

ISSUE 29

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# independent

THE STUDENT WEEKLY SINCE 1969

# THE POLITICAL ISSUE

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November 3, 2022

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WILL RECKLER '99

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# PROTESTS IN IRAN: SPARKS OF A REVOLUTION?

*The death of Mahsa Amini has reignited an Iranian movement for "Women, Life, and Freedom."*

BY ALICE KHAYAMI '25

On September 13, Mahsa (Zhin) Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian woman visited Tehran, where she was arrested by the Iranian morality police for "improperly" wearing her mandatory hijab. Three days later, she died at the hands of these officials.

Since her death, hundreds of protests have erupted across Iran, gaining traction online. The Iranian government cracked down on protests with continued violence and suppression, shutting down the internet and censoring social media. Yet, a testament to the power of social media in modern politics, hashtags and posts have continued to proliferate online, building international support for Iranian women. Indeed, the Iranian people's response—particularly the response of Iranian women—has been astounding. Despite persistent violence from the Iranian government, women have kept fighting for their fundamental rights. Knowing the government will meet them with gunfire and tear gas, they still show up every day mourning, chanting, and fighting. Even more encouraging is seeing young men also show up in solidarity with the female protestors.

Support for Iran has even reached as far as Harvard's campus. On Friday, September 30th, Harvard college students gathered on Widener Steps to demonstrate in support of Iranian and Kurdish women, chanting in recognition of their right to live free from oppression.

Saba Mehrzad '25, one of the protest's organizers and co-president of the Harvard College Iranian Association (HCIA), said she was "genuinely surprised that so many Harvard students felt so passionately about women so far away." The hundreds of students and community members that showed up in support of the movement was striking. It's clear that the injustice in Iran resonates with people globally.

The conversation over the liberty of women in Islamic society is an important one. Of course, no where does Islam deny women freedom. The Quran states that "there is no

compulsion in religion," explicitly demonstrating that liberty is compatible with Islam. Yet, the role of the morality police directly violates human rights. The morality police is part of the national police force and is tasked with ensuring compliance with Iran's Islamic values. They have yet to strike a balance between maintaining modesty and suppressing freedom. Their actions do nothing but increase pejorative misconceptions about Islam. The hijab, for instance, is a heavily politicized article when it should be nothing but a symbol of religious freedom. The actions of the morality police go against the principles of religious freedom and simply contribute to providing Islam with a negative reputation.

Despite sympathy for the Iranian women's cause, the international community is not doing enough to help the Iranian people and end this terrorizing regime. For the United States, it's clear that their priority with their Iranian foreign policy is to bring the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA, referred to as the Iran nuclear deal, is a set of negotiations between Iran and the five UN Security Council countries to curtail Iran's nuclear program in exchange for alleviating some of the economic sanctions in place since the 1979 revolution. They are more concerned about preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon than trying to stop a government that kills its own people.

On October 28th, U.S. envoy to Iran Robert Malley spoke in an event organized by the Harvard Undergraduate Foreign Policy Initiative. The primarily Iranian audience was composed of peaceful protestors and fervent voices, eager to empower the movement of "woman, life, freedom." While the talk remained orderly, it was clear tensions were palpable and emotion resonated with every member in the room. Malley reiterated the United States commitment to a diplomatic strategy in their Iranian foreign policy. But the U.S. is quite disillusioned if they

believe diplomacy can win over the current Iranian regime.

So far, their only strategy has been imposing sanctions. Prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine this spring, Iran was the most sanctioned country in the world. Since 1979, the sanctions have sent Iran into recession after recession, burdening Iranians with economic hardships. The restrictions include sanctions on Iranian banks and prohibiting funds from being transferred between the U.S. and Iran. Remittances could be extremely beneficial to Iranians, especially in supporting the current movement. But it is unlikely that the U.S. will ever allow any change to their current policy, out of fear that softening the financial restrictions would be seen as softening towards the regime. What is clear is that the economic hardships Iranians face only adds to their current frustration.

The U.S. is not the only country failing to take action. The entire international community, including the United Nations, has failed to take any concrete action addressing the ongoing human rights violations. What's shameful as well is the failure of the international journalism community for their lack of coverage of what is happening in Iran and the anger Iranians feel towards the current regime. As the Iranian people are censored and barred from sharing their stories with the rest of the world, press around the world can—and should—do more.

This is not the first time such a horrific act has occurred in Iran. For years, the Islamic Regime has unapologetically suppressed the lives and voices of people who even attempt to speak up for themselves, exiling dissenters to Evin Prison, a notorious detention center in Tehran. It's thanks to social media that Amini's story has been shared and the media has given a small ounce of recognition to the events in Iran. It shouldn't require any more deaths for the world to start holding the Iranian regime accountable.

While the international community may view the current protests in Iran as just a wave of dissent, the Iranian community defines the movement as much more: a revolution. Protesters are not just making waves, they are brewing a storm. Iranians are reaching for a glimpse of a possibility for change. It is clear that this movement is enduring and will endure. Perhaps, there is room for optimism.

As an Iranian American, I am heartbroken every day when I see the ceaseless coverage of terror. As an Iranian American, I am enraged that the current regime is still in power. As an Iranian American, I am unequivocally inspired by Iranian women and hopeful that their force is the beginning of a revolution.

**ALICE KHAYAMI '25 (ALICEKHAYAMI@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) HOPES CHANGE WILL COME SOON IN IRAN.**

**PHOTO COURTESY SABA MEHRZAD '25**



# JFK JR. FORUM WELCOMES AMERICA'S DOCTOR

## *Student Reactions to Dr. Anthony Fauci's "Down to Earth" Nature.*

BY AMIYA TIWARI '26

On Wednesday, October 26, 2022, the Institute of Politics' John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum held their most attended event since the pandemic, according to Forum Co-Chair Hannah Bottarel '24. With three filled floors of attendees and many still standing, an excited buzz filled the conference room: America's doctor was about to speak.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and Chief Medical Advisor to President Joe Biden, visited the JFK Jr. Forum to speak about his history, triumphs during the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and highly contested response to Covid-19.

Fall 2016 IOP Resident Fellow Peter Staley returned to campus to moderate the event. As an AIDS and LGBTQ+ activist, Staley collaborated with Fauci on advocacy and policy measures throughout the AIDS crisis of the 80s and 90s. Their close friendship allowed the Forum to host a laid-back discussion of heavy themes.

Before introducing Dr. Fauci, Peter Staley surprised attendees—and the Forum planning committee—by pulling out wine glasses for himself and his guest. “Normally, when we talk after 6 PM, we both have a glass of pinot noir in front of us,” Staley said. “Only Peter,” responded Fauci. This lighthearted exchange set the Forum's casual tone.

Layla Charaoui '26 said, “[Dr. Fauci] had great chemistry with longtime friend Peter Staley, and it was nice to hear their interactions, especially considering that Staley has criticized Fauci at times.”

On Fauci's continued work with Covid-19, Staley boldly asked: “Did you mess up with masks?”

Fauci responded that this simple question has a “complicated answer.” Public health communications and directions on masking varied throughout the pandemic due to changes in the available information. “In science, it's a self-correcting process. You make a decision based on the data that you have. If the data changes, . . . you have an obligation as a scientist to change what you're saying,” said Fauci.

“I was very moved by Dr. Fauci's bravery,” said Jane Lichtman '26. “It seems like no matter what happens, he's ready to defend himself and his decisions during the pandemic in the face of anti-scientific attacks.”

Staley closed his questions with humor, asking Dr. Fauci to rate Senator of Kentucky Rand Paul on a scale from “Mother Theresa to total dickwad.” In response, Dr. Fauci highlighted the dangers of “politicizing a very serious situation that the American population is facing.”

AIDS and HIV relief was one of Fauci's primary motivators in becoming director of NIAID in 1984. “I didn't think that the scientific community was taking this disease serious enough . . . I think it was the disenfranchisement of the populations involved,” he said. “I [took the position at NIAID] to really turn attention to HIV. And that's what I did.”

Fauci primarily contributed to fighting AIDS through his work with President George H.W. Bush, one of the seven U.S presidents that Fauci has advised over the past

38 years. Their collaboration created a program that now saves 20 million lives annually across the globe.

Dr. Fauci admitted that he took a risk in focusing his time and energy on AIDS. “I'm not 100% sure what it was inside me [that made me shift gears]. I think it was a combination of excitement about something new and empathy for the people involved,” he said.

Lichtman was “especially moved after hearing about [Dr. Fauci's] journey to collaborating with HIV/AIDS activists when most of the medical community refused to encourage their cause. Empathy and openness to everyone seem essential but very underrated qualities in public health officials.”

Fauci's mantra is to “expect the unexpected.” He believes his success as director of NIAID comes partly from his ability to connect with activists and the general population. “Most of the scientific community said, ‘Oh, stay away from these crazies,’ and one of the things that I feel good about is [asking myself] if I were in their shoes, what would I be doing? I decided that I would be doing exactly what they were doing and I became an activist,” he said.

While most students were excited to see Fauci speak because of his work combating the Covid-19 crisis, many were particularly interested to learn more about the rest of his monumental contributions to public health care. Lily O'Donoghue-McDonald '26 said, “I knew he had done some great work in his career, but I didn't know about his inclusion of HIV/AIDS activists in his study of the virus, which was why it was especially helpful that [the Forum] was moderated by Peter Staley.”

According to Jack Silvers '25, who is in his second semester on the Forum committee, “the Forum is such a nexus within [the Harvard Kennedy School] It really is in the center of everything.” As a result, students from every school at Harvard attend Forum events, and many were understandably eager to ask questions of Dr. Fauci.

Andrew Lu '25 asked Dr. Fauci to share “an accomplishment, a mistake, a story that hasn't



been covered as much” that gives him strength in light of intense scrutiny from news media. Dr. Fauci responded that he feels like he has been “publicly colonoscoped” by the media, which was met with laughter from the audience. He then highlighted that “personal relationships, particularly my family, which has really been the core of what keeps me sane, particularly lately, where I get attacked every single night on FOX News . . . and a lot of politicians running their campaigns on ‘put Fauci in jail, hang him, kill him.’”

Fauci shared that his priorities are “public health, science, medicine, and young people.” He is particularly hoping to inspire the youth to make meaningful contributions to society. Fauci achieved his goal—whether it was their first or tenth Forum event, students left the IOP feeling energized. Through this casual conversation, Fauci was deemed approachable—a key ingredient for a successful role model.

Fajr Khan '26 added that “[the Forum allowed me] to see a more personal side of [Fauci]. The conversation humanized such an influential figure and showed me Dr. Fauci's sense of humor as well as his love for his family.”

Tarina Ahuja '24 asked Dr. Fauci: “thinking about how you're a caretaker of so many, how do you care for yourself during a time like this, and how do we build mental health into our public health infrastructure, particularly at a time where our generation is experiencing a mental health epidemic?”

Dr. Fauci responded that “Covid has shone a very bright spotlight on . . . the fragility of mental health in our society,” and he shared his fears concerning the long-term effects of the mental health epidemic. Concerning his own well-being, Dr. Fauci shared his love for exercise: “I walk, but I walk really fast!”

Bottarel, who spoke individually with Fauci after the event, was “in awe of his candor and humility. He was very down to Earth.” According to Bottarel, Dr. Fauci even took a photo of the Forum committee using “BeReal”.

**AMIYA TIWARI '26 (AMIYATIWARI@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WAS VERY MOVED BY DR. FAUCI'S VISIT AND HOPES HE WILL ONE DAY TAKE HER BEREAL.**

**TOP RIGHT PHOTO BY MARTHA STEWART, IOP PHOTOGRAPHER**



# DEMOCRACY ON THE BALLOT

*What is at stake during midterms, and how can youth voters sustain our democracy?*

BY HANNAH DAVIS '25

Massachusetts Senator Ed Markey visited the Institute of Politics John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum last week, two weeks before the midterm elections, to discuss the role of youth in American democracy. As the clock ticked down, a collection of undergraduate and graduate students, business professionals, and local residents filed into the room eager to hear the senator's words. Markey advocated strongly for students to get out and vote, as well as to further their civic engagement in regard to salient issues, like climate change, gun safety, and human rights.

Senator Markey began by emphasizing the current threat to democracy and the need for high youth turnout. "Democracy is on the ballot in 2022... We need young peo-

ple, particularly as the Supreme Court attacks rights that many younger Americans have taken for granted in the past few decades. The United States' democracy and initial constitution was built upon principles of basic egalitarianism that the Supreme Court has expanded since to include previously marginalized groups. Now, these rights and privileges—like a women's right to choose, same-sex marriage, and affirmative action—are under attack. Franny Connors '26 said, "There are some fears about the Supreme Court. We kind of discount these fears because we don't know what will happen. You want to make sure everyone has the same rights. That is really important."

The Senator explained that each Supreme Court decision "put[s] the burden

more rare," said Forum member Ryan Tierney.

The Senator elaborated that this election will help the United States determine what type of country we are: the country pursuing progress from January 5th, 2021, or the country on the verge of collapse from January 6th, 2021? Senator Markey recalled an image of American progress from January 5th, 2021. "Georgia elected a Jewish young man as one of their new senators and an African American man as their other senator," he said. But from January 6th, he took a very different image of the state of our nation. "All of us who were in the capital that day had people coming up the walls of the Capitol Building to snatch an election away from Joe Biden and the American people."

**“DEMOCRACY IS ON THE BALLOT IN 2022...WE NEED YOUNG PEOPLE TO COME TO THE POLLS TO MAKE SURE THAT WE PROTECT DEMOCRACY OTHERWISE NONE OF THE OTHER ISSUES—VOTING RIGHTS, CLIMATE CHANGE, GUN SAFETY, [AND] A WOMEN’S RIGHT TO CHOOSE—IS SAFE IF DEMOCRACY DOES NOT WORK.”**

**- SENATOR MARKEY**

ple to come to the polls to make sure that we protect democracy otherwise none of the other issues, voting rights, climate change, gun safety, a women's right to choose. None of it is safe if democracy does not work," warned Markey.

For democracy to function effectively, the people must act, turnout to vote and organize—especially at the grassroots level. Merely hoping for the political tides to turn will not incite change; grassroots action and political participation are vital, perhaps now more than ever. "Hope does not just happen. Hope is the result of actions that are taken, otherwise there is no reason to be hopeful," said Markey.

IOP John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum member Ryan Tierney '24 echoed the importance of youth activism. "Historically, in order for substantial changes to occur, there has to be external pressure applied by activism, too."

Recently, not all actions have incited

back on Congress to respond to put those rights back on the books." Markey emphasized that the current Supreme Court was distinct from previous Courts, and that such a Court requires a strong response from other institutions of American democracy. "We're going to hit the critical mass with these Supreme Court because it's six to three and they're ideological and they're on a mission to repeal the last 50 years of our country. We're going to need ultimately to have democracy work to restore the laws that they're gonna strip off the book," said Senator Markey.

But can we trust today's American democracy to achieve this mission? "I am concerned for our democracy on some level. I feel that people are politically active, but I don't think that question is the worry. I am more worried about whether people are politically courageous; January 6 was largely stopped in its tracks because of a few brave decision makers, but that spirit is becoming

Senator Markey discussed the importance of bipartisanship for passing critical legislation and for protecting democratic discourse. In particular, he highlighted how today's youth have the voice, the opinion, and the necessary media at their fingertips to enact real change.

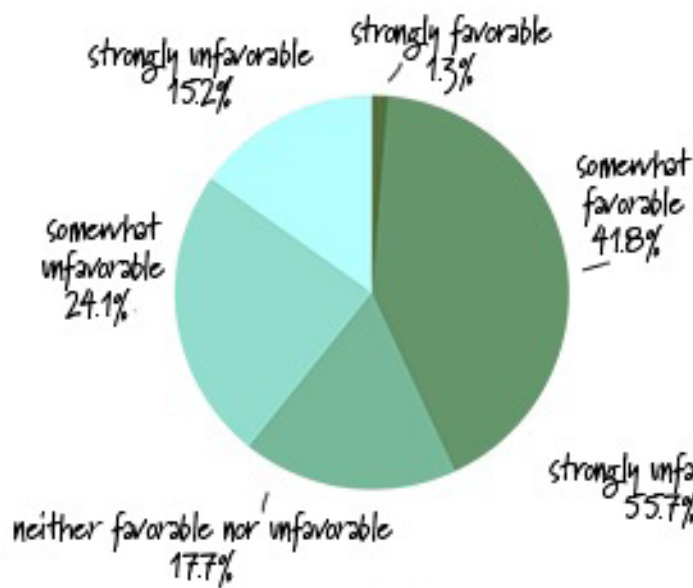
Franny Connors '26, says "Looking toward the future, it is really exciting to see how much our generation cares about politics and how we don't really want to let the status quo remain and we want to see action be taken." With more resources than ever before, and a country in peril, the youth of America have a responsibility to do more than just hope; we must act.

**HANNAH DAVIS '25 (HANNAHDAVIS@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) FINALLY FILLED OUT HER ILLINOIS ABSENTEE BALLOT AFTER WRITING THIS PIECE.**

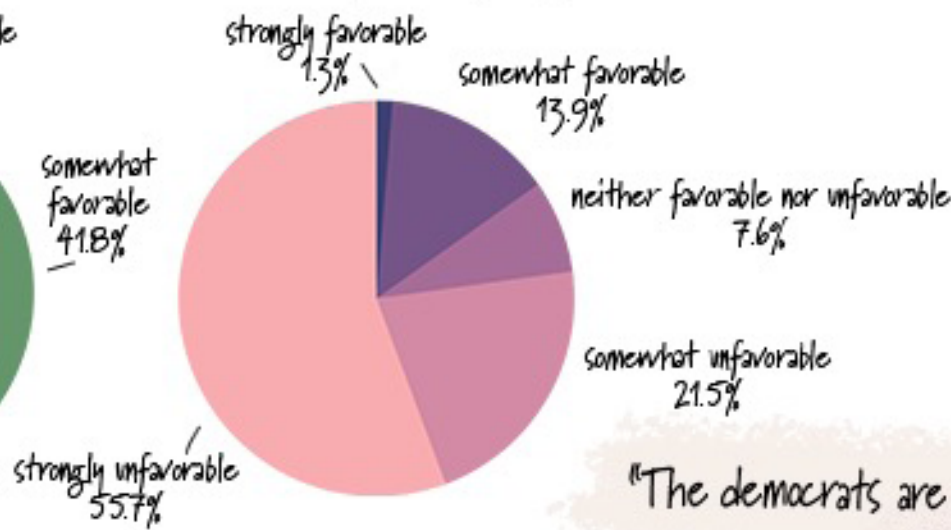
from 79 responses...

what is your view of...

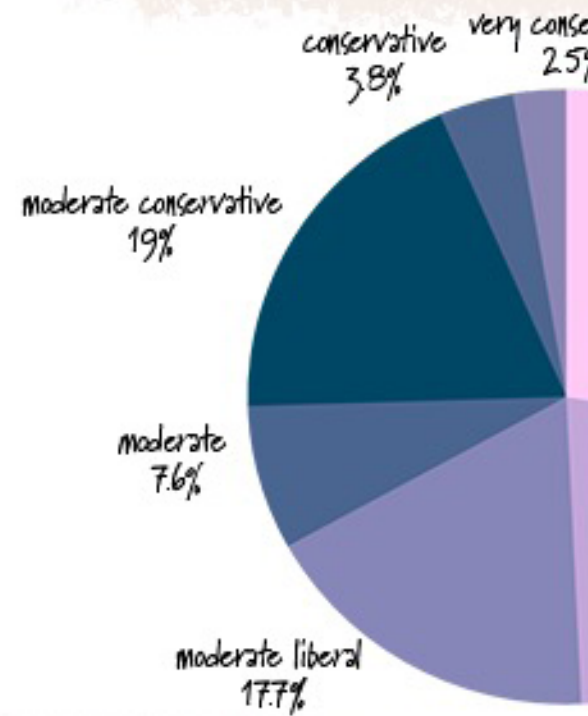
the democratic party?



the republican party?

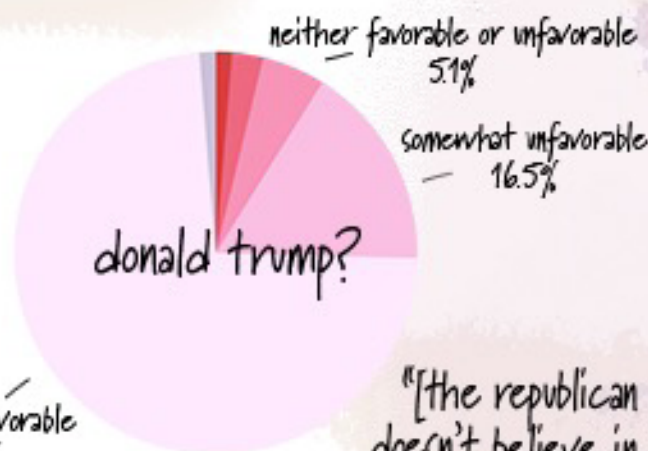
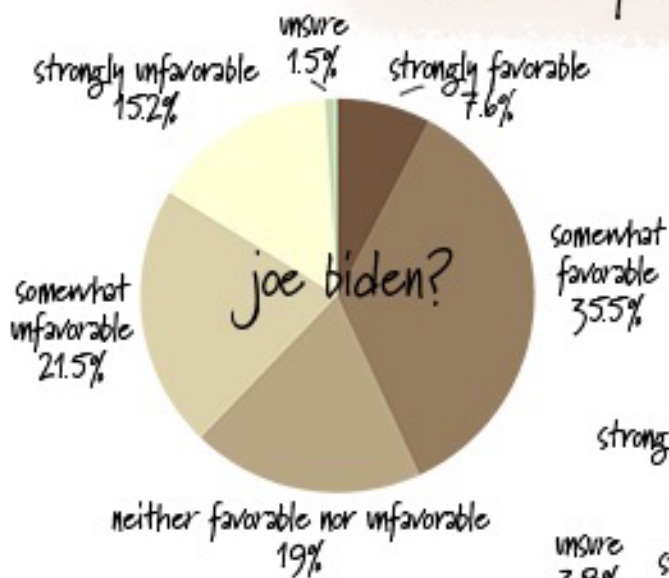


what best describes

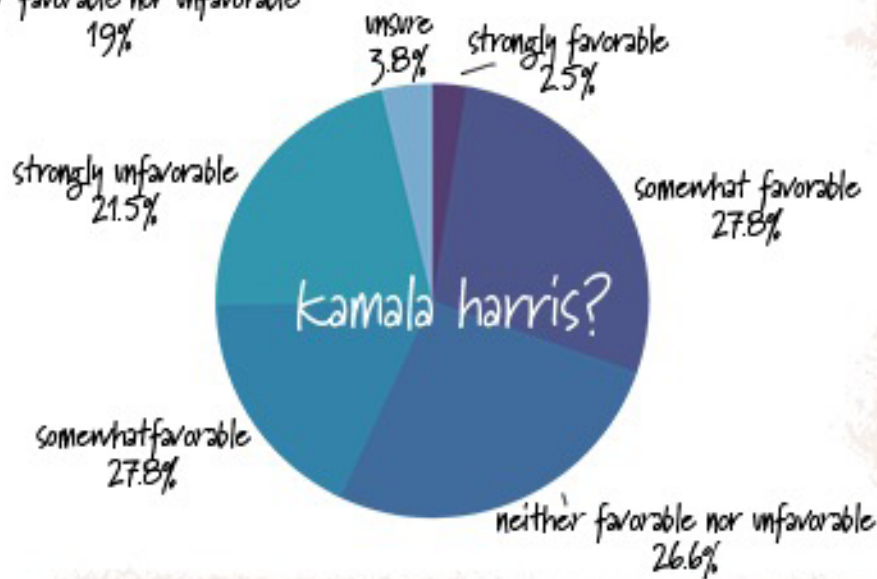


"The democrats are their own worst enemy"

what is your view on...



"[the republican party] doesn't believe in science, spread misinformation, generally screwing over people in my generation."



"I used to be really involved and up-to-date on politics, but I've honestly burned out of it. It's too stressful and my mental health has improved so much since I stopped following things as closely."

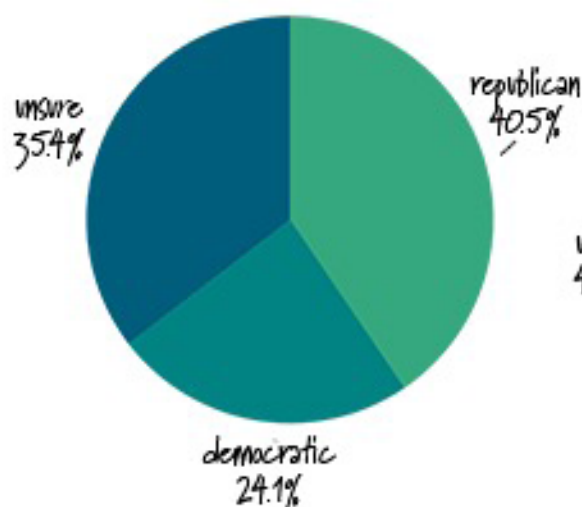
the indy po



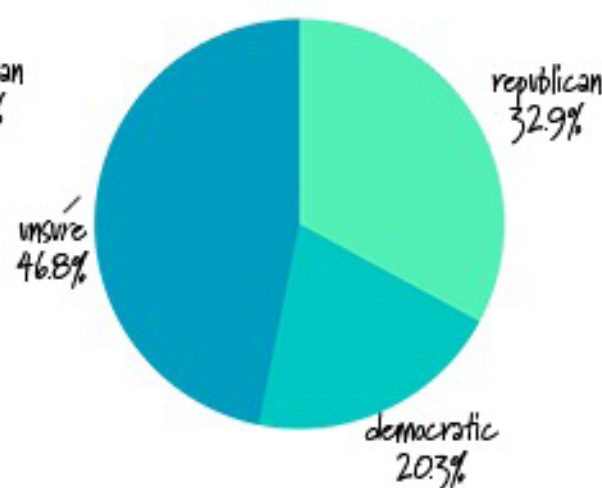
"I am a demo

after the nov 8th midterm elections, which party do you think will win...

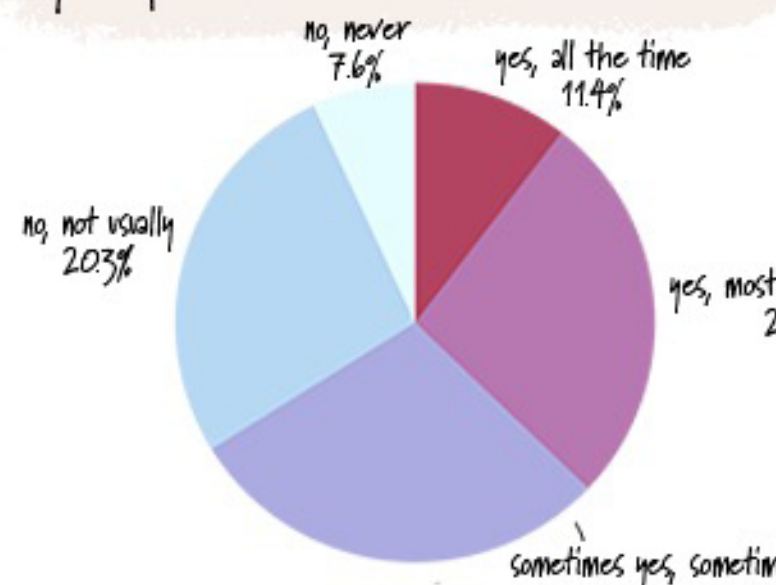
the house?



the senate?



do you feel comfortable expressing your political views at harvard?



# What are your political views?



"I have a more negative view of liberalism and a deeper conviction that we must build strong communities of revolutionary mutual aid rather than worry about which rich asshole is in congress."

# Political survey

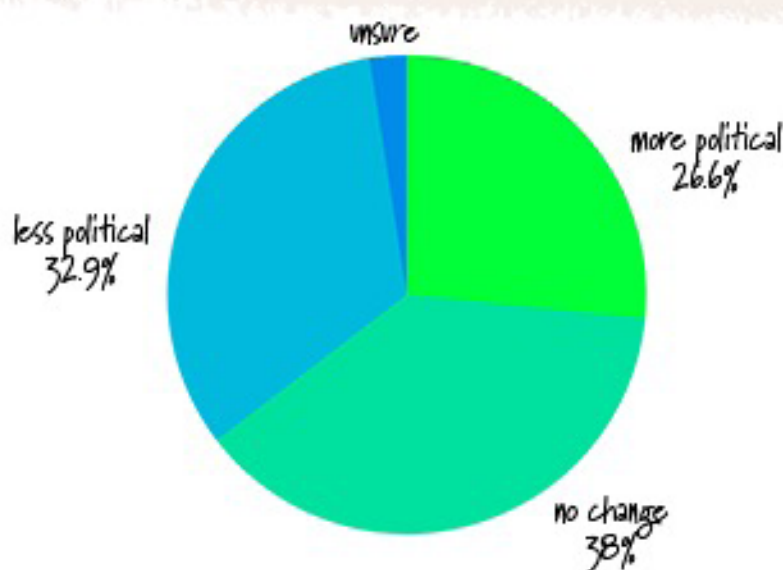


"When we refuse to let people speak without judging them as a person, they stop sharing their thoughts publicly."

"A lot of kids here are able to rise above the tribalism of the RNC/DNC and approach political discussions with understanding up front. Still, college is a bad age for angst and kids are still learning empathy so many are quick to antagonize when they sense someone might have a different perspective. It's sketchy to feel out who's who, sometimes."

democrat, family is democrats, etc."

did you become more involved in or passionate about politics at harvard?



of the time 9.1%

yes no 31.6%

# what is your view of...

widely accessible abortion services

strongly favorable: 68.4%  
 somewhat favorable: 6.3%  
 neither favorable nor unfavorable: 6.3%  
 somewhat unfavorable: 6.3%  
 strongly unfavorable: 11.4%  
 unsure: 1.3%

the legalization of marijuana

strongly favorable: 68.4%  
 somewhat favorable: 6.3%  
 neither favorable nor unfavorable: 6.3%  
 somewhat unfavorable: 6.3%  
 strongly unfavorable: 11.4%  
 unsure: 1.3%

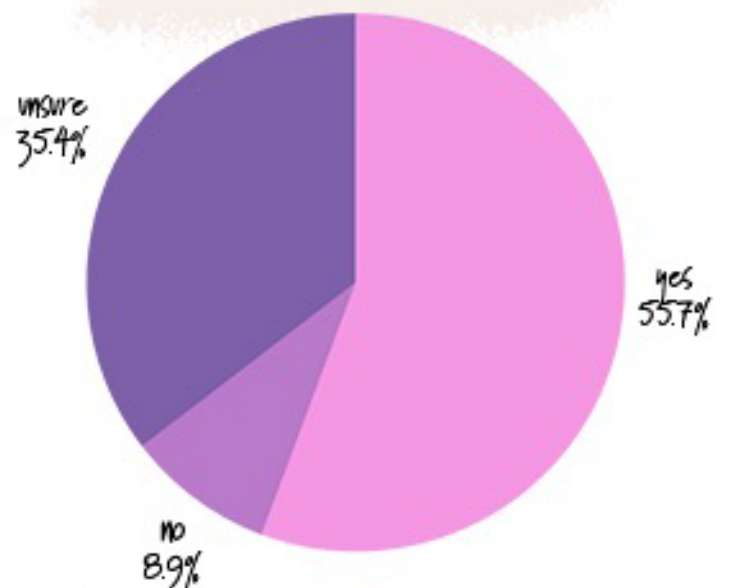
universal healthcare in the U.S.

Strongly favorable: 45.6%  
 Somewhat favorable: 22.8%  
 Neither favorable nor unfavorable: 10.1%  
 Somewhat unfavorable: 8.9%  
 Strongly unfavorable: 8.9%  
 Unsure: 3.8%

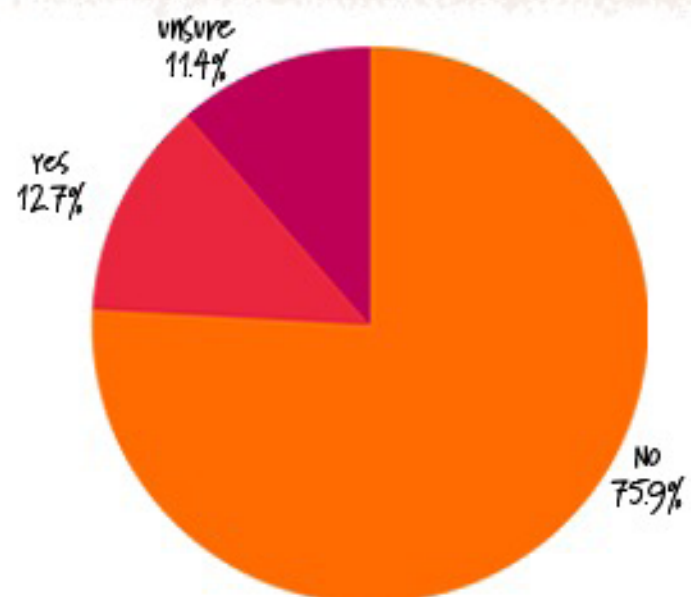
gun control laws on firearm purchases?

Strongly favorable: 57%  
 Somewhat favorable: 27.8%  
 Neither favorable nor unfavorable: 2.5%  
 Somewhat unfavorable: 7.6%  
 Strongly unfavorable: 5.1%

has harvard influenced your political views?



do you think our generation cares enough about local elections?



# THE PRESIDENT PREDICTS: THE MONEYLINE FOR THE 2022 MIDTERMS

*A look at four misunderstood big-races that could decide control of the Senate and House*

By MATTHEW SHUM '24 AND NOAH TAVARES '24

The upcoming midterm elections on November 8th have generated increasing national buzz around the increasing extremism of conservative politics and the progressive pivot to issues in the culture war. Nonpartisan pollsters predict that Republicans are favored to win the House, while the Senate is expected to be extremely close. At the *Indy*, we wanted to look further into several races, and offer predictions in the form of moneyline odds. Welcome to The President Predicts.

## A primer on moneyline wagers:

The number presented next to each candidate, when positive, represents your potential payout if you bet \$100. If the number is negative, it represents the amount you would need to bet to earn \$100. Let's take the following example:

### 1948 Presidential Election

Harry S. Truman (D, Incumbent) v. Thomas E. Dewey (R)  
Our Odds: Truman +200, Dewey -230  
Let's say you bet \$100 on the winner. If Dewey beats Truman, you would earn a profit of \$43.48. If instead Truman beat Dewey, you would earn a profit of \$200. If you bet wrong, you lose your money.

## The Races:

We've selected 3 Senate races and 1 House race which we believe are being mis-pollled (mispriced) by pollsters (odds makers).

### Pennsylvania Senate Race

John Fetterman MPP '99 (D) vs Mehmet Oz '82 (R)  
538 Odds: Fetterman -100, Oz +100, PredictIt Odds: Oz -203, Fetterman +163  
Our Odds: Oz -115, Fetterman +115

In Pennsylvania a Senate seat has opened up following the decision by two-term senator Patrick Toomey '84 (R) to not seek re-election. The Republican nominee is Mehmet Oz, a former surgeon who hosted his enormously popular eponymous TV show about health and medicine for 13 seasons. The Democratic nominee is John Fetterman, the current lieutenant governor of the state who served as mayor of Braddock for 13 years.

Oz supports restricting access to abortion with some exceptions and supports same-sex marriage. Oz has been endorsed by former President Donald Trump. Fetterman supports criminal justice reform, banning anti-LGBTQ discrimination, and legalizing marijuana. While Fetterman held a substantial lead in most polls for the majority of the race, concerns about his health following a stroke has led to a close race

Arizona is a politically significant state for both parties with competitive races that could make the difference to each party's national agenda. Mark Kelly, a former astronaut and US Navy captain, won the seat in a special election in 2020. His challenger is Blake Masters, a venture capitalist often referred to as the protégé of tech billionaire Peter Thiel. Thiel has contributed considerable amounts to political causes and candidates including Donald Trump, and has donated at least \$15 million to Masters' candidacy so far. This is believed to be the largest sum ever spent on a race from a single source.

While Masters has closed the gap significantly in a race against an incumbent, polls still place him at a significant deficit going into these final weeks. Kelly is a formidable opponent who has built a fundraising juggernaut and consolidated Democratic support nationally. Masters has also recently flip-flopped on his stance on abortion, easing calls for a nationwide ban back to calls for banning late-term abortions. We predict that Kelly remains a favorite but Masters may be able to eke out a narrow path to victory in this home stretch.

### Rhode Island's 2nd District

Allan Fung (R) v. Seth Magaziner (D)  
538 Odds: Magaziner -113, Fung +113, Our Odds:

## 1948 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

HARRY S. TRUMAN (D, INCUMBENT) V. THOMAS E. DEWEY (R)

OUR ODDS: TRUMAN +200, DEWEY -230

LET'S SAY YOU BET \$100 ON THE WINNER. IF DEWEY BEATS TRUMAN, YOU WOULD EARN A PROFIT OF \$43.48. IF INSTEAD TRUMAN BEAT DEWEY, YOU WOULD EARN A PROFIT OF \$200. IF YOU BET WRONG, YOU LOSE YOUR MONEY.

We'd like to put our money where our mouth is and offer you the chance to bet on the odds listed below by sending an email to [president@harvard-independent.com](mailto:president@harvard-independent.com). For each race we will supply the line given by 538 (traditional political polls) and PredictIt (the most liquid political betting market). Now let's get to our 2022 picks in this edition of: The President Predicts!

## Our top-view perspective:

In general we believe the economic environment has been underweighted by most pundits and pollsters. This cycle will be dominated by reaction to inflation and worsening prospects for the middle class. Following a decades-old trend of the party in power taking the brunt of the blame for a sluggish economy, culture war politics will take a backseat to the price of gas at the pump. This trend will have a chilling effect on Democrats, who have poured ad dollars and campaign resources into anti-facist rhetoric. Meanwhile Republicans have tied their opponents to high inflation, which they've successfully linked in the public's eye to Biden's policies. We also think the younger voter turnout will be lower than expected given increasing apathy across youth with moderate ideologies and increasing frustration with inaction across more progressive ideologies. Early voting data so far supports this idea. Across our selected races you will see that perspective reflected in our odds adjustment.

going into these final weeks. As such we predict the line moving towards Oz.

### Georgia Senate Race

Herschel Walker (R) v. Raphael Warnock (D, Incumbent)  
538 Odds: Warnock -117, Walker +117, PredictIt Odds: Walker -170, Warnock +150  
Our Odds: Warnock -150, Walker +150

In Georgia incumbent senator Raphael Warnock won the hotly contested 2021 special election in a state whose senators have been largely Republican since the early 2000's. Warnock, a former pastor, helped the Democrats achieve a slim majority in the Senate. Walker is a former professional football player who enjoys enormous popularity in Georgia from his collegiate career at the University of Georgia.

Walker has come under fire for his support of no-exception abortion bans in the wake of allegations that he fathered multiple children out of wedlock. Despite Walker's controversies, his popularity has remained robust and most polls indicate a dead heat going into election day. We predict that the voters will prioritize stability and Walker's scandals will prove to be an insurmountable issue.

### Arizona Senate Race

Blake Masters (R) v. Mark Kelly (D, Incumbent)  
538 Odds: Kelly -285, Masters +285, PredictIt Odds: Masters -127, Kelly +104  
Our Odds: Kelly -150, Masters +150

Fung -125, Magaziner +125

Rhode Island's 2nd District has been held by a Democrat since 1991. The Democratic nominee is Seth Magaziner, the current General Treasurer. His opponent in the race is Allan Fung who served as the mayor of Cranston (Rhode Island's second largest city) for over a decade. A large part of what makes this race a draw is Fung's perception as a moderate and popularity among both independents and Democrats.

All throughout New England, the Democratic midterm playbook has involved tying Republican candidates to Donald Trump and equating a vote for the candidate as a vote for Trump's agenda. This strategy is looking like it'll prove successful in the races for Massachusetts governor or New Hampshire's Senate race, but Fung doesn't fit cleanly into the bogeyman archetype. Fung's long career in local government, general likeability, and relatively centrist views have buoyed his candidacy. Fung's major focus on the campaign trail has been to talk about runaway inflation, while Magaziner has tried to keep the focus on abortion rights (Fung has said he does not support a national ban). With polls coming down to the wire, we predict the voters will resonate with Fung's messaging on inflation and we'll see the seat flip.

MATTHEW SHUM '24 (MSHUM@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND NOAH TAVARES '24 (NOAH TAVARES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTCOME OF THESE RACES.



# TO “DISAGREE AGREEABLY”: TALKS ON THE ROCKS, VOLUME 1

*A Conversation with IOP's John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum Members*

BY MARBELLA MARLO '24, MADDIE PROCTOR '25,  
AND PROOF SCHUBERT REED '25

Plastic spiderwebs hang from the rafters, and patrons and barkeeps flit around, masquerading as witches and clowns. It was Halloween at Shay's Pub in Harvard Square. It was also the first installment of a new column in *The Harvard Independent*, “Talks on the Rocks”—in which three members of our editorial board converse over drinks with one of Harvard's many diverse and accomplished student organizations.

For our first conversation, we sat down with two members of the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum. The slasher film soundtrack playing overhead and the werewolf statue guarding the door were apt to the topic of discussion: the future of political discourse and how the JFK Jr. Forum is attempting to rescue it.

At the Harvard Institute of Politics' JFK Jr. Forum, Ryan Tierney '24 and Cormac Savage '25 serve as the Director of Community Partnerships and Director of Ideation, respectively. While Tierney organizes representative student body engagement, Savage oversees the acquisition of global thinkers to the Forum's space at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Founded in 1978, The John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum, held at the Kennedy School of Government, “regularly hosts leaders in politics, government, business, labor, and the media,” according to its website. Members of the JFK Jr. Forum work in conjunction with other IOP staff to schedule visiting or guest speakers up to four times a week. The 40-minute talks are typically moderated in a conversational format, followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions.

The Undergraduate Committee, on which both Tierney and Savage serve, collaborates with members of the Institute of Politics to solicit and coordinate relevant guest speakers. While the general Forum staff contribute to finding and promoting speakers, the Undergraduate Committee specifically aims to tailor talks to the community. “[The Undergraduate Committee is] in the mission of finding the pulse of Harvard's campus, like what students are interested in, what topics are relevant. What do students want to hear about? Not only at the College, but it's really

about the entire Harvard community,” said Tierney.

The ability to enter directly into conversation with decision-makers is distinct from the political discourse occurring elsewhere on campus. Tierney said, “With other political debate platforms on campus, no one leaves getting any questions answered, and to bring outside voices into the dialogue is really valuable.”

Savage recalled a question from Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković's appearance at The Forum, during which an audience member asked, “How do you feel about the fact that your party justifies genocide?” Tierney and Savage said the Prime Minister answered the question directly.

Overarchingly, discussions in the Forum allow the public to challenge leaders and hold them accountable, whilst gaining further insight into decisions made behind closed doors.

“Sometimes people do use [the platform] to promote an outside agenda,” Tierney conceded, in reference to attendees who use the unvetted Q&A time to push personal political agendas. Nonetheless, the Forum plays an important role by introducing students to an authentic view of perspectives they may not otherwise encounter. While attendees certainly skew liberal—which as Tierney noted “mirrors the demographics of the Harvard community”—the Committee has made a concentrated effort to bring in conservative voices as well. Tierney even attends the Conservative Coalition's meetings to welcome students from less recognized political identities to the Forum's events.

After acknowledging that the Forum committee receives understandable pushback for inviting certain guests to speak, Tierney and Savage both agreed that the only two disqualifying factors for speakers are “election deniers and those who will justify genocide.” That said, the committee seeks to acquire guests that will generate healthy discourse on a variety of topics with representation from diverse cultural, political, and affinity groups students may not otherwise have exposure to.

This past week, the JFK Jr. Forum hosted a guest that Tierney described as “an incredibly interesting speaker,” Dr. Anthony Fauci. As Tierney explained, the Forum has been trying to solicit him since the beginning of Covid. Fauci spent the hour in a conversation moderated by Peter Staley, AIDS and LGBTQ+ activist. The two men discussed Fauci's career as director of the National Institute of Allergy, masking mandates, and the politics of Covid-19, all while sipping glasses of pinot noir.

Savage wishes to see more student representation in the selected

moderators, as student moderators are “representative of all the people in the audience and the questions they have.” The moderators, typically Harvard affiliates with experience in the guest speaker's particular field, are essentially responsible for the outlook of the entire conversation. They draft questions, direct the speaker to certain topics, and dictate the tone of the discussion.

As the middlemen between Harvard undergraduates and staff at the Harvard IOP, Forum Committee members such as Tierney and Savage are responsible for framing discussions, sparking ideas for future events, and promoting speakers to the Harvard student body.

Forum relevance and student engagement can stem anywhere from guests connected to current events, speakers who represent specific student organizations on campus, or those who defend opinions warranting appropriate controversy. The structure of this discourse is exactly what distinguishes IOP Forum from other platforms for political discussion at Harvard.

The structure of a 40-minute closed conversation, followed by open discussion between the speaker and the audience, generates a unique appreciation for students and speakers with contrasting opinions. Savage, a self-proclaimed liberal, recounted how the Chris Christie Forum specifically helped humanize a politician he would not typically sympathize with.

“I had to listen to Chris Christie for 40 minutes. I got a sense of not only how he would defend himself but get a sense of him as a person,” Savage recalled. “After hearing his point of view and getting to know him as a person, you feel less inclined to attack him ... and that's the beauty of the structure of Forum.”

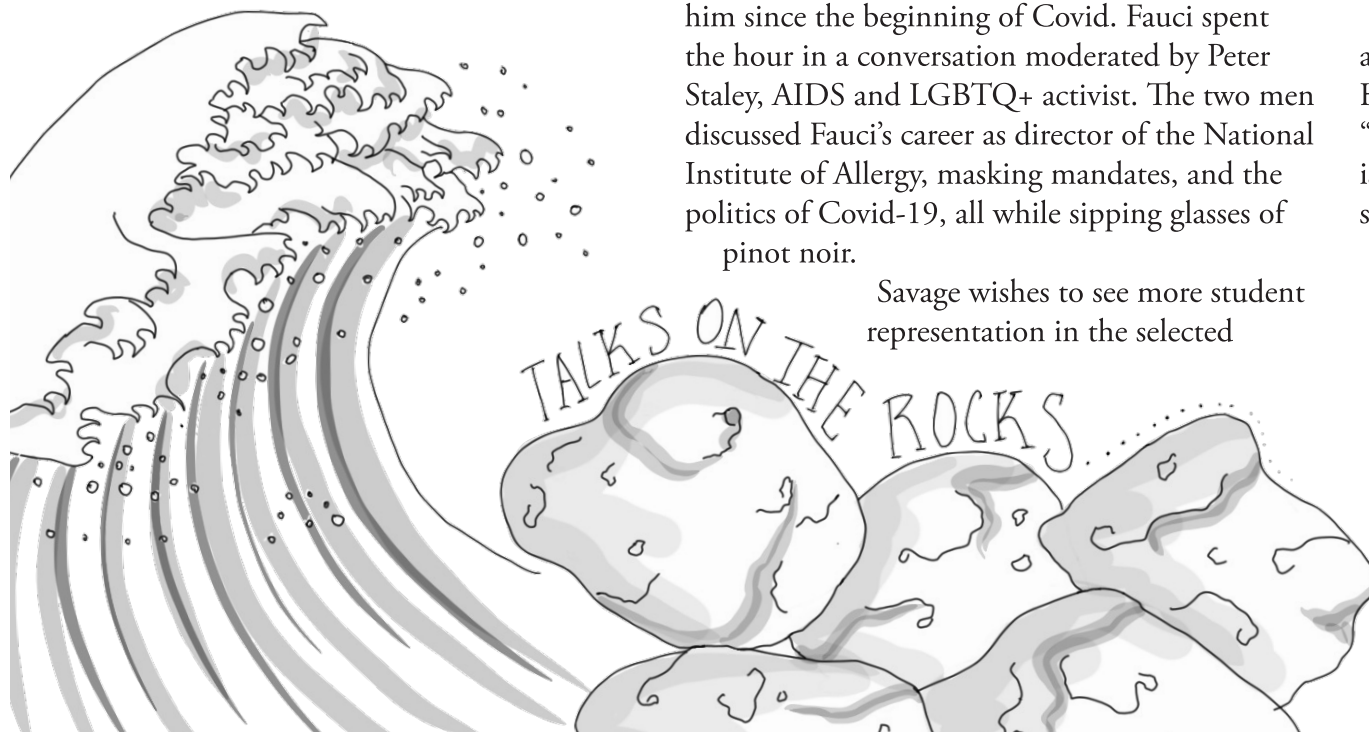
The sacred 40 minutes that precede open discussion are not only unique to Forum but also rare in most political dialogues on campus. Rather than forcing ourselves to take alternative opinions into consideration, Savage noted that Harvard students, as well as most Americans, “have forgotten how to disagree agreeably.”

Harvard boasts its diverse cultural and political student body—a trait that Tierney suggests can possibly contribute to a more hostile space for political discussion.

“There are times where political disagreement can change personal relationships at Harvard. That should not happen,” Tierney said. “Forum is one of the only places at Harvard that is moving in a direction to make that open discussion more accessible.”

**MARBELLA MARLO '24 (MMARLO@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU), MADDIE PROCTOR '25 (MADDIEPROCTOR@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU), AND PROOF SCHUBERT REED '25 (PROOFSCHUBERTREED@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITE FORUM FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY CANDACE GARDNER '25**



# MT JOY, “WHERE EVERYONE’S FREE NOW, TO MOVE HOW THEY FEEL NOW.”

*Mt. Joy rocked out at the newly opened MGM Music Hall at Fenway.*

BY HANNAH FRAZER '25 AND ANDREW SPIELMANN '25

On Tuesday, October 25th, 2022, Mt. Joy stepped onto the MGM Music Hall stage and was greeted by a chorus of cheering fans. Groovy lights flashed, creating a kaleidoscope of color that cut through thick fog spilling out from the stage. Without any formal introduction, lead singer Matt Quinn launched into the biggest hits from their latest album *Orange Blood*.

Mt. Joy quite literally started off with a bang; the energy in the room was palpable as they played “Lemon Tree” and “Evergreen.” The excitement continued to build as they switched up the vibes and performed “Sheep,” one of their earlier, more mellow songs. The voices of dedicated audience members enthusiastically singing along to every word echoed from the midst of the crowd.

Mt. Joy was originally formed in Philadelphia, PA, the hometown of the lead singer and guitarist. Having attended Northeastern University, frontman Matt Quinn repeatedly expressed his excitement to be back in Boston and underneath Fenway Park. The band has been around since 2016, and have since released three albums: *Mt. Joy*, *Rearrange Us*, and *Orange Blood*. The band has also been outspoken and involved in various forms of activism, such as donating all of their album profits from the first week of *Rearrange Us* towards Campaign Zero, a nonprofit dedicated to ending police violence.

The beauty of the band’s performance is from their ability to stay dynamic and experiment with new material, while staying timeless and keeping the audience engaged. The band kept the audience on their toes as they switched between covers such as “Fire on the Mountain” by the Grateful Dead and their original music. The crowd roared with excitement as pianist Jackie Miclau took control of the keyboard and dominated a piano solo in the middle of “Dirty Love.” Then, towards the end of the set, Matt Quinn led a shocking yet beautiful transition from his original song “Julia” straight into the bridge of Bill Whither’s “Ain’t no Sunshine.” It was appar-

ent that this band’s recorded music is only a small glimpse into their musical prowess, as each and every song was embellished well beyond its studio version.

Between guitar solos and covers, the band was clearly having fun jamming out, and the audience eagerly fed off of their playfulness. Before playing one of their new hits, “Johnson Song,” Matt joked about the unintentional phallic humor in the chorus. Their opener, The Brook & The Bluff, along with the singer Ashe, proceeded to join them, filling the stage with musicians jumping around singing “Oh-la-la-la, Dance away ‘cause a Johnson’s coming.”

After ending the official set with their most popular song on Spotify, “Silver Lining,” Matt Quinn and the rest of the band exited the stage to a sea of cheers and applause. They were not gone for long. They returned to the stage for an encore, performing three final songs: “Bathroom Light,” “Strangers,” and “Astrovan,” their first ever single, released in 2016.

Mt. Joy noted they were lucky to have The Brook & The Bluff as the opening act. Indeed, the opener shared Mt. Joy’s musical vibes. Their hit song “Halfway Up” captured a cool indie sound that could have been straight off of a Mt. Joy album.

MGM Music Hall Fenway recently opened in August 2022. From the outside, bright lights on a street corner beneath Fenway Park make for an obvious arrival. Inside, it feels both chic as well as comfortable. A mid-sized concert hall with a 5000 person capacity is perfect for a wide variety of artists, who want some more room than the House of Blues across the street but more intimate than TD Garden. While packed at the peak of Mt. Joy’s set, there was breathing room on the sides, and clear views even from the very back. The Brook & The Bluff were able to foster a great

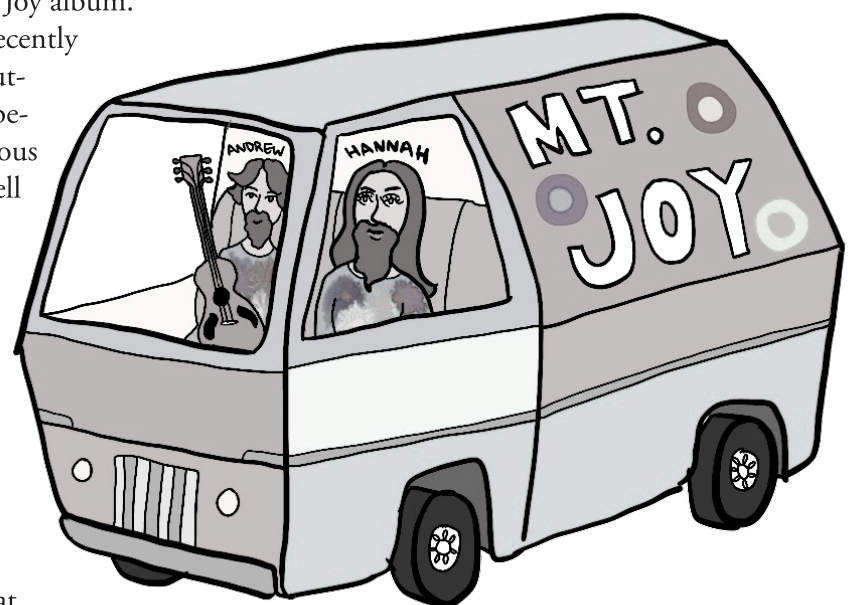
sense of intimacy in the space with their slightly smaller crowd.

Beyond their musical display, Mt. Joy’s lyrics are at once humorous, inspiring, and extraordinarily down-to-earth. The music is guitar-driven and frequently upbeat. The demographic of people at the concert, ranging widely in age, suggested that Mt. Joy, although a fairly young band, appeals to the masses with their unique indie rock sound. The fact they can cover the likes of Pink Floyd and The Grateful Dead with ease is testament to this flexibility, alongside Mt. Joy’s clear modernity.

Mt. Joy’s *Orange Blood* US tour comes to an end this week, but hopefully they will be back with more soon enough.

**ANDREW SPIELMANN '25 (ANDREWSPIELMANN@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND HANNAH FRAZER '25 (HANNAHFRAZER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) LEARNED HOW TO TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH JUST FOR THIS SHOW.**

GRAPHIC BY DAVID LI '25



## THE SHARK OF THE SUPREME COURT

*Students for Fair Admissions vs. Harvard: a Teaser*

BY CHARLES STEINBAUM '24

Todd Lincoln.

The mystery woman told me that the Supreme Court is a hierarchy-obsessed psychological game: a farce. These nine apex predators of the American legal trophic pyramid couch their wildest fantasies in “legal precedent” and “baroque Tort law.” And as committed patriots, we lay back, close our eyes, and think of England.

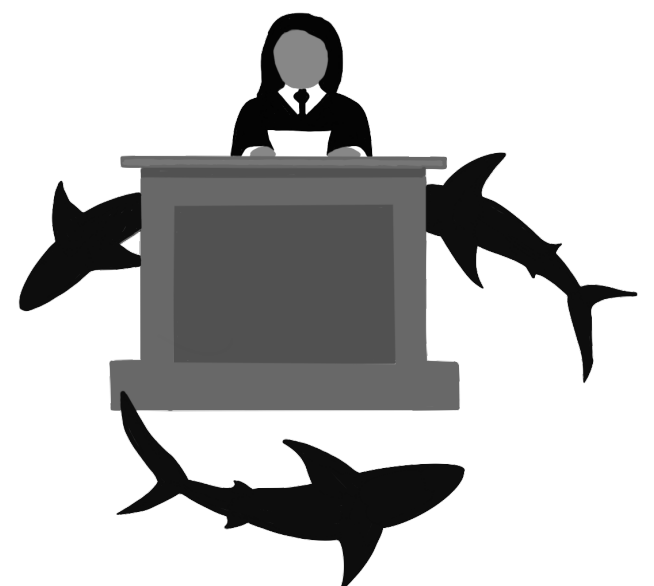
The late Antonin Scalia had an unshakable belief in natural law and the original intent of the Founders. But I realized, sitting there, breathing the same air as the robed god-kings, *there is no real natural law* — only the law of the jungle. The only natural thing in this environment are the appetites of the id. The super-ego is a veneer, a sham, a fig leaf. It’s all about the id, the will to power.

I’m afraid *Dobbs* did not satisfy these mako sharks-that-made-it: if that was the happy hour *Chateau Lafite Rothschild Pauillac*, then *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* is surely a fitting cigarette.

*Stay tuned for the 11.10 issue for a full, first hand account of Steinbaum’s experience at the Supreme Court.*

**CHARLES STEINBAUM '24 WRITES FORUM FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

GRAPHIC BY ISABEL EDDY '24



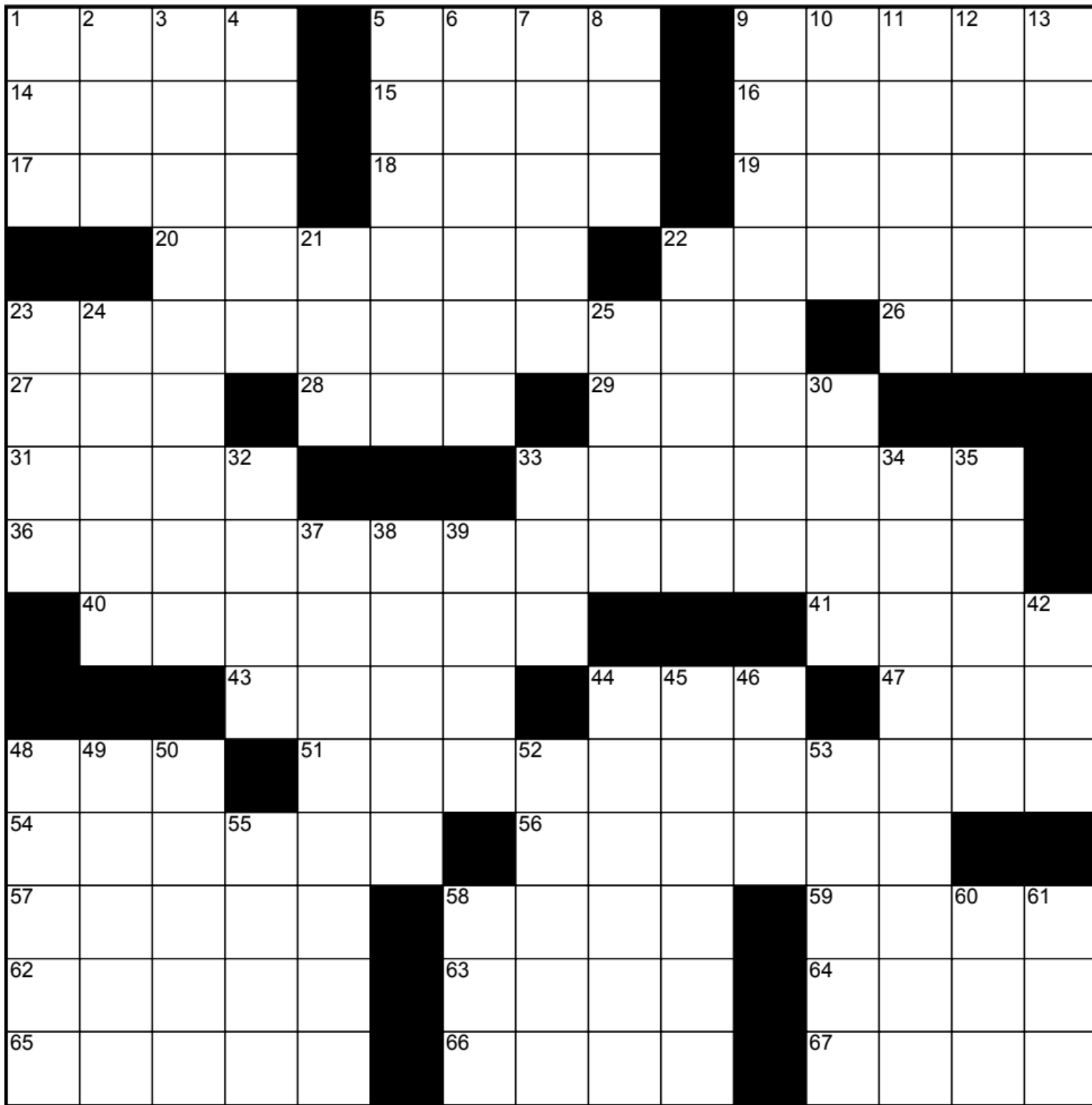
Brett Kavanaugh - in both appearance and essence - is a dangerous fish. A mako shark, to be precise. Not because he interrogates with vigor and valor, but because he actively *sharks*. Let me explain by way of an example. He sharked Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson during her first line of questioning. Call it rude, call it whatever. But KBJ—for now—is a mere guppy in a dangerous pool of cold-blooded ocean predators. It’s really nothing personal in the animal kingdom. The big fish eats the small fish. That’s just how it goes.

Kavanaugh’s zoological tendencies are not his fault. That is simply the way of the robed god-kings. This past week, I traveled to Washington to attend the Supreme Court oral arguments for the Affirmative Action Cases involving Harvard and UNC. I sat next to a nice lady who worked for another publication—I think it was the New York Times. But my head was still spinning from one too many Manhattans at the Spee the night before that it might as

**ARTS + NEWS | 10** well have been Mary

# LEFT, RIGHT, AND CENTER

BY PETER LASKIN '23



- 13 Struck like Samson
- 21 OB's counterpart
- 22 Tote
- 23 "El \_\_\_\_" (Marty Robbins ballad)
- 24 HAIM keyboardist
- 25 Where Homer gets hammered
- 30 Response to "Shall we?"
- 32 NYSE debuts
- 33 Actor Omar of "Lupin" and others
- 34 Ocean air
- 35 Ain't for long?
- 37 Licorice extract
- 38 Opposed the dying of the light, perhaps
- 39 Fey of "Megamind"
- 42 Epitome of messiness
- 44 Dog food, sometimes
- 45 Twain of Canadian country
- 46 BPD alert
- 48 Urban Dictionary entries, mostly
- 49 Doppler device
- 50 "Same," formally
- 52 Sitar tunes
- 53 Place with rolling and pins
- 55 Code for web devs
- 58 Prefix with pen
- 60 401(k) alternative
- 61 Ooh follower

## ACROSS

- 1 Crockett and Tubbs' squad
- 5 Slice of toast, in diner lingo
- 9 Stacks of paper
- 14 Workplace safety org.
- 15 Abbr. below "Entering Denver," maybe
- 16 Truth held to be self-evident
- 17 Sharpen, as a blade or an appetite
- 18 Chelsea's "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" character
- 19 "The Bare Necessities" singer
- 20 "I should have been a pair of \_\_\_\_ claws"—T. S. Eliot
- 22 Shoe material for a mobster, maybe
- 23 Donkey or elephant?
- 26 Cochineal, e.g.
- 27 Gymnast Raisman
- 28 Super Mario Bros. console

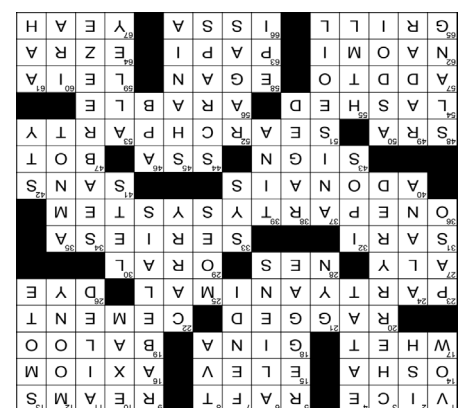
- 29 Kind of 10-Down that's not written
- 31 It's red at a wedding
- 33 Initial startup funding
- 36 Method for a night out that doesn't involve too much travel?
- 40 Shelley elegy
- 41 Comic's partner?
- 43 + or -, in number theory
- 44 "Top 10 Baby Names" dept.
- 47 @mothgenerator on Twitter, for one
- 48 Mme., across the Pyrenees
- 51 Google-themed bash?
- 54 Strapped down, like Odysseus to the mast
- 56 Fit to be farmed
- 57 Supplement
- 58 "The Candy House" novelist
- 59 Princess whose hairstyle was inspired by Hopi "squash blossoms"

- 62 Poet Shihab Nye
- 63 Big \_\_\_\_ (former Red Sox slugger)
- 64 Pound of letters?
- 65 Turn up the heat on, or something on which to turn up the heat
- 66 "Vengeance" actress Rae
- 67 Monosyllabic 2004 Usher hit

## DOWN

- 1 It's read at a wedding
- 2 Suffix with fool or freak
- 3 Cerise
- 4 Bother incessantly
- 5 Ska offshoot
- 6 1986 sci-fi sequel
- 7 Gucci rival
- 8 New Deal org.
- 9 "Gargantua et Pantagruel" fabulist
- 10 Mid-semester hurdle
- 11 Wasn't in good health
- 12 Lupin's nickname among the Marauders

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**CROSSWORDS FOR THE INDEPENDENT**



COVER ART + LAYOUT BY PIPER TINGLEAF '24

WE BELONG  
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OURSELVES

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