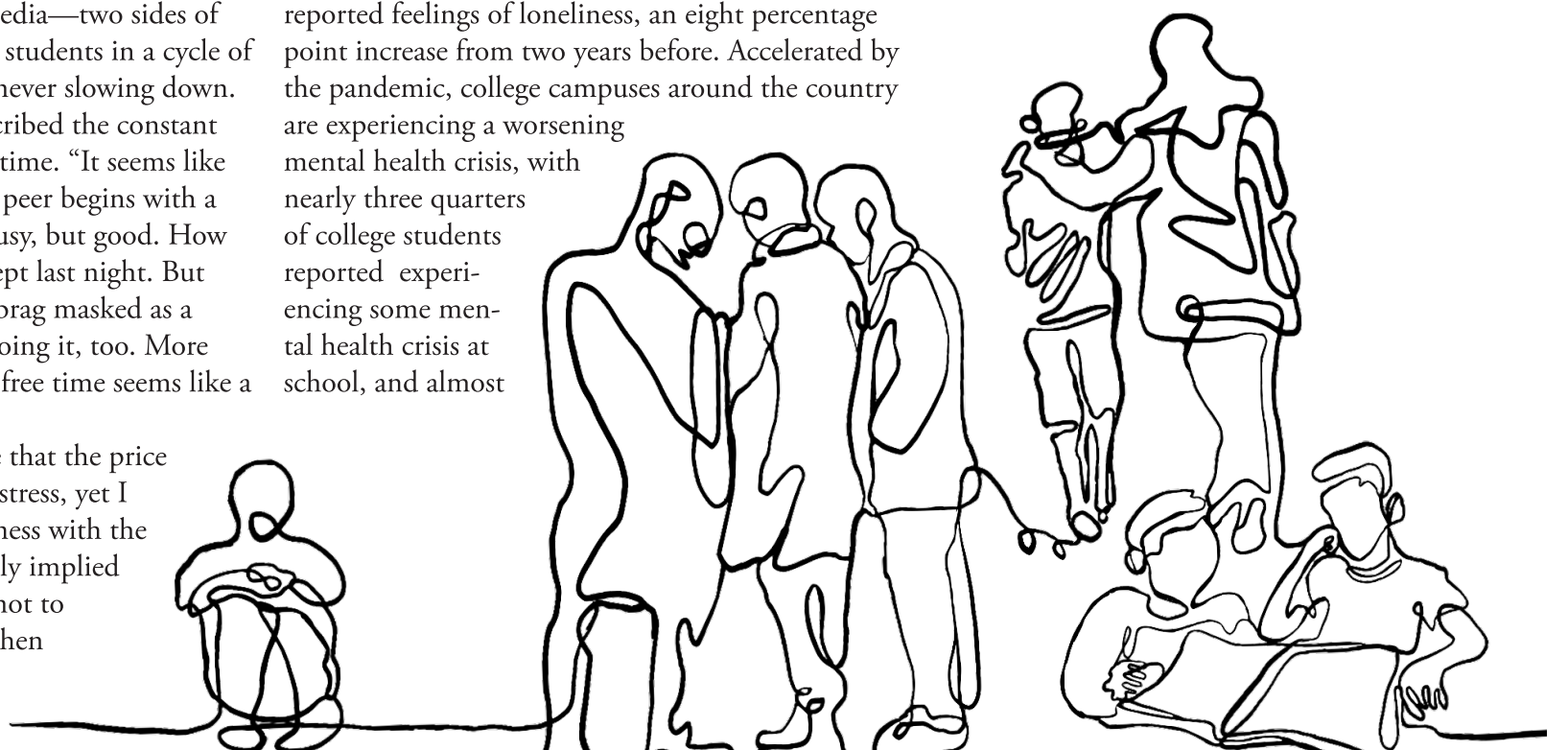
Fennelly said she has found solace in her moments away from Harvard. During the pandemic, she took a year off and spent seven months away from her computer. "That changed everything," she said, explaining she was able to deeply consider what was important to her and return to school with a more "positive relationship with life."

"For me it comes back to the idea that life is meant to be joyful and that you must do things that bring joy into your life." Fennelly acknowledges that taking time off is a privilege that not all students have. Many people pursue pre-professional tracks because they don't have the security to go elsewhere. "Being able to choose joy is a privilege," she explained.

"I don't have a 'plan' per se, I'm not following any specific path, and I don't have an answer when people ask me what I'm going to do when I graduate or what I'm going to do with my degree. But I'm much happier than I was before."

**Proof Schubert Reed '25 (proofschubertreed@college.harvard.edu) edits Arts for the Indy.**

**Graphic by Annelise Fisher '26**



# THE POWER OF GOD IS IN THIS TELEPHONE COMPANY

## Patriot Mobile ensures that God reigns supreme in Grapevine-Colleyville School District

BY SEATTLE HICKEY '25

When my little brother moved into North Texas' Grapevine-Colleyville School District (GCISD), he had a hard time making friends. Of course, that's normal for any tween moving schools, but his trouble had less to do with his personality, and more to do with his new friend's parents disliking his name. My sweet brother is named Darwin, after Charles Darwin, the creator of the Theory of Evolution, and in GCISD, that is not compatible with many people's belief systems.

During my time in the district, I remember being teased by my friends for not believing in Adam and Eve. My AP Biology teacher prefaced our Evolution unit with a disclaimer that we did not have to actually believe that it occurred, it was just a requirement of the standardized curriculum under the American public school system.

A Grapevine-based conservative telephone company Patriot Mobile has created a Political Action Committee (PAC). They donated over \$400,000 towards taking over local school board elections in the battleground Dallas-Fort Worth suburb of Tarrant County. GCISD's School Board is one of their top success stories. In the spring, they funded eleven school board election candidates in Tarrant County, including GCISD, and won every single election.

The newly appointed school boards work to ensure these schools' curriculum align with "conservative Christian values." They have banned the Scholastic Book Fair because of Scholastic executives' "progressive" social media posts, and implemented new policies that ban any instruction on gender and sexuality unless approved by the school board, in addition to expliciting banning any implementation of Critical Race Theory. They specifically excluded trans and gender non-conforming individuals from using multiple person bathrooms and sports that do not follow their biological sex.

As these far-right politicians take local power, the majority of residents remain against these values being perpetrated in their schools. In fact, Tarrant County has been slightly blue in the last two major elections, which is what prompted Patriot Mobile's decision to provide a sudden influx of cash to shore up support from the new generation. According to the New York Times, Patriot Mobile is trying to stop these battleground suburban counties from turning fully blue, which they fear may be what finally turns Texas blue. Many parents in the district are trying their best to fight back through grass-roots efforts like ProtectGCISD and Moms4GCISD, but with Patriot Mobile-backed board leaders having a 4-3 majority in the district, these

extremists can tightly control school district operations to conform to their ideals.

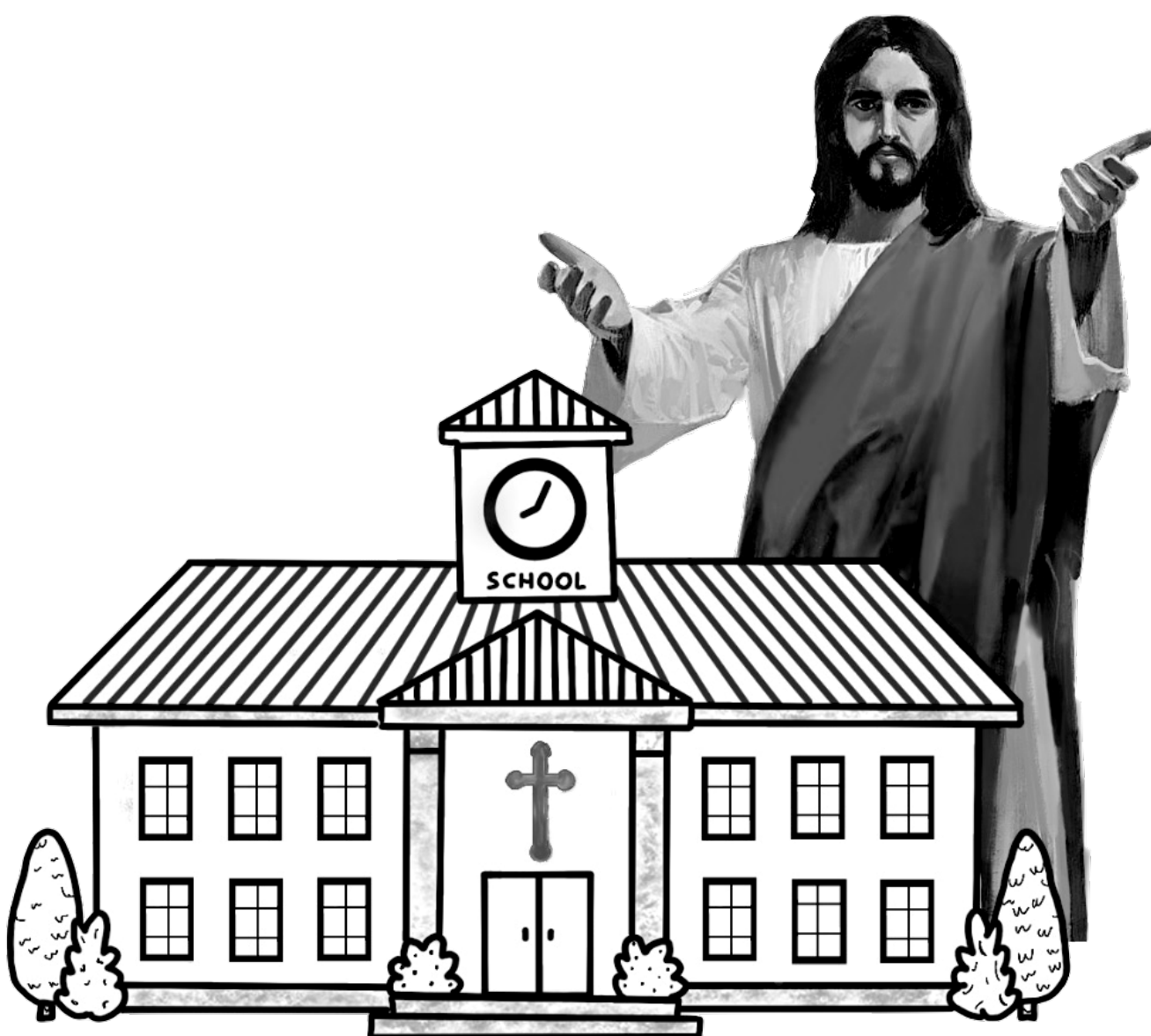
Beyond Harvard's campus, we need to be aware that inclusive, equity-focused education is not only absent, but actively being fought against in schools across the nation. My friends who come from more liberal areas never believe the level of bigotry that was normalized and accepted in the name of parent's beliefs and the Church at my high school. There is privilege in assuming the requirement of gender theory and critical race theory at some high schools implies it is present at all American schools.

I was a student at GCISD before Patriot Mobile took power, and I truly fear for the level of conservative Christian dogmatism that exists now. I remember finding out that one of the best teachers at our school was a lesbian, but she had to take down a photo with her wife because a student complained. I remember even our most "liberal" teacher making us come up with Asian stereotypes during world history to introduce our unit on China. My sister was bullied for saying "Black Lives Matter." I remember so many other shocking experiences that happened to me or my siblings, that we only noticed because we were raised by liberal parents who encouraged us to form our own values rather than follow blind faith in any religion or ideology. But I continued at the school because it was, at the time, the 17th best public school in Texas.

Now Grapevine High School is ranked 261st, according to US News. If I went there now, I would have had a significantly harder time getting accepted to Harvard. The people meddling with education there do not care. They would rather have moral superiority than give their children the opportunity to leave DFW, or give them the tools to deal with people who aren't like them. I already feel so behind my peers in terms of knowledge of critical race and gender theory, and it feels like I am learning a language everyone else started learning 4 years ago, because they did. With the increasing polarization of American culture, it is important for us to remember that schools have become the latest battleground for where America is heading, and public school education is not equal for all.

**Seattle Hickey '25 ([seattlehickey@college.harvard.edu](mailto:seattlehickey@college.harvard.edu)) is a big believer that Texas will turn blue.**

**Graphic by El Richards '26**



# THE CARE GAP

## HUHS fails to equitably provide reproductive and maternal care

BY KATE KADYAN '26

The recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade* has made maternal and reproductive health care even more essential in places where it remains legalized such as within Harvard campus. Harvard University Health Services (HUHS) promises to provide reproductive care services for its students, but they fail to do so in an equitable fashion, creating burdens and stresses along gendered, geographic, and financial lines.

The Student Health Fee, required for all registered students, is intended to cover urgent care and specialty services. It does not cover maternal or reproductive care. Admittedly, under the Student Health Fee, students can apply for a \$350 partial benefit after receiving an abortion, but the cost is not fully subsidized.

coverage. “If Harvard already has the financial means to cover this charge to some extent, why can’t they do it fully?” said Alberts.

Moreover, the lack of reproductive coverage under the Student Health Fee generates inequality based on students’ home states. In the wake of the *Dobbs* Supreme Court case, eleven states have made it illegal for private insurance to cover abortions. As a result, students covered on insurance from these states face greater burdens and out-of-pocket costs in procuring reproductive health care services. And, due to the urgent nature of abortion care, *any* student covered by out-of-state insurance must navigate complex insurance claims in a short time frame. Professor Andrew Janiak, an expert in reproductive health care and an intermittent consultant to HUHS on these issues, said this process “will be a huge barrier for anyone who’s not on the

On the surface this may seem similar to not covering eye exams and glasses; not everyone uses these services, and they can be extremely expensive. In my opinion, the difference is that vision exams are not stigmatized,” said Professor Janiak.

Dr. Ana Langer, a worldwide leader in women’s health policy, was likewise at a loss as to why Harvard does not universally cover reproductive and maternal health care. Dr. Langer noted that, “not having those services available puts female students in an unequal position vis a vis their male counterparts, because these are issues which obviously particularly affect women.”

It is imperative that the university cover not just abortion services, but all reproductive and maternal care, Dr. Langer emphasized. Care is a “continuum,” and “you don’t want to stigmatize people for doing this

**The current, nationwide assault on reproductive rights and the financial capability of the university simply make Harvard’s failure to universally provide this essential care all the more irresponsible.**

HUHS only offers maternal and reproductive health care through the Harvard Insurance Plan. As of 2017, the HUHS director estimates that 60% of students waived this plan. Students may choose to opt-out of this plan because of existing parental health care coverage or concerns about the \$4,080 cost. As a result, Harvard’s policy creates an unequal burden regarding access to abortions and maternal care, in which accessibility restrictions are potentially related to the financial background of the student.

The Harvard College Democrats, a student organization on campus, published an open letter on September 25, 2022, requesting that abortion be included in the Student Health Fee. Co-President of College Democrats Luke Alberts ’23 said, “It’s not equitable access, unless you have equitable financial access.” Harvard already partially subsidizes abortions, proving that Harvard recognizes the need for this

Harvard insurance.”

Professor Janiak likewise noted that these barriers might lead Harvard students to seek assistance from charitable funds and organizations. He stated, “These resources really are not for privileged people like Harvard students.” Harvard’s failure to pay for its own students’ abortions is, in Professor Janiak’s words, “negligent,” as it potentially leads Harvard students to utilize funds intended for individuals under greater financial strain.

Moreover, although abortion has recently been the focus of national attention and student action on campus, the overall lack of women’s health care on the Student Health Fee is problematic. Students are currently not eligible for gynecological services, maternity care, or birth control devices under the Student Health Fee.

“I do think it’s a tremendous oversight that the student health fee does not cover birth control devices like IUDs, implants, etc.

or that; you want to give people full access to reproductive health services, and they should have access to whatever they need at that particular moment,” she said.

Tiffanie Green, a spokesperson from HUHS, declined to comment on the College Democrat’s push for expanded abortion access. However, the obvious gendered gaps and barriers created by Harvard’s current policies *should* spur swift action from the University. The current, nationwide assault on reproductive rights and the financial capability of the university simply make Harvard’s failure to universally provide this essential care all the more irresponsible.

**Kate Kadyan '26 (katekadyan@college.harvard.edu) has signed the College Democrats’ open letter and thinks you should too.**

# "LIVE EVERYDAY LIKE IT'S YOUR LAST"

Steven Wang on the joys of dropping out to build his investment startup

BY LAYLA CHAARAOUI '26

Passionate, decisive, and gritty. These are the three words Steven Wang '24, CEO and co-founder of investment startup Dub, uses to describe himself.

"You have to have a vicious belief, to know what you're doing to drop out. It's dedicating your life to what I'm doing right now. My life is essentially my company. To be a leader and to be CEO, you make a lot of hard calls and often don't have much time or context," Wang noted, in reference to his company, Dub. "You just need to be good at something to fail, and sometimes you just don't have time to waste."

Building a company brings "a lot of emotional hurdles and tackles and just pain every single day," he said. "The desire and end goal is to win. You have to be ready to get there."

The 20-year-old entrepreneur is no stranger to dropping out. In 2017, he forwent his sophomore year of high school to pursue a virtual reality education startup, Realism. After raising money from investors and receiving a grant from MIT, he and his co-founder spent two years in Cambridge working on the company, ultimately selling it and returning back to high school.

Wang decided to attend Harvard because he "didn't like working for other people... it's pretty cool to see that there are actually so many lowkey Harvard alums," he said. "There are brilliant startup CEOs, founders, or venture capitalists. Talking about the application process, and after getting in, deciding where to go, that really sold me."

In his second semester of his first year at Harvard, Wang was tasked with working on a company for a class project. After securing high-profile investors, raising money, and crystallizing what he started, Wang became excited about this new venture, naming it "Dub." That's when he decided Harvard wasn't for him. Dub allows people to take agency in their own investments, as well as to copy those who are skilled in investing. Its purpose is to "transform how individuals think about investing," keeping up with the changes within the world of investing, especially now as this current generation looks to "invest in the future," Wang explained.

"Two weeks before finals, I was like 'screw finals.' I want to work on this. I don't want to write my Expos 20-page finals paper. So, off we go. I left, moved to New York, and started working. It's been for the past year and 3-4 months... I knew what I could do the first time around. And there were just too many incredible opportunities to give up."

Steven Wang was only at Harvard for 8 months.

His story begins in Detroit, where his parents immigrated from China. In the second grade, his mother sent him to an investing summer camp. "That led me to be a hustler growing up. I was always selling something, whether it's cookies or Pokemon cards during recess. I always had a little bit of free cash and I grew up investing a lot whenever I had time."

Wang has always known he wanted to succeed, and what success meant to him. "I view success with two lenses. I like to live every day like my last... I'm personally very interested in existentialism and one of the teachings in that philosophy is that you should live everyday like it's your last and you never know what could happen tomorrow," he explained. "In the lens of what would you do today, if it's actually your last and to be successful is to be

able to do that every day."

"The second part of that definition is given a longer-term impact for me when success to me is within the lens of my company, is really improving economic outcomes for people globally," Wang continued. "If I can say someone has built generational wealth because of using Dub, that's something I get very excited about. So two lenses: one is a personal lens of success and one is based on what I'm doing, my work, and my company."

After moving to Texas in 2008, Wang and his family came back to Detroit, where he spent his middle and high school years. After his high school hiatus, he moved to the Bay Area and worked for Apple for half a year, doing co-op as a product manager for Apple Watch. Inspired by Steve Jobs and his philosophy, Steven Wang ultimately realized that he, like Jobs, did not enjoy working for other people.

Arriving at Harvard peak-pandemic in the fall of 2020, Wang articulated his desire to follow the footsteps of successful Harvard graduates and described Harvard as a place where "some of the most brilliant minds have just done it." Although online classes transformed Wang's vision of "hallowed halls" into an experience he found both unfamiliar and uninviting, he speaks highly of the friends he made during his first year. "The people were just some of the hands-down smartest and most brilliant individuals that I've met in my career."

Yet he decided that he didn't need a Harvard diploma to have a successful career. "You go to college and figure out what you want to do. And you build that network through that. I already knew what I wanted to do, and I have a good network of folks," Wang noted. "There's nothing else that brings me more joy than to work on my company."

Wang recognizes the great benefit and utility he derived from his time at Harvard. He recalled reaching out to the connections he made at school, some of whom later invested in Dub. "I think we're very lucky to get some Harvard grads that really believed in what I was doing," he stated. "There's an incredible network of folks and that really paid off in the realest way, as they invest in what we're doing."

In addition to securing investments from Harvard alums, Wang has seen investments from venture capital firms like Sequoia to the founders of Uber and Airbnb. "We're building a social investing marketplace so you can copy anyone else's investments," Wang explained. "It's a really simple, easy way for you to essentially follow someone else that you believe in. No longer are you investing in yourself where 90% of investors underperform the markets. You're investing in someone else that knows how to invest the best ideas that you really care about."



Wang hopes Dub can have a "lasting tangible impact" on the field of investing, and help bridge the gap between prospective, newer investors and high-profile companies. "I hope that one day, generations later, there will be people that are using products made by my company. And we have seriously changed and altered the course of humanity through it."

Wang believes that if anything, he would only return to the Harvard community in a decade or two to pursue something he is truly curious about. "Even if this company might, in the worst case, fall through, I probably wouldn't go back. I would just start something new." He is not yet finished with the Harvard community, and claims he is "very keen" on hiring Harvard students soon.

Arguing that Dub's timely opportunities trumped any factors keeping him at school, Wang insists he made the right choice in dropping out of Harvard. "There's like a wave that's coming at you. You only have one chance to get on it. And I'd much rather do that and do my life's mission, my life's work, than anything else," he said.

Steven Wang's overall philosophy goes back to his objective to live everyday like it's his last, as well as the three characteristics he so used to describe himself: passionate, decisive, and gritty. He champions the value of failing every day until he succeeds.

"Never get complacent because you're always failing until you really do what you set out to do," he stated. "That keeps me hungry. That keeps me motivated. It gets me up early in the morning. I got a lot of work left to do and I can never afford to lose sight of my mission. I'm a failure until proven not."

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

# DANCING IN THE STREETS

**Three sophomores and techno music enthusiasts are taking to the streets to prove you don't need clubs to dance the night away**

**BY CARLY BRAIL '26**

If you happen to walk by CVS at 2 a.m. on the weekends, you might just hear Milo Schwelbe '25, Tyler Heaton '25, and Austin Guest '25 before you see them dancing to techno music. When he's busking with his guitar during the day, Heaton uses his speaker to amplify the music—but at night, it's blasting techno music, drawing from Milo's experience in Berlin this summer. There, he fell in love with the genre and embraced the culture, even getting into the club Berghain, dubbed “the world capital of techno” and famous for its exclusivity and strict door policy.

The three sophomores met as first years, brought together partially by their proximity in Weld, and perhaps more importantly, as a result of their mutual love for truly dancing at parties. They call their group “Funktion-Eines” named after Funktion-One, the German sound system used by top clubs. They are even on Instagram, under the name @funktion\_eins. The first iteration of their name was also German: “De Anst” meaning “the fear.” But the group of optimists realized the counterintuitive message it conveyed, and pivoted to this double-entendre title.

This is not their first organization. Last year, they formed the “Harvard Whistler's Society” (with the intentional apostrophe), and even ran a guerilla marketing campaign at the annual club fair, touting their tunes that range “anywhere from Pitbull to Puccini.” But their true passion is dancing.

What started as “raves” in their Lowell dorm room soon turned into an open call to the steps of Widener in early September, where Milo, Tyler, and Austin started dancing to techno music as the Harvard Islamic Society happened to watch on during their convocation. Soon, the music genre shifted to Arabian to include the audience, and the dancing continued until the speaker died. In subsequent nights, the festivities moved to the cobblestone sidewalks outside of the CVS on John F. Kennedy Street, where one night, a crowd of 50 people accumulated dancing the salsa.

Passersby have mixed reactions, from steering clear to enthusiastically joining in. Heaton observed that “you can tell a lot about a person by the way they react” to three sober men dancing techno on the sidewalk past midnight.

Hugo Nunez '26, a one-time participant in this dancing adventure,

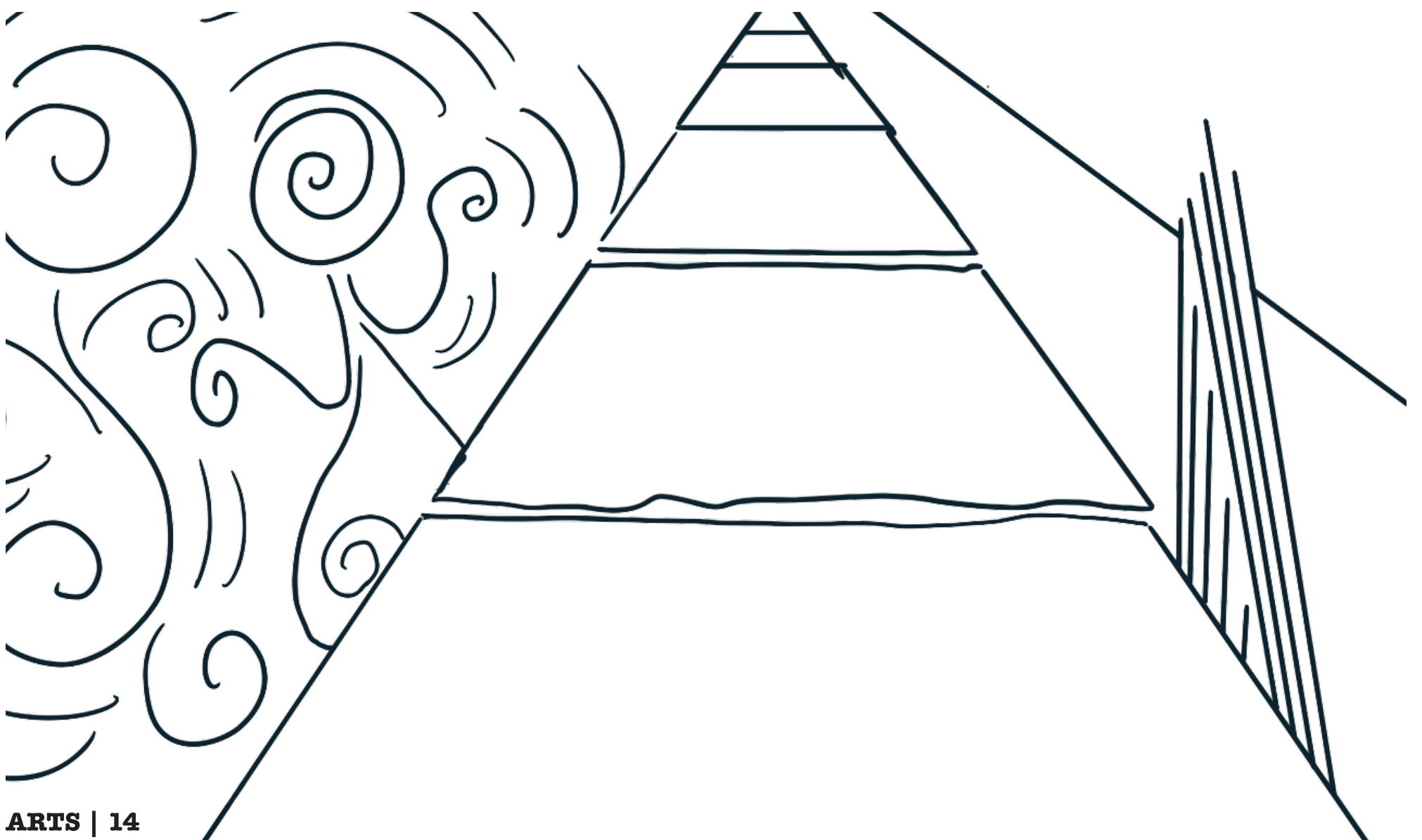
finds movement to be both mentally and physically freeing. “Dancing makes me feel free because man is condemned to be free and when I dance it opens up the movement in my heart,” Nunez said. In a truly techno-enthusiast manner, he explained that “when my frequency is good, I dance.”

Nunez is a proud member of Harvard College Electronic Music Collective, which recently lost its HUA funding—perhaps another incentive for him to turn to the streets for dance. He hopes to continue to explore his bodily freedom to the beat of techno music.

Sure enough, in a school where the social scene is dominated by exclusivity and closed invite parties, these techno dancers demonstrate that not all fun is behind closed doors. Indeed, the best experiences can be found outside of CVS at 2 a.m., embracing the freedom and fluidity of the music.

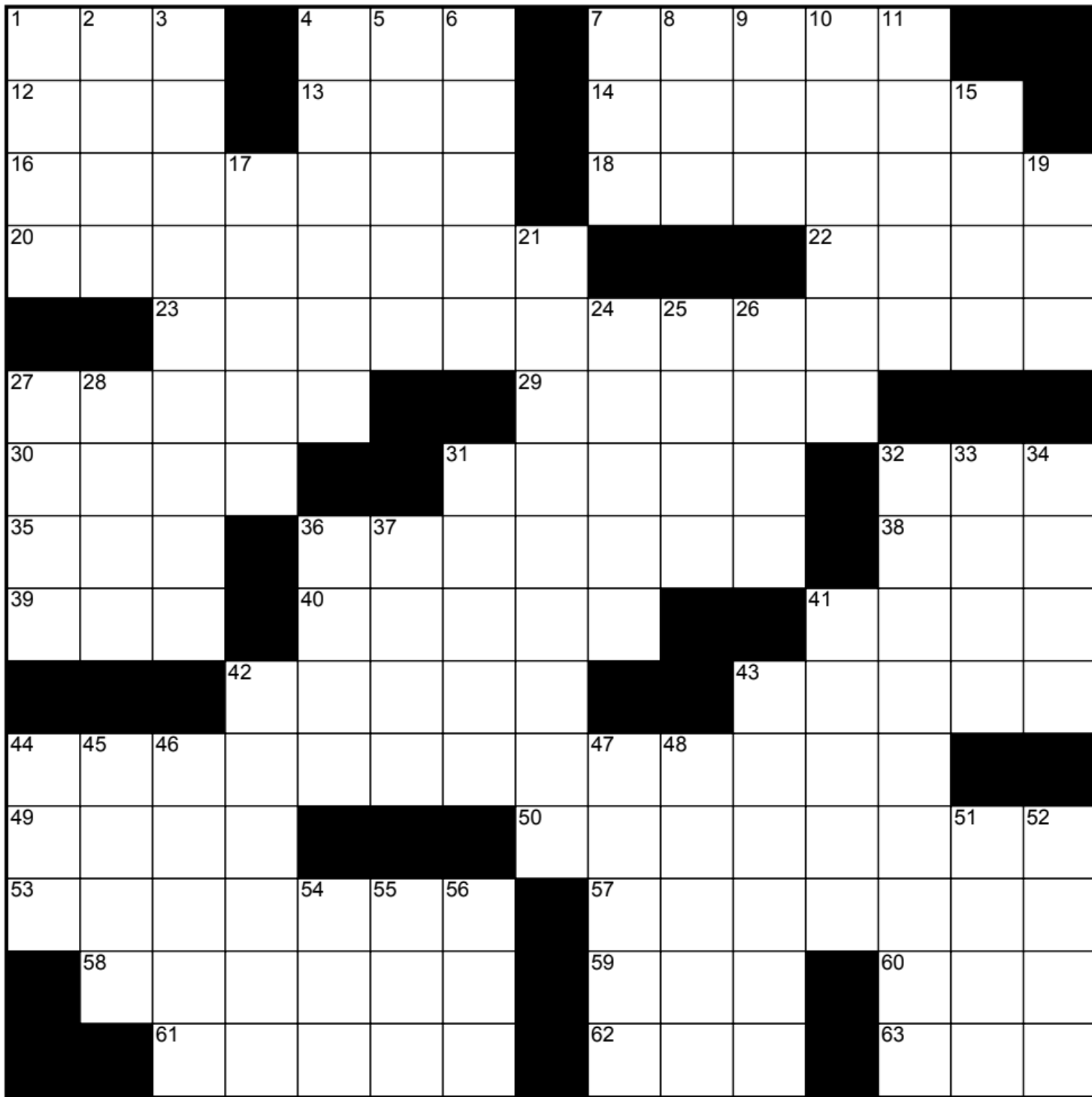
**Carly Brail '26 ([carlybrail@college.harvard.edu](mailto:carlybrail@college.harvard.edu)) loves to dance the robot.**

**Graphic by Seattle Hickey '25**



# OH MY GOD, IT'S FULL OF STARS

BY PETER LASKIN '23



- 24 LSD precursor
- 25 Faithful, in Frankfurt
- 26 Party planner
- 27 "Off the wall" brand
- 28 Radiate
- 31 Misappropriate
- 32 Genre for 2-Down
- 33 Get better
- 34 Sicilian summit
- 36 Count's nickname
- 37 Part to play
- 41 "\_\_\_ say more?"
- 42 Potato shade
- 43 Drum's counterparts
- 44 Dorm overseers
- 45 Marker brand
- 46 Artemis, to Aurelius
- 47 Didn't feel too hot
- 48 \*Struck out
- 51 Iberian appetizer
- 52 Primordial substance, in cosmology
- 54 Harvard-to-Brown dir.
- 55 Soul maker based in Seoul
- 56 "\_\_\_ darn tootin'!"

Peter Laskin '23

## ACROSS

- 1 Airgun ammo
- 4 Red envelope holiday
- 7 Top of one's dome
- 12 \*Judge's outfield
- 13 "Selma" director DuVernay
- 14 Pacific island nation
- 16 \*Out of the blue
- 18 Like a plastic-wrapped sandwich
- 20 Like the starred clues in a crossword puzzle, usually
- 22 Soon, to Shakespeare
- 23 \*Rule out
- 27 Vice's partner
- 29 Trying to read an entire book the night before the report is due, probably
- 30 One with a prophet-able cookie business?
- 31 Shark divers'

- enclosures
- 32 "Weekend Update" host Michael
- 35 Starting score in soccer
- 36 This issue's theme... or how to make sense of the starred clues
- 38 Tennis call
- 39 Cardinals' place
- 40 Cardinal's place
- 41 Bread from a tandoor
- 42 Novelist Ellison
- 43 Car with models S, 3, and X
- 44 \*Burn out
- 49 \*Point out on a globe
- 50 Fearfulness
- 53 Fischer's chess rival
- 57 \*Out of order
- 58 Infant's attire
- 59 BTC alternative
- 60 One of your closest relatives, phylogenetically
- 61 Beefing, militarily

- 62 \_\_\_ Moines
- 63 \*On the \_\_\_ (running out)

## DOWN

- 1 Rorschach shape
- 2 "Goldberg Variations" composer
- 3 Cinnamon or sticky bun
- 4 Godzilla creator Tomoyuki
- 5 Digital missive from a 26-Down
- 6 \*Not outspoken
- 7 Fuel additive: abbr.
- 8 Mean mutt
- 9 "\_\_\_ Maria"
- 10 Actress and engineer Hedy
- 11 Dallas suburb that sounds pretty bland
- 15 Japanese noodle
- 17 Store up
- 19 Ending with acetyl
- 21 Low blow

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WE BELONG  
TO NO ONE  
BUT  
OURSELVES

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