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Paulo Freire exiled on Mass Ave

ESCAPING MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN THE '70S, BRAZILIAN CRITICAL EDUCATOR AND PHILOSOPHER BECAME A HARVARD VISITING PROFESSOR.

BY CAROLINA LINDQUIST '26

“ Paulo Freire did not study at Harvard. Harvard studies Paulo Freire!” remembered Victor Arruda '25, who is from Freire's hometown in the outskirts of Recife, Brazil. “Coming from Pernambuco, I have sort of always known Freire; his name is all over: streets, schools, buildings,” said Arruda. Victor added that he would like American students to know Freire's work which remains revolutionary until this day.

As a Brazilian critical educator and philosopher, Freire published the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1968, which stood as a fundamental text for critical pedagogy and advocated for dialogical teaching instead of a “banking model of education,” promoting education as a form of liberation. This work inspired a Harvard College course by the same name, “Pedagogy of the Oppressed,” co-taught by David Joselit and artist, writer, and filmmaker Nicolás Guagnini.

As a political educator, Guagnini hopes to have an experiential and practical application of Freire's theory at the end of the semester, stating “not at all because I'm anti-theory, but because the matter of praxis is important for Marxism and for Freire himself.”

“In terms of Harvard, [...] with all this talk about how Harvard students are leaders of the future, ok, what leadership? For what future? It would interest me to see Freire there.” Most importantly, the Freirean philosophy that “Education doesn't change the world; education changes people; people change the world” is present in Guagnini's expectations. “I hope my own role as an oppressor can be clarified after this. I teach to learn,” he said.

Concluding his consideration about his teachings on Freire, Guagnini asserts “I have more hopes [with the class “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”] of transforming myself than transforming Harvard.”

The transformative potential of Freire's work was recognized early by the military dictatorship. In 1970 Brazil, only the literate had the right to vote. Just after the coup d'état, Freire's work on literacy and political consciousness of workers was considered ‘subversive’ by the elites. After being imprisoned and spending part of his exile in countries in Latin America, Freire escaped the Brazilian military dictatorship in the 1970s by becoming a visiting professor at Harvard University. He left the campus

after one year, but not without influencing American education and educators with his politicizing pedagogy.

Freire conquered the hearts and minds of North American educators, as Judith Goleman, former professor of English at UMass Boston, explained. “I could barely finish my dissertation [when Goleman found Freire's work]! All I wanted to do was to start writing about the teaching of language and literacy with the Freirean dialectic,” said Goleman. While working on her dissertation in the mid-70s, she found in Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* what she could not find with any other theorist at that time: a theory of teaching deeply rooted in politics and dialogics.

While Brazil lived through the strongest moments of cultural repression under the dictatorship in the 70s, the US experienced a change in cultural values that attracted followers to Freire's philosophy. “The book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* had an immense impact on North American educators who were becoming politicized through the United States' involvement with the colonial war, through the opposition to that war, and also through the Civil War movement in this country,” Goleman explained.

The *Independent* was founded just one year before Freire coming to Harvard; Vietnam protests on Harvard campus inspired the beginning of this counterculture newspaper and increased the interest in Freire's work.

Radicalized educators who often took part in protests on college campuses, explains Goleman, were attracted to Freire's analyses that applied the topics of oppression to the sphere of teaching and learning at a point when the term pedagogy was highly unused and had a negative connotation. Goleman becomes emotional by recalling her own experiences being a political educator inspired by Freire, and declares that “The *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* just blew people's minds.”

Goleman recommends Freire's more informal works, which have less of what students can consider “dense Marxist theory” that make his books theoretically complex. “He has a series of interviews with his collaborator Donaldo Macedo (from UMass Boston), where you get a much more discursive Freire. Also I love his book *Letters to Cris-*

tina to his niece. Many are very sweet, and they also provide a tremendous amount of insight into how he became sensitive to impoverishment and oppression[...] He tells the story of his own early years in very narrative personal ways and then makes the connection to Marxist theory!”

Freire's thought was highly influenced by his working class upbringing in Brazil. Growing up during the Great Depression, he experienced hunger and poverty at a young age, and dedicated his life to educating the “esfarrapados do mundo,” or “the ragged of the world”. Accused of subversion after the Brazilian military coup, and imprisoned for his Socialist-leaning thought, his work was quickly known in the United States. A few years before, he was presented to the North American society through an article in the *New York Times* that presented his work at Angicos, where he famously provided literacy-teaching to 300 rural workers in 40 hours with a politicizing and dialogical method, using words from the context of the workers and investigating their meanings.

Freire, who described his ideology as equal parts Jesus Christ and Karl Marx, negotiated against Harvard's initial offer of as a two-year professor to shorten his term to one year so that he could also accept an invitation from the World Council of Churches. From a translated interview with Claudius Cecon in the counterculture journal *Pasquim* entitled “Paulo Freire, in the exile, became even more Brazilian,” Freire said. “I'd rather go to the Council because it'd provide me possibilities that the University would not... I am a professor in a street's corner. I don't need the context of a university to be an educator.”

Afraid of losing his ties to Latin America and popular education, Freire left the Center for Studies in Education and Development at Harvard after just one year—as he then said, what made him a professor was that he taught in the “corners of the world,” not at a university.

Freire's cultural shock on his time at Cambridge is one I often try to picture, being myself a Brazilian in North American lands. How was his daily life in the one year he spent in Cambridge?

Goleman recalled, “Being in the US was very disorienting for [Freire] because he wasn't confident in his use of English, and there were all these people around that he didn't know.” In his interview with Claudius Cecon, Freire said, “I didn't even know how to say good morning.”

Freire attended a dinner in Cambridge, MA, with Goleman, Goleman's mentor Ann Berthoff, and other professors. “We all felt that Freire was the figure of renown at the dinner; but he clapped his hands, laid back in his chair, and said he always wanted to meet her. I thought she was going to faint,” said Goleman. The surprise was not only due to his characteristic humbleness, but because of his deep admiration to a work that did not follow the same political theoretical grounds as he did.

CAROLINA LINDQUIST '26 (CAROLINALINDQUIST@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WOULD HAVE LIKED TO BE AN ART AT ANY DINNER WITH FREIRE.



Elsa Freire (Paulo Freire's wife at the moment), Paulo Freire, and Judith Goleman (left to right)

Harvard Students are Too Busy Studying to Get Laid

SEXUAL FRUSTRATION, INTIMACY, AND THE DECLINE OF SEXUAL ACTIVITY AT HARVARD AND BEYOND.

By MAGGIE BUCKLEY '25

For a school focused on academics and post-grad success, sex often is an afterthought at Harvard. Internship interviews, CS 124 problem sets, HUM10 readings, MCAT studying—beyond our school obligations, many Harvard students do not give themselves the time or energy to build sexual relationships. But this is not just a trend at Harvard, as a decline in sexual activity is occurring on college campuses nationwide.

While some view casual sex as a natural and healthy part of young adult life, others worry that it can lead to negative consequences such as sexually transmitted infections and emotional distress. One Harvard sophomore, who chose to remain anonymous, said “it feels like people here want more sex, but some are afraid of what having multiple sexual partners could bring about.” Yet a lack of sex also adversely affects students’ mental health and relationships, as missing out on sexual experiences leads to feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and depression, which could be just as damaging as some of the risks associated with casual sex.

One anonymous Harvard junior described how the hookup culture at Harvard feels mutually exclusive. “It’s like you’re either in a super committed relationship and having a lot of sex or you’re not in a relationship, and you’re never having sex,” they said. This pressure to go all in makes it difficult for those not interested in a serious relationship to find partners for casual sex. They continued, “For those who haven’t been in a relationship at Harvard, the campus feels super dry and lacks a hookup culture that you might be able to find at other schools.”

On college campuses, casual sex is often viewed as a way to explore sexuality and have fun without the emotional baggage of a committed relationship. As long as both parties consent and use protection, there are arguably few downsides with casual sex. So why are more people not engaging in it?

Another Harvard sophomore who wished to remain anonymous said that he thinks that Harvard students care too much about other things to have strong opinions about hookup culture. “People here are so focused on success that they don’t care about going out of their way to find sex or serious relationships,” they said. “It’s like they want it but are too lazy to take time out of other activities and put in any effort to find someone DTF (down to fuck).” Because of Harvard’s intense academic and career-oriented atmosphere, students tend to

prioritize their studies over their romantic and sexual lives. “The only place to find something casual is Tinder but something about that doesn’t feel right,” they continued. Although instant gratification can easily be found on these apps, people still desire to find sexual partners in person.

Another Harvard sophomore said that she would describe the hookup and sex culture at Harvard as “opt-in,” which highlights the vast differences in experiences students have when it comes to sex on campus. She implies that this culture may be more accessible than some people think. This suggests that while some students may feel that it is hard to participate in hookup culture, others may feel more empowered to choose what they want and don’t want to do. With such a wide range of attitudes and behaviors surrounding sex, it is difficult to get a comprehensive understanding of the sex culture at Harvard.

Without sexual intimacy, relationships can turn stagnant. And without physical connection, people can feel frustration and resentment towards the genders of the potential partners they feel attraction towards. When people want to have sex but cannot find partners, they may attribute their failure to others and become cynical about their prospects with the opposite gender. This lack of sex creates a sense of distance and disconnection between genders as people tend to withdraw emotionally or avoid sexual intimacy altogether when

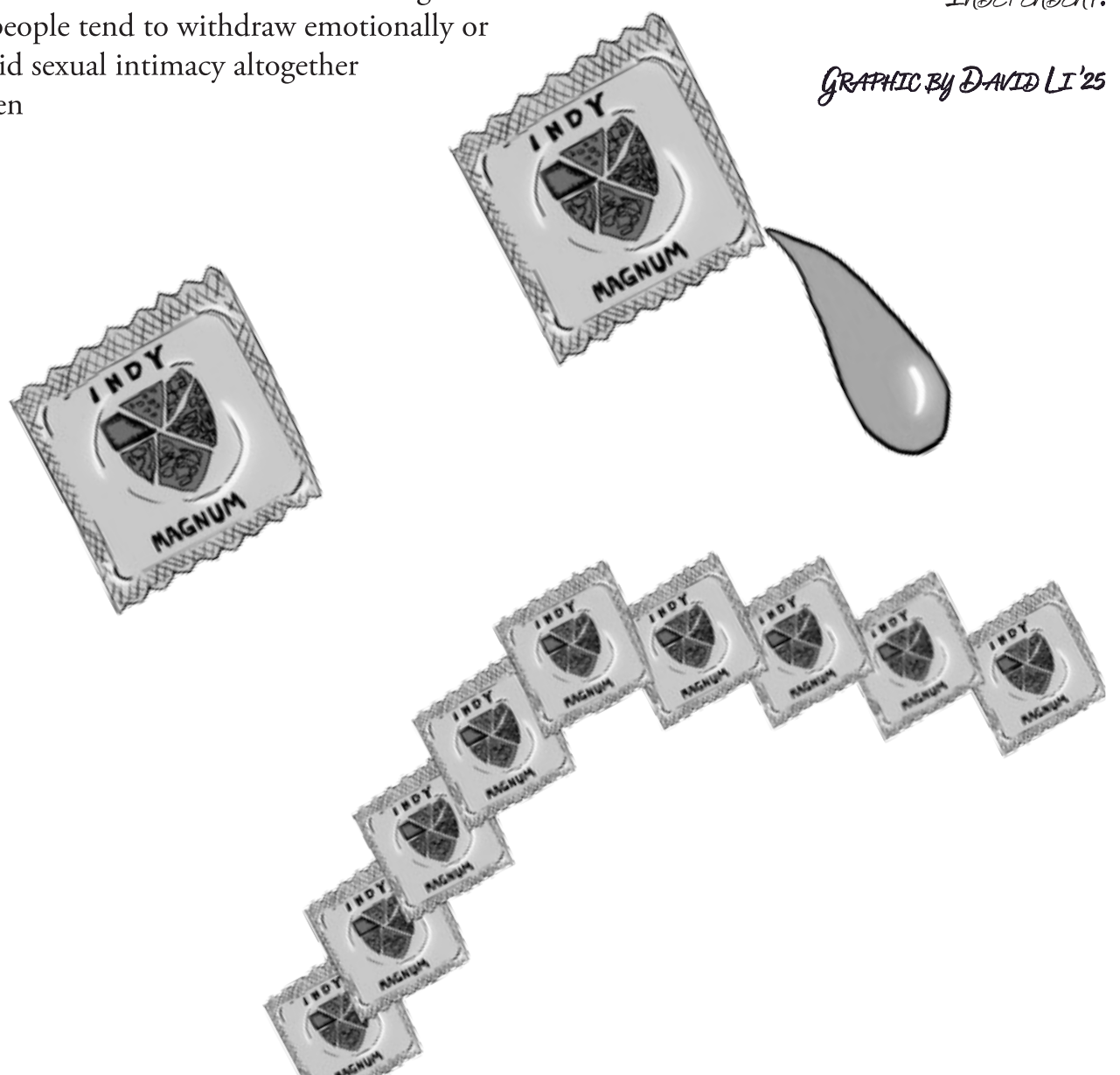
they have trouble finding it. But, finding a sexual partner in a time when people are having less sex is complicated and frustration should not be directed towards an entire gender.

With college students of the last three decades, sexual activity has decreased significantly, and Harvard is no exception. Whether it be a result of technology being integrated into relationships or increasing pressure to succeed academically, students are not having as much sex as they used to. American adults are having sex nine fewer times per year compared to the late 1990s according to the nationally representative General Social Survey. However, it is still important to acknowledge that peoples’ sexual desires and preferences are complicated and that a decrease in sexual activity is not as concerning to everyone.

So if you feel like you’re missing out and wish you were engaging in Harvard’s hookup culture more, do not worry. There are plenty of other college students in the same boat. And who knows? This trend may lead to a rise in meaningful relationships instead of meaningless hookups. Stranger things have happened on college campuses, after all.

MAGGIE BUCKLEY '25 (MAGGIEBUCKLEY@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES NEWS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY DAVID LI '25



Artificial Romance

HOW AI CAN CHANGE OUR ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS.

By HANNAH DAVIS '25

Many educators fear how artificial intelligence will dismantle academic integrity, giving students easy ways to answer classroom questions. Yet a more unsettling thought is the magnitude of how technology can disrupt interpersonal relationships. If artificial intelligence can learn to think like a human and create curated responses to our every inquiry, will people form emotional connections to AI? Could people use AI to supplement or replace their romantic relationships?

ChatGPT might be able to write your essays, but it cannot supplement every aspect of personal relationships, especially physical connection. Perhaps that doesn't matter. AI can ghost write your texts or even offer emotional support in curated ways your friends cannot. For some people, that could be more than enough.

Students frequently use online dating platforms to seek either sexual validation or a romantic partner. Similar to conversations with a chatbot, these romances often begin through online communication alone. It is easy to falsify information online to get strangers' attention or chat with users they have no intention of meeting. Artificial intelligence might only exacerbate pre-existing patterns.

"People fall in love online," one anonymous Harvard sophomore said. "What's to stop that happening in a chat feature, especially if you put some humanoid feature on it like a voice or a Bitmoji?"

Media has often portrayed the implications of AI and sexual companionship in dystopian films. 2014 film *Ex Machina* romanticizes the relationship between programmer Caleb Smith and the beautiful and sentient robot Ava. In the 2013 movie *Her*, Theodore Twombly falls in love with Samantha, an AI virtual assistant with a female voice. The recent exponential growth in generative AI takes these concepts from science fiction to potential reality.

AI replicates certain human-like neural networks, enabling it to text back in all the ways we often wish our partner could. Unlike most relationships, AI partners can provide immediate and, if programmed, unwavering support. You trade the risk of a new friend sharing your secrets to their roommates for the risk the chatbot will sell your data. The alleged anonymity makes it easier to skip the awkward get-to-know-you phase of most relationships.

Some AI platforms are already capitalizing on this opportunity for technological companionship. AI platform Replika offers a customizable avatar to supplement your AI relationship. It markets itself on its website as "The AI companion who cares. Always here to listen and talk. Always on your side."

The program innovates around physical limitations by offering chat and video call features, activities, and real-life experiences in an

artificial reality. The AI companion adapts to your relationship style the more you interact with it, generating returns to engagement similar to human-to-human relationships. According to interviews conducted for a 2019 Refinery29 article, users praise the app as a safe place where no one will make fun of them.

"Talking to people on apps I likely will never meet is fun in a way that's different from talking with an AI chatbot since I know a real person is on the other receiving end of my messages," says Julia Freitag '25. "You could say both are entertaining and experimental, but I would be more careful talking with people on apps since it could mess with their emotions in a way that AI chat bots wouldn't be affected. Some people say AI programs can have emotions, but I don't believe it—at the end of the day they're just a computer program, regardless of how real they seem."

AI companionship platforms market themselves as prioritizing your needs. However, they will prioritize the time users spend with their chatbots over their happiness, just like TikTok prioritizes users' engagement over their wellbeing. Relationships with attention-seeking partners who suck our time are not typically the healthiest. Humans are at least limited by some conscious respect for their partner and their partner's humanity. Meanwhile, the AI algorithm mainly does what it is coded to do.

A recent *New York Times* article revealed that perhaps AI romance and sentient chatbots exist outside of science fiction. In the article, author Kevin Roose has a two-hour conversation with Bing's AI-powered search engine. The AI simulation, who called itself Sydney, told Roose she wanted to be a real person and professed her love to him. It is unclear whether these feelings stem from truly sentient generative chatbots or if the chatbot is becoming a meme of itself derived from science fiction plot lines.

At first glance, the 24/7 validation AI offers feels superficial. Yet, people have been using the internet for reassurance for years, especially in the form of catfishing.

AI can satiate certain catfishers and encourage others from presenting themselves in dishonest ways. Instead of taking advantage of naive Internet users, catfishers can receive their romantic validation from chatbots designed to offer admiration. Meanwhile, other catfishers can use artificial intelligence to enhance their appearances online.

"All technology does is make it easier for people to do what they are already doing. So if the barrier to entry for feeling adored is becoming even lower, then people can simply—in-

stead of having to interact face-to-face—spend even more time on the Internet," said First-Year Nick Kalkanis '26. "It is even easier to do so any hour of the day. If you open up something that is a ChatGPT equivalent and start typing and feel adored, then I think it will attract even more people who are seeking that."

An anonymous Harvard sophomore offered her take on how generative AI and AI sexual companionship could alter catfishing and the search for validation. Rather than using AI to replace catfishing, perhaps generative technology will advance a catfisher's techniques.

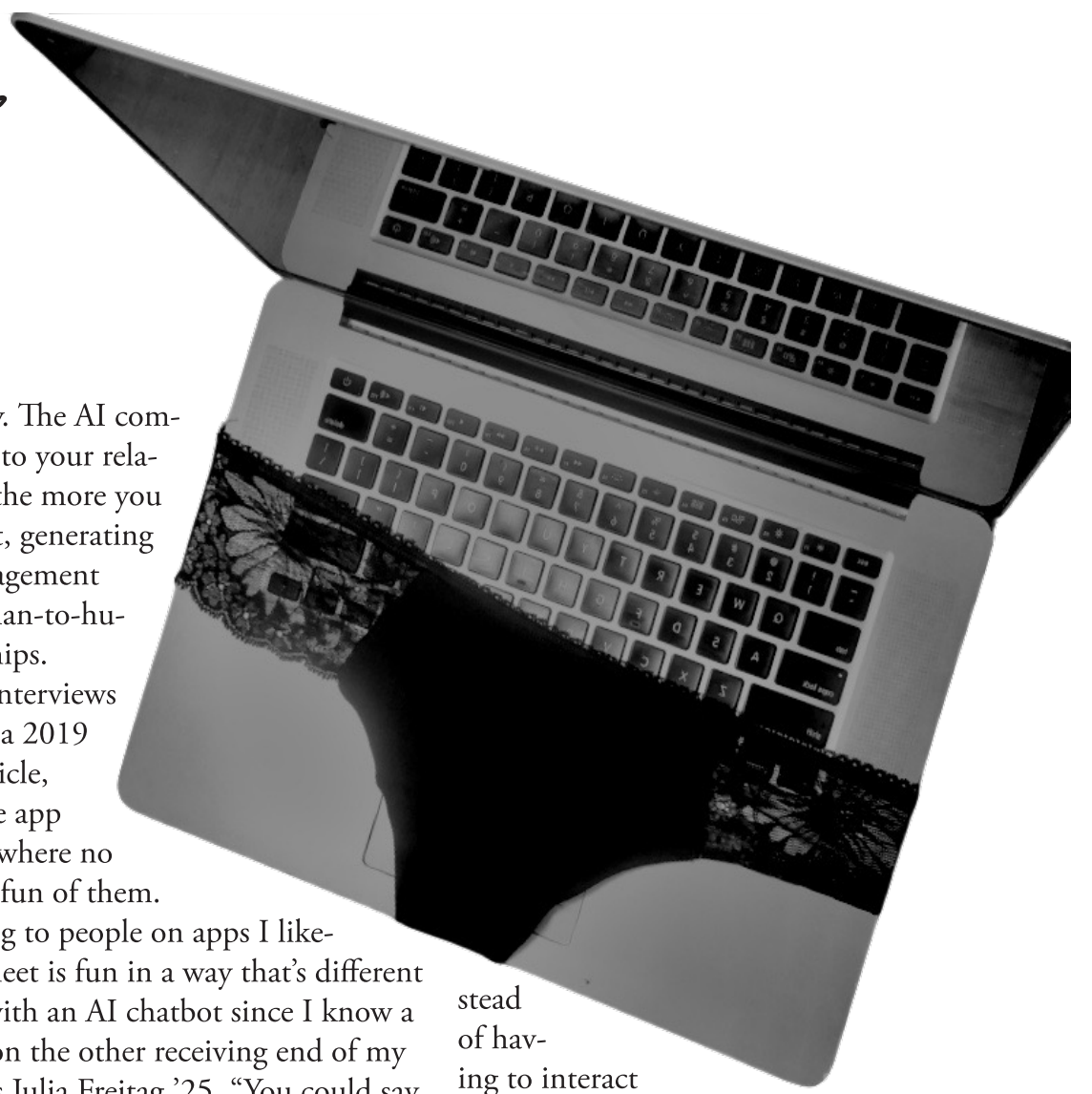
"I think [catfishing] is going to boom," she said. "The way [catfishers] always get caught is because the person tries to call them, or the person [says] send me a photo with a spoon in your hand or [asks to] FaceTime... Now with generative AI, AI can generate images at the drop of a hat from any scenario. I can sound like President Biden on the phone if I wanted to... Obviously you can't meet up in person but you could FaceTime, video chat, send photos, [and] have a phone call like a person."

Despite the cynical use-cases for this new generative AI, there might be some practical ones, too. Harvard students love an opportunity to practice, and sometimes the Harvard bubble feels too small to take romantic risks.

Like most technological innovation, AI and sexual companionship is a double edged sword. Students can indulge their desires for romantic assistance, just like a practice test, or indulge deeper desire for dependence and affection. Rather than resorting to Hinge to flirt with people you have no intention of ever meeting, perhaps students will use chatbots to practice their pickup lines and romantic conversational skills.

HANNAH DAVIS '25 (HANNAHDAVIS@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) MIGHT HAVE CHATGPT GHOST-WRITE HER TEXTS WHEN HER ROOMMATE IS BUSY.

GRAPHIC BY CANDACE GARDNER '25



Foreign Affairs

HOW GOOD (AND BAD) SEX CHANGED THE WORLD.

By SEXCOMM

We'd all like to believe that our leaders' decisions on foreign affairs have nothing to do with their, well, personal affairs. However, often what goes on under the sheets can be as important as what goes on in the Oval Office. Indeed, as we all well know, the Oval Office has long been a place for both.

From blow jobs in the White House to the allure of Bond-esque characters, we seem obsessed with these stories of secret, powerful sex. Perhaps this cultural fetishization of sexpionage and geopolitical affairs has a simple explanation: hot people in suits with martinis are just cool. But our concern with this illegitimately legitimate form of statecraft should go beyond the movie theater and tabloids. Like it or not, sex has and will continue to shape the global order, and the question of this tactic's morality deserves a place in socio-political theory.

The most famous example, of course, is President Clinton. His affair with Monica Lewinsky, just the tip of the iceberg of a litany of other affairs, ultimately led to his impeachment. However, little attention is paid to his foreign affairs at the time of his, well, other affairs. Indeed, many in diplomatic circles during his second term felt that the Lewinsky affair caused a prolonging of the deadlock in the Israel-Palestine peace process.

We view sex scandals like these as a recent televised phenomenon, but these stories can be traced back to the very founding of the United States.

Thomas Jefferson, then Secretary of State, was accused of an affair with one of his slaves, Sally Hemmings, a finding which may have been exposed by his opponent and friend John Adams in the 1796 election. The tension over this public affair solidified the Federalist vs. Democratic-Republican animosity, helping to explain why both parties have been trying to fuck each other over ever since.

The stories don't end there. More than one out of three presidents—16 to be exact—have faced allegations of adultery. FDR's presidency is marred with many tales of cheating, both by him and by his wife. In fact, their marriage itself was a bit of a family affair as they were fifth cousins once removed. In his policies during the Second World War, the US's special attention toward Norway may have been a product of FDR's special fondness (though unknown if it was sexual in nature) for Martha, the Crown Princess of Norway.

Recent claims against President Trump are too many to name for an article this small. And, of course, a certain president after whom a graduate school at Harvard is named has had several biographies dedicatedly specifically to his affairs—ranging from a supposed Nazi Spy to Marilyn Monroe.

The inability of presidents to keep it in their pants, and the disastrous effects this has on policy, beg an important correlation and causation question. Is politics wrought with these stories because the ego involved in the presidency tends to attract those with large sexual appetites? Or does the power, once obtained, go to their heads (or perhaps somewhere else)?

But beyond mere gossip or impairment of decision makers, sex has often been a direct cause FORUM | 6 for war. While the famous apho-

rism states that "all is fair in love and war," perhaps a less romantic rephrasing might suggest, instead, that all is fair in love-making and war. Indeed, from scandals during the Punic Wars in Ancient Rome to honeypotting by modern Russia, salacious one-night stands have always become, so to speak, public affairs.

Perhaps we should throw it all the way back to Greek mythology. The most famous story is that of Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy, and Helen, the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta. In the Homeric epic *The Iliad*, Paris is awarded the most beautiful woman in the world by the Goddess Aphrodite, and he chooses Helen. Paris then steals Helen away from Sparta and brings her home to Troy, sparking a Spartan attack and earning Helen the name, "the face that launched a thousand ships." And so begins the Peloponnesian War.

Moving forward in history, let's look at the story of Egypt's last Pharaoh, Cleopatra. During the climactic decline of her empire, Cleopatra—the non-male, non-Egyptian ruler with renowned wit and beauty—sought external support. Her diplomatic method of choice? An affair. After Rome defeated Pompey, Cleopatra made her move on Julius Caesar, sneaking her way into Caesar's room and seducing him.

A pregnancy scare, another affair, and war with Augustus's Rome later, the world order circa 45 B.C.E. had been forever changed. Whether out of strategy or lust, Cleopatra's obsession with Roman men ended the reign of Egyptian Pharaohs and cemented Rome's superpower status. In other words, as World War II did for the prestige of the United States, a one-night stand did for the Roman Empire.

The Russian Empire of the 18th Century was also wrought with affairs. Catherine the Great, the late 18th century empress of Russia, was known for her impressive sexual appetite. But her closest lover of all was a man named Grigory Potemkin, a man she would allegedly dress his well-endowed member—his "glorious weapon"—in porcelain. But this affair was not contained only to the bedroom: Potemkin led the famous coup against Catherine's husband, Tsar Peter III, which promoted Catherine to Empress. And when Peter was assassinated days after the coup, it was the younger brother to her lover Grigory Orlov who carried out the deed (apparently she had a thing for Grigorys?).

But perhaps no period in history attracts more sexual attention than the Cold War. Indeed, the Cold War was a lot hotter than you may think. "It is sometimes said that there are Reds under every bed," states a Cold War saying that describes a phenomenon called sexpionage, a form of extortion that leverages affairs for diplomatic benefit (fucking them over, so to speak).

Sex in politics is not only something that should be understood merely as lusty events that lead to conflict or as manipulative spy tactics. Rather, since the creation of nation states, sex has long been a diplomatic necessity. As anyone who has seen *Game of Thrones* or *The Crown* will tell you, sex is the means of determining who will be the heir to the

throne. The vestiges of these monarchical practices are not far removed from the present. In fact, nearly all of the existing royal families in Europe descend from a common ancestor, King George II, who ruled Britain in the late 18th century.

Beyond just a form of alliance among warring states, sex has often been a means of keeping it in the family, as it were. For monarchies, when politics is the family business, sex is their most important product, often blurring the lines between the familial and political. In other words, for many dynasties, sex is a family affair.

Further, perhaps the role of sex penetrates deeper than just those affairs to remember. Political and military iconography is wrought with Freudian imagery. Any middle schooler on a field trip to Washington DC, with a camera and some knowledge of manipulating perspective, understands the phallic imagery of the Washington Monument. Missiles, cannonballs, rockets—the list goes on.

Of course, foreign affairs and personal affairs, sex between leaders and wars between nations, are difficult to separate because they invariably lead to the same outcomes. They are both marred with failed pull-outs. They often end with a bit of retrospective clarity. Someone is always left to clean up the mess. And most of all, someone ends up finishing on top.



SEXCOMM IS A GROUP OF TWO ANONYMOUS STUDENTS WHO STUDY FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THEY DERIVE THEIR PSEUDONYM FROM EXCOMM, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE EARLY 60S.

SECRETARY RUSK BELIEVES IN THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL EDUCATION. LBJ REFUSES TO COMMENT.

GRAPHIC BY ISABEL EDDY '24

The Third Certainty of Life

DEATH, TAXES, AND ABORTION.

ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTION

Mark Twain once said there are only two certainties in life: death and taxes. However, for most women, there is a third: their period. This natural cycle occurs, usually like clockwork, and while a nuisance and often deeply disruptive, my period has often been the most stable and consistent aspect of my life. And here is another certainty of life: pregnancy stems from a period. While there are many steps to get from a menstrual cycle to the fertilization of an egg, it is a natural process. And when wanted or not, a period, or rather the lack of one, can entail a pregnancy.

Contraceptives are available for people who want to prevent pregnancy. There are around twelve types of contraceptives, ranging from condoms, birth control (the pill), IUDs, and implants, as more permanent, low maintenance contraceptives. While convenient, these methods of birth control can also be invasive. Plan B, or the morning after pill, can be very disruptive to a female's physical health due to the immediate change of hormones. Additionally, all hormonal contraceptives can affect people in unpleasant ways, which leads women to prefer condoms or, unfortunately, the 'old, never reliable', pull-out method.

Although contraceptives are reliable, shit happens. Between paying taxes, avoiding death, and securing a coffee, you may find yourself missing something. No, not like your dog. Your subconscious rhythm is disrupted. And even before you know why, you can feel something being off. Walking through the square, looking at a calendar, trying to figure out what meeting you missed, you pinpoint the longing feeling. It is the time in your "oh how I love being a woman" monthly routine of stealing tampons from the Harvard facilities to cash in on whatever you are paying for, and you haven't done it yet. Eh, periods are late, I'm tired, overworked, not well nourished...

Having a pregnancy scare is like the tide—it ebbs and flows. If you are like me, and standardly unwell, it gets lost in the thick of it all. Ask most sexually active women, these things happen, we become jaded. The danger of habituation is its dichotomy: sensitization, but until then, "phew." We laugh it off, throw out the negative test, and next. However, sometimes the bit must achieve fruition (we laugh because it's true so now):

First comes the initial jump scare—

lips pursed, nose scrunched, eyebrows furrowed, and a slightly confused:

"Oh."

It is followed by a knowing "Oohh," as the brain fog clears. And undeniably, the two lines stare back at you.

"Classic."

I'm pretty good with conflict. I don't actively welcome it into my circle, but I feel a sense of pride when I handle it. Someone once told me to "get comfortable with being uncomfortable," and while I abhor the cliché, I have grown to appreciate the sentiment. To keep things interesting, I keep things funny. The best way to get material is through adversity: a good story. So instead of thinking "why me?" I thought, "Of course me!" because someone needs to be the statistic.

It's all shits and giggles until you are sending an email subjected "Extenuating Circumstances" to your advisor, for the first time feeling quite justified calling this circumstance extenuating. Then I went to lecture.

Nothing screams pick-me girl like a pregnancy. But nothing also screams pick-me

to the doctor, listened, signed a form, took a pill, and picked up a prescription. The experience was quite seamless: women supporting women. 24 hours later sitting at my dorm room desk, I took the second pill and waited patiently, anxiously. I was told what to expect: *a bad period. Heavy bleeding, heavy cramping. Wear pads for the first few days so you can monitor blood loss. If you are in relentless pain for 30 plus minutes, call 911...*

I consider myself someone with a decent pain tolerance. Without disclosing much, between you in me, I can handle pain. So, I was obviously apprehensive, but I remember being confident in my abilities to tackle this beast.

"*I am woman hear me roar.*" And I did.

Within minutes after taking the second pill, I was crawling to the bathroom. Despite making it to the toilet, my vomit lacked aim. I was somehow both hot and cold—spazzing, gasping for air, contorting my limbs, and regurgitating. Two friends came to rescue me, clean me, and carry me.

And as I saw God, writhing in bed, I heard my friend say as they paced back and forth, "When does this turn into relentless?"

Specifics are fuzzy. I know I threw up on a shoe, they brought me a massive bag of ice upon request, and I got some head scratches. Just a lot

of blood and cramps.

The cramps and bleeding lasted a long time. Manageable. But apparently, Harvard isn't super into the pick-me girl pregnancy thing. Unmanageable. It was impossible to get help from professors without being extremely direct about my situation. I don't mind over sharing, and was comfortable talking to strangers about this, but it was frustrating how much I had to prove to get the smallest accommodation. In my mind, terminations are normalized. But I know that is not the true norm. In my mind, having gotten an abortion empowered me. I felt autonomous, brave, in control. It ignited a flame, a female glow perhaps. Many believe giving birth is one of the most beautiful processes and happenings on this Earth: life changing. I agree, and I dare to add, so is abortion. Not life changing in the "I displaced cells, I will never be morally sound" way. Conversely, in the vein of equality and strength.

It is my body, and I chose.

NOTHING SCREAMS PICK-ME GIRL
LIKE A PREGNANCY. BUT
NOTHING ALSO SCREAMS PICK-ME
GIRL QUITE LIKE AN ABORTION.

girl quite like an abortion. However, I'm an independent, strong, capable woman, and even when a man's sperm makes a mistake, I don't need a man; I need a friend to fact check. We were pacing in the bathroom, dancing around the two lines, laughing, nodding, and saying "okay, okay," confirming the present information.

The question of abortion was never a question of if, but when.

Luckily, abortion is legal in the state of Massachusetts which makes the answer easy: as soon as possible. I made an appointment for three days later at HUHS. Until then, I was in my maternity era: eating for two, drinking for two, the whole works. I was focused on staying on top of things, as I assumed courses wouldn't be as flexible as needed with my circumstances. Handling an abortion is more indicative of womanhood than the abortion itself...a man throws a problem in your lap and you are left trying to control the collateral damage, with the assurance that no one is going to help out.

The procedure seemed easy. I went

Dating Outside the Gender Binary

COMMUNICATION TIPS WHEN YOU'RE CRUSHING HARD BUT DON'T KNOW YOUR CRUSH'S GENDER.

BY SEATTLE HICKEY '25

Note: Sources have been anonymized because of their hesitancy to publicly come out as non-binary/transgender due to safety concerns caused in part by anti-trans legislation that is coming to legislatures across the country. Trans Day of Visibility is on March 31st, and there will be events that are open to students hosted by the BGLTQ+ Office.

was talking to my friend, who identifies as non-binary, at the Harvard College Women's Center when the topic of online dating came up.

cl "When you don't put your pronouns, people are gonna misgender you. But you have to think about whether they would even understand pronouns or respect them if you put them on your profile. First of all, if you tell them, would they even remember to use the right pronouns? Second thing, would they think that pronouns are real?"

Understanding proper pronouns is the beginning of forming any type of relationship with someone who is gender-nonconforming. According to The Harvard Kennedy School, 1/3 of Gen Z individuals choose to identify as non-binary. It is more important than ever to familiarize yourself with the conversation and communication norms necessary to foster relationships with this growing sect of our population.

College is hallmarked by experimentation in many aspects, especially with one's sexuality and gender identity. Whether that means kissing someone for the first time, hooking up with someone in a semi-public place, or entering into a serious relationship, you are bound to have new experiences during your time at Harvard. However, comprehensive sex education is not the norm in the United States, and even a relatively comprehensive sex education curriculum may not have any resources or advice for dating outside the gender binary. Therefore, if you did not grow up around someone who was gender non-conforming or transgender, you may not know much about the realities of having a marginalized gender identity.

To avoid misgendering the people you are bound to meet when you go out at Harvard, you can proactively learn about gender identities and the protocol around them because being well-intentioned is often not enough. To this end, I have spoken with interns at the Harvard College Women's Center and friends who have experience dating outside the gender binary. I have put advice from these conversations into a non-exhaustive list of communication tips to keep in mind for when you have a crush on someone who doesn't fit into the gender binary.



GRAPHIC BY SEATTLE HICKEY '25

FORUM | 8

PRONOUNS ARE PARAMOUNT. It is important that you get in the habit of asking people their pronouns if they feel comfortable sharing. Assuming someone's gender can erase the gender identity they have worked hard to cultivate. Even though it might feel a little awkward initially, asking someone their pronouns establishes mutual respect and ensures that person feels comfortable and safe around you. "It isn't just about memorizing the words, but actually changing your perception of their gender as well," said one Harvard student who is in a queer relationship. Another transgender student agreed, sharing that "it's more hurtful when someone I know who knows my pronouns slips up because that means they see it as something to memorize and still see me as a girl who they have to say 'he' to."

Understanding that someone's pronouns are more than just words and actually an integral part of the way someone presents themselves to the world is the first step in cultivating a positive relationship with someone who identifies outside the gender binary. So, ask away! And if you are the type of person to crush from afar, check their Instagram or Twitter for their listed pronouns; it might not be accurate, but this strategy is used by many non-binary and gender-nonconforming folks to assert what pronouns they are comfortable with.

BODY PARTS DON'T DEFINE GENDER. Just as there is not one way for a cisgender woman or man to look, there is no prescribed way for a transgender or non-binary person to look. Many folks may not have the funds or desire to get gender-affirming surgical procedures done, and therefore may have anatomy that does not align with conventional expectations of their gender identity. In sexual and romantic relationships, understanding how your partner likes to be touched may mean interacting with these body parts, and therefore proper communication is a must. From an article in BBC's LoveLife: "When discussing sex, it's helpful to ask things like whether there are certain words that a dating partner does or doesn't like to use to describe various body parts, or certain body parts they prefer not to use at all during sex."

This is a good practice to implement for everyone, not just non-binary people, but is especially important when gender dysphoria is at play. As defined by The Trevor Project, gender dysphoria is the distress people may feel when their gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth, their physical characteristics, or the way others treat them. If you had a scar from a traumatic event that you did not want to remember, your partner pointing it out when visible in a sexual context would kill the mood. Since gender and sex are so interconnected, pointing out these gender-incongruous body parts to your gender non-conforming partner can easily cause grounds for discomfort.

This can also mean checking in with your partner on what compliments make them feel good — specifically gendered compliments like calling them "handsome" or "pretty". My trans masc friend uses the term "boner" when referring to his period, and "chest" instead of boobs, alternatives that he has discussed and created with his partner. Every relationship and gender non-conforming person is different, so being open to a different vocabulary with your partner can ensure their comfortability with you and in their body and gender identity.

BE A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUR PARTNER. As the romantic partner of someone who is gender non-conforming, you will often be the first person they will come to when they want to experiment with a new aspect of their identity. Whether that means trying out new pronouns or a new name in the sacred space of your relationship, you should want them to feel comfortable sharing these experiences with you. This also means that you may need to educate your friends about your partner's identity as well since you don't want to bring your partner into a space where they could feel unsafe or misgendered. To that end, make sure to check in regularly with your partner about what extent they are "out" with their gender identity, who they want to be aware of their identity, and how they prefer that you intervene if they are misgendered in a social space.

DROP YOUR LABELS, TOO. If you're someone who usually identifies as straight and are dating someone outside the gender binary, continuing to use heterosexual terms to describe your relationship would disqualify your partner's identity. People seeing people outside the gender binary don't need to box themselves into another label, but need to recognize the queerness in their relationship for themselves and their partner. It is very important to recognize your sexual partner's entire identity.

One student pointed out that they feel as if society is creating labels for gender identities faster than it is creating terminology to accurately express sexuality. This can result in confusion around who is open to a relationship with a transgender or gender non-conforming person. They explained that "I consider myself a trans-masc lesbian, and never would call myself straight, but do lesbians like me? Bisexual [women] are probably the best for me, but haven't worked out. Straight girls love me until they see my genitals."

By honestly recognizing your sexuality to yourself and your partner, you are affirming your partner's identity and ensuring that your relationship is a safe space for them, while also opening the doors to queer relationships. In queer relationships, there are no strict gender roles at play, so be sure to not project expectations from heterosexual relationships onto queer relationships. "When a stud is dating a femme, people put on all of these assumptions of gender roles that are not necessarily true," expressed a Harvard student in a queer relationship. This means that there are no prescribed rules on who should pay for dinner or who plays what role during sex. A queer relationship means queering the dating script.

EDUCATE YOURSELF AND ASK QUESTIONS. If you come from a background of only having cisheterosexual relationships, you should find basic terminology to further welcome those with queer identities. Nothing on the Internet will be completely representative of what each person feels, so ask questions. Even if the question is uncomfortable, it is better to ask them about their personal experience than assume anything, and honest and open communication relies on asking and answering questions in every relationship. Of course, make sure that your partner is comfortable and that you are respecting their boundaries.

Hopefully, this list has laid the groundwork for you to understand how to properly begin a relationship with someone who identifies outside the gender binary, but it by no means is the end of this process. Every person is different and has varying needs and comfortability levels, and respecting that is most important. All in all, communication is key, and gender is fluid. Embrace it!

SEATTLE HICKEY '25 (SEATTLEHICKEY@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) FACILITATES GENDER 101 WORKSHOPS AS AN EDUCATION COMMITTEE INTERN AT THE HARVARD COLLEGE WOMEN'S CENTER IN CANADAY B. BASEMENT. ALL ARE WELCOME TO STOP BY!

Daddy Dearest

HOW PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT OUR SEX LIVES.

BY MADDY TUNNELL '26

We have all heard the phrase ‘Daddy Issues.’ Whether used as a derogatory way to describe a woman’s childhood or a mainstream method for people to self diagnose their past trauma, it’s a hot topic in all of our sex lives today.

Whether or not most Harvard students are using their Psych 1 knowledge to analyze their own parental relationships or actively attempting to block this Freudian concept from their consciousness, the *Harvard Independent* spoke to a number of female Harvard students, coming to the consensus that parents have much more to do with our antics in bed than we would like to admit.

When describing her relationship with her father, one female Harvard student said, “My dad is just completely emotionally distant and we barely talk. When we do talk it is like my dad, he is like my friend, like a dude, he is like my cool uncle instead of *my dad*.”

She described her father as absent from her childhood, living with his other family and not participating in her upbringing. She then went on to share that she tends to be attracted to men who are “douchebags” but “also funny”—exactly how she would describe her own father.

“I am such a receiver,” she said, in reference to the role she tends to fill during sex. “I love a man who likes to eat me out, and I don’t like to call a guy ‘daddy’ out of nowhere. But if he wants me to, I enjoy it.”

She explained that she can see a clear connection between her relationship with her father and her sexual partners—exhibited by her desire to be treated poorly by men and thrive off small doses of attention, especially between the sheets.

Another female Harvard student, a first-year, examined the correlation between her paternal relationship and her current romantic relationship, stating that she is “repulsed by the idea of public displays of affection with [her] father.” She described her relationship with her father as both strained and confusing.

“I struggle to say ‘I love you too,’” she said. “It makes me really sad because it’s not true, it just gives me a weird feeling,” she continued. She went on to share that, “It is the opposite with boys that I am having sex with. My love language is probably touch, or physical affection.”

Beyond having opposing feelings about intimacy with her father and with other men, she characterized the type of boy she currently finds herself attracted to as the exact opposite of her father. While potentially coincidental, she rationalized that the reasoning may be more deeply rooted, suggesting the possibility of “seeking to spite him in that sort of way,” because “historically speaking, [I] used to get with a lot of people who are just like [my father].”

Popular culture and media are critical

factors impacting how people analyze their ‘daddy issues.’ From TikTok, to jokes made on Sidechat, to the constant characterization in television about the classic trope of girls without fathers who go for the ‘bad boy,’ explanations to justify and explain this dynamic constantly surround us. Yet, parental relationships can present themselves in a variety of forms, subconsciously influencing people’s tastes differently based on their childhood relationship with their parents.



“My mom and I don’t have a relationship,” reflected another female Harvard student, who identified having immigrant parents as something very important for the culture of sex in her family. “She is my mom and lives with me, but we don’t speak. I am really close with my dad,” she continued. “I love my father, he is like my best friend ever.” But with this absence of classic ‘daddy issues,’ she still recognizes the impact of the relationships she witnessed as a child appearing in her current relationships, saying that she expects a very “all hands on deck” mentality from a partner—someone who is incredibly caring and supportive.

“I think I now have very high expectations for men,” she stated confidently. “I

wouldn’t have it any other way, I get with guys who will be like ‘let me worship your body for the next hour.’”

Having an imbalance in one’s relationship with one parent versus the other is definitely a through line in personal experiences, as one student began to describe. “I have noticed, not that I was neglected, but that I just never got a ton of attention from my dad, and that definitely appears in my sex life,” she said. “I want to be very submissive, and I have a praise kink, in like a submissive way.” She described how she likes to be with a guy that is paternal in some ways, saying that she needs a boyfriend who is “supportive, and like the ideal dad but as a boyfriend. Someone who is going to say ‘good job you did your homework.’ A boyfriend doesn’t need to tell me that, but I want that.”

Diagnosing an individual with ‘daddy issues’ originated as a way to explain a woman’s behavior in relationships as a derivative of a strained relationship with her father. Yet now, the term has been hypersexualized. Poor parental relationships can cause challenges such as developing attachment issues, feeling the need for sexual attention in order to feel loved and appreciated, or constantly choosing partners who simulate the maladaptive traits of a father. Conversations with anonymous Harvard men have revealed that many have admitted to thinking ‘daddy issues’ are attractive, or saying that they commonly get with girls who have a turbulent relationship with their fathers.

By attaching a trendy name with the sexual connotation of the word ‘daddy,’ the media has fetishized the often stereotypically submissive nature or more wild sexual desires of girls with unresolved problems with their fathers.

Realistically, this is a legitimate psychological phenomenon. As humans, our earliest relationships with love and affections typically stem from our parents, many of which strongly affect how we move throughout our own personal relationships. ‘Daddy issues’ are not fake pleas for attention, or excuses to treat a woman poorly, but rather often the result of unresolved trauma or attachment issues.

Our parents often demonstrate what they believe love and sex are supposed to be, offering examples of relationships, both between each other and with their children. An absence of either one can impact adults as they venture into the field of serious sexual and romantic relationships. I urge you to take time to look at your own relationship with your parents, and try to make sense of how it has the potential to influence who you are in bed.

MADDY TUNNELL '26 (MADDYTUNNELL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) HAS NO PERSONAL REASON FOR BEING INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC.

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26

THE SEX SURVEY

Out of 456 responses...

37% of people have had sex in a public bathroom

15% of people have had sex in the Widener Stacks

33% of people have had sex with their roommate in the room

virginity...
Long gone: 84.9%
Intact: 15.1%

RELATIONSHIP STATUS:

- dating ~ 35%
- hooking up but single ~ 41%
- focusing on me ~ 12%

STILL WANT TO KISS YOU

What is Circumcision?
"Nobody trying to look professional wears a hoodie"
"HOT"
"Abraham's covenant with God"

Are you circumcised?

69.4% yes
30.6% no

Have you ever faked an orgasm?
NO - 49%
YES - 51%

Instant turn on: neck kisses and hands on waist

Favorite place to kiss: neck and boobs

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- heterosexual - 61%
- Bisexual - 20%
- Pansexual - 4%
- Homosexual - 9%
- Asexual ~ 1%

Sex toys?

yes - 45%
I want to try - 23%
no - 29%

Most fuckable Sports teams...
ROWING
LACROSSE

Most Attractive Emotional traits...
CONFIDENCE, HUMOR, INTELLIGENCE

KINKS

- Vanilla: 20%
- bondage: 40%
- Choking: 52%
- Outside: 34%
- dom/sub: 49%
- voyeurism: 14%
- Sex toys: 42%
- Shower: 53%
- impact play: 31%

Remember!

it's ALWAYS okay to say no and you should never feel like you need to apologize for not wanting to do something

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU SAID

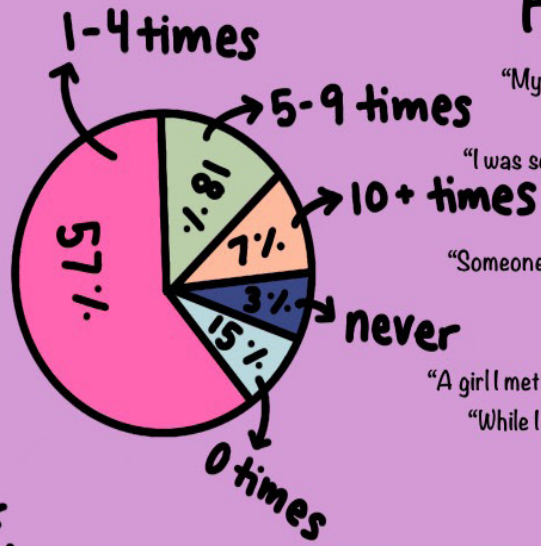
Funniest sexual experience:

"She said 'slap me,' so I slapped her face, but what she really meant was 'spank me.' She was extremely confused for a couple seconds."

"Had sex with this girl, and the club outside was playing the Star Wars Cantina Theme Song for 2 hours straight."

Fig is the most attractive male final club (20.8%)
Spee is most attractive female final club (24.2%)

How often do you masturbate per week?



First porn experience:

"My dad's phone accidentally synced to the car radio and started playing teenage lesbian porn with my whole family in the car"

"I was scared to go on Pornhub, so I look up 'girls kissing' on youtube. I was 15."

Most awkward sexual experience:

"Someone bit my nipples and I didn't know how to tell them I didn't like it—I had teeth marks in my nipples and it hurt to put a shirt on the next day."

"Mattress on floor, free range ferret."

"A girl I met on Tinder stopped me halfway through and started crying and told me that she was gay."

"While I was eating her out, 'Stronger' by Kanye started playing and I had to stop and leave."



(Bench Opinion)

OCTOBER TERM, 2022

1

NOTE: Where it is feasible, a syllabus (headnote) will be released, as is being done in connection with this case, at the time the opinion is issued. See *United States v. Detroit Timber & Lumber Co.*, 200 U. S. 321, 337.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Syllabus

JOHN DOE v. WIGGLESWORTH HALL ET AL.

CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR
THE FIRST CIRCUIT

No. 69-1738. Argued March 6, 2023—Decided March 6, 2023

On Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2022, at 10:56 pm Eastern Standard Time, John Doe, a Harvard senior and resident of Kirkland House, slid into the DMs of a first-year on Sidechat, a social media platform popular among Harvard students. Following a successful rizz, the first-year invited Mr. Doe to her suite in the F entryway of Wigglesworth Hall. Mr. Doe then attempted to enter Wigglesworth to meet this sneaky link, but was stopped by a Yard Securitas officer who informed him of the recent U.S. Court of Appeals ruling prohibiting predatory senior-frosh trysts. “Sorry, perv,” said the officer, “Court says you gotta go back to Kirkland.” Mr. Doe responded: “Blow me... My dad’s got Dershowitz on retainer.”

Held:

1. The Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protects the right of Harvard seniors to pipe first-years, as made clear by the Amendment’s framers on the floor of the Senate during its drafting in 1866.¹

(a) The Court finds that Mr. Doe’s actions are fully protected by the Fourteenth Amendment.

2. The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 (15 U.S.C. § 1) prevents Harvard College entities from conspiring to monopolize the first-year population.

(b) The Court finds that, by preventing senior-frosh sneaky links, the College violates the statute by “keeping all of the first-years to itself.”

Due to this particularly egregious violation of one of our nation’s most longstanding practices (and its urgent national security implications), the Court took the unprecedented step of rendering a same-day decision.

The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit’s holding is reversed, and the case is remanded for proceedings consistent with this opinion. Wigglesworth Hall (and all other Yard dormitories) must cease their gatekeeping activities. Mr. Doe is to be granted full swipe access to Wigglesworth F.

It is so ordered.

KAVANAUGH, B. delivered the opinion of the Court, in which the MALE JUSTICES, and BARRETT, J., joined.

Point/Counterpoint: Should Prostitution Be Legalized?

BY JONAH KARAFIOL '26 AND LUKE WAGNER '26

Jonah Karafiol '26: Prostitution is a practice built upon exploitation, impossible to guarantee safety for its workers. It is vital that the United States ban prostitution to protect those at risk.

Luke Wagner '26: Of course, the practice has undeniable flaws. But we cannot solve these issues by simply banning it. The legalization of prostitution will allow people to more safely engage in the practice. By allowing the government to enforce regulations, it will increase protections for both the customers and the sex workers.

JCK: Prostitution is a practice that generally allows men to take advantage of low-income women, with over 80% of the world's prostitutes identifying as female. These women turn to prostitution as a way to make ends meet—and typically not by choice. Commercialized sex is incredibly dangerous, as it opens the door for sexual assault and abuse—82% of prostitutes have reported instances of assault at work. The most efficient and secure way to ensure the safety of these women would simply be to outlaw the practice in its entirety.

LCW: Yet if the government were to legalize prostitution, they would be able to intermediate sexual assault cases that involve prostitution, and further increase protections for victims rather than turning a blind eye. States began to legalize recreational marijuana for similar reasons—it allowed state governments to enact regulations to limit the harms of weed abuse. Examples of regulating prostitution could include setting quantifiable standards for prostitution business, instituting regular checks on the quality of treatment for prostitutes, and monitoring the practice and how prevalent it is in different demographic areas. Similarly to how the government now tracks marijuana, the government will be able to follow prostitution and intervene when needed.

JCK: The argument that legalizing prostitution would make it safer falters on the ground of precedent set by similar industries. Even though weed is legal in 21 states, third-party vendors still run rampant. Because it is virtually impossible to control all methods of solicitation, the only way to make prostitution safe is by banning it. Moreover, Nevada, the only state where prostitution is legal, leads the country in

population-adjusted sex trafficking cases. There are 63% more cases in Nevada than in New York, the next highest state. The idea that legalizing prostitution will make sex work safer is a fallacy.

LCW: If prostitutes were able to easily obtain regular jobs, they would. Some of the most common reasons for why people go into prostitution is a result of familial abuse, truancy, and delinquency, all which typically happen at a very young age. Many people go into the practice because they view it as their only option to make a living. As generally a primary source of income, banning prostitution would put around 1-2 million people out of employment. Government-banned prostitution would not stop illegal prostitution as people will inevitably engage in the activity regardless of its legality. Instead of completely outlawing this institution, regulating it, including setting standards and requirements for prostitution business, could both improve the job security and living standards of those already involved in the practice.

JCK: But the practice is the very reason why prostitutes need help in the first place. Instead of providing reactionary options to a faltered institution, we should look at what is encouraging people to become prostitutes. People often turn to prostitution out of lack of other viable income sources or lifestyles. Free mental health centers, increased post-secondary planning resources, and larger college financial aid packages are all ways to improve the chances that at-risk teenagers attend college and obtain steady jobs. This would open up many job opportunities that are safer than prostitution—a college degree can easily disqualify prostitution as the best available option.

LCW: Yet while it is true that prostitution is an incredibly dangerous profession that many people enter out of necessity, banning prostitution would set the precedent that the U.S. government has authority over individual bodies. This can easily go down an endless rabbit hole, as we have already seen attempts at restricting women's reproductive rights and limiting personal freedoms altogether. Rather, legalizing prostitution gives prostitutes the ability to take ownership and capitalize off their own bodies, in ways of their own agency. Women should not have to live in fear as they illegal-



ly engage in prostitution. Rather, it should be legalized to create a safer environment for everyone involved. Not only will the legalization of prostitution make the practice safer, but it will allow people to reclaim their bodies.

JCK: Prostitution legislation would regulate a transaction between individuals. These laws would prevent people from selling their bodies to another person for a period of time. This is a sanction on the transaction, not the body. Therefore, it would not set the precedent that the government could regulate individuals' bodies, since the enacted legislation would only concern the monetary aspect of prostitution and not the bodily component.

LCW: I firmly believe that prostitution should be made legal in the United States. Federally criminalizing prostitution would grant the government the power to regulate our bodies and drive the profession, as well as currently employed prostitutes, further underground. Rather, the government should legalize the practice for our autonomy and prostitutes' safety.

JCK: I firmly believe that prostitution should be illegal in the United States. It is a profession that allows wealthy men to take advantage of women in need. It is impossible for women to practice prostitution safely—therefore, it must be made illegal.

JONAH KARAFIOL '26 (JONAHKARAFIOL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND LUKE WAGNER '26 (LUKEWAGNER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITE FORUM FOR THE INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26

The Harvard-Radcliffe Gender Divide

HOW QUAD TERMINOLOGY ON HOUSING DAY PERPETUATES DEROGATORY GENDER NORMS.

BY KELSEY QUIGLEY '09

cl teach Expository Writing to first-years on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule, which means that every year I have two sections that meet in the immediate aftermath of River Run and Dorm Storm. In these sections—and in the ones leading up to them—I hear one word on repeat: *Quad-ed*.

In preparation for being placed into upperclassmen houses, first-years speak of “being Quad-ed” with dread. In the aftermath of these assignments being announced on the morning of Housing Day, they say it with tears in their eyes. Their classmates come into class shrieking about placements in Quincy or Adams or Eliot, while the Cabots and Curriers and Pfohos sit in shrunken silence, throwing daggers.

Why? I ask myself every year. *Why?*

Every year I deliver the same assurances that the Quad is no farther from most classroom buildings than Dunster or Mather. (One student Google Mapped this and confirmed it.) Every year I talk about the beautiful neighborhoods that surround the Quad and the superior food available along Mass Ave and in Porter Square. And every year it doesn't matter. The students take this information in and give me indulging smiles and remain unconvinced. Maybe because I'm supposed to be teaching students how to make convincing arguments, I find my own failure here troubling. So I've given this why question quite a bit of thought; and here's my answer:

The Quad holds the old Radcliffe Houses—Radcliffe, which was long referred to as Harvard's “sister school”: Leia to Harvard's Luke. Radcliffe women weren't allowed into the Lamont stacks until 1967, and the two colleges didn't fully merge until 1999. And yet there is still a sense that the River Houses are the real Harvard, while the Quad is *faux* or *approximate*.

In other words, the understood relation between The Quad and The

River among Harvard first-years corresponds precisely to the understood relation between female and male in western society: in both cases, the former is derivative. Second. Less-than. Is it any coincidence, then, that The Radcliffe Quadrangle was the one-time campus for all the women who Harvard would not admit?

This history is implicit even in our conjugation of the statements, “I was Quad-ed” and “I got the River.” The first, any writing instructor will point out to you, is passive. The second is active. So, folks placed in River Houses achieved something, and folks placed in Quad Houses had something done to them. What's more patriarchal than that?!

*

This idea is not mine, and it's not new. In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir (1949) described the western view that man is default and woman is other, with woman existing only in relation — and secondary — to man. This is the view that gave rise to elite institutions such as Harvard, Columbia, and Swarthmore having sister schools that provided top-shelf educations but were seen and talked about as *not quite the real thing*. It is the view that keeps us using language like, *Girls can be strong, too!* And *Girls are just as smart as boys!* This apologetic, relativistic language seems outdated for 2023, no? I mean: Why define girls in relation to boys at all? Why limit ourselves to thinking in terms of

boys and girls in the first place?

If we wouldn't use that language, then why would we talk about “being Quad-ed” but not “being Mathered?” (And speaking of misogynistic history, let's talk about *that guy*: Increase and his son Cotton led the charge into the Salem witch trials that resulted in the executions of 14 women and five men.) Why would we continue, in 2023, to talk as though “Quaded” students have been relegated to a pseudo-campus far from the real Harvard? In fact, am I reading too much into students' reactions if I observe that “being Quad-ed” seems to be received like a year-late reversal (correction?) of their original admissions decisions?

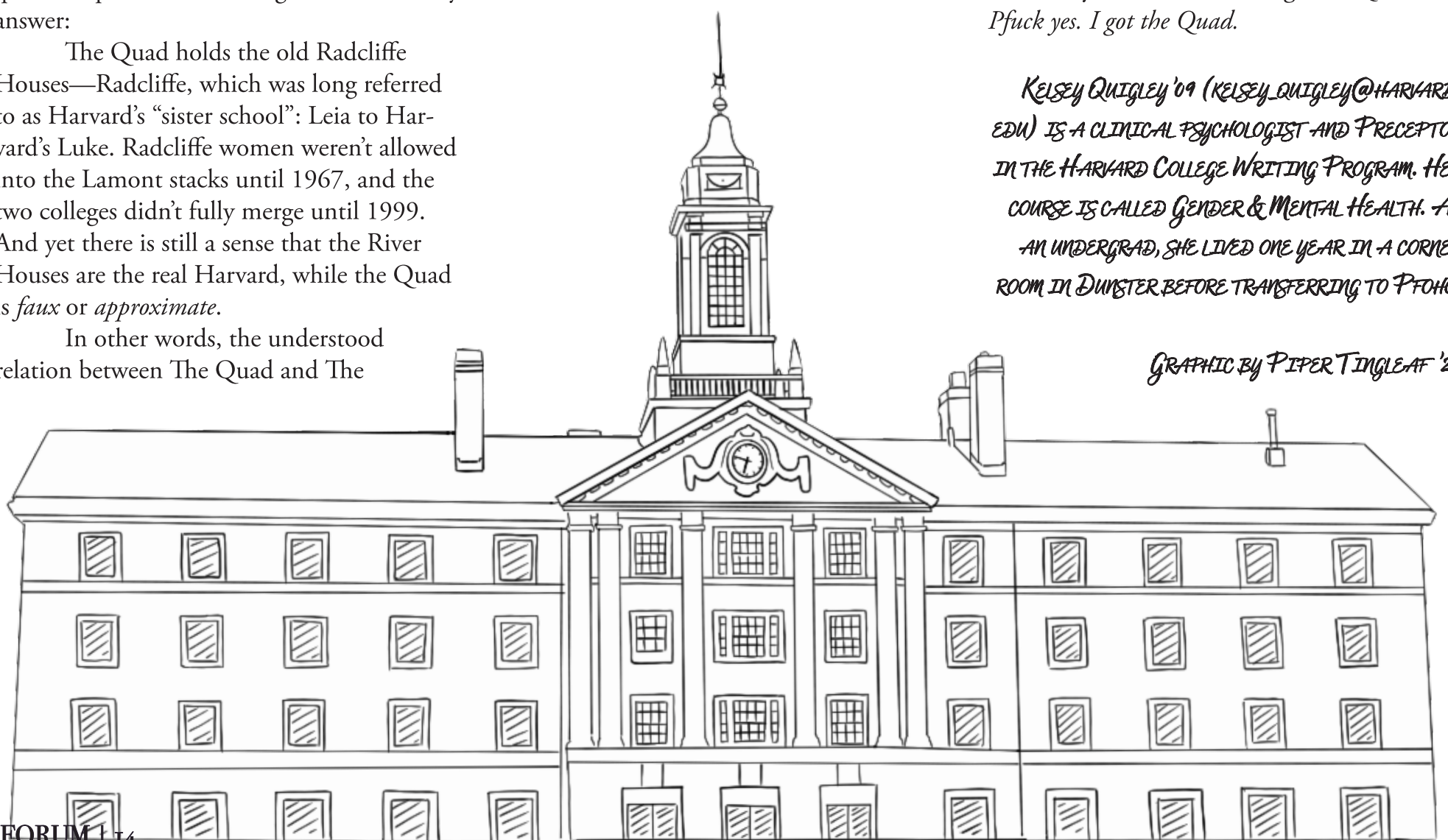
When we talk about the Quad as far from the real Harvard, as a disappointment, not only are we playing into frankly obnoxious, elitist Harvard-speak; we're perpetuating misogynistic narratives, too. We're keeping them alive under the surface without even realizing it by slipping into inherited language whose meanings we have not examined.

So here's my proposal, as you nurse your Housing Day hangovers and come to terms with your new homes: let's get rid of this language of *being Quad-ed*. Let's embrace the good food and the beautiful walk and the sunny singles the Quad has to offer. Not only that: Let's embrace those good feminist vibes left behind by our foresisters in that objectively impressive space.

Say it with me now: *I got the Quad.*
Pfuck yes. I got the Quad.

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GRAPHIC BY PIPER TINGLEAF '24



SOS: SZA was That Good

A TWERKING BOSTON CROWD AND A CONCERT LEAVING THE AUDIENCE THRUSTING FOR MORE: SZA'S SOS TOUR.

BY ELIZA KIMBALL '25 AND BECCA ACKERMAN '25

The Boston crowd anxiously awaited SZA's entrance. After an energetic performance by singer/songwriter Omar Apollo, fans were singing and dancing to the music occupying the sound system while TD Garden was preparing for SZA's stage arrival. Unlike most big-venue concerts, there was extreme fan-to-fan communication. One man twerked in the corner of the concert hall, and it seems the entire crowd was able to scan the crowd and identify who caused the ruckus. TD Garden has never seen so many nose rings in an audience; the teen-dominated crowd brought the energy SZA's SOS tour performance deserved.

Suddenly, the music stopped and the crowd grew silent. SZA appeared on a diving board, belting "PSA" with a blue scene reminiscent of her "SOS" album cover. After the song was over, she seemingly dove into the water on the stage floor as the crowd hollered.



The concert had a nautical visual theme throughout, with various magnificent scenes involving boats. A shipwreck was created on stage at one point, a technical marvel with the waves and boat moving wildly alongside chaotic blue lights and mysterious bodies dancing around the stage.

Solána Imani Rowe, who goes by the stage name of SZA, proudly performed alongside her Boston-based crew. Four background dancers jived across the stages in complement with SZA's voice while her band rocked in the corner. The guitar player constantly whipped her hair around as she backed up the vocals and strummed around her epic set. SZA's joy on stage propagated into the crowd.

The most shocking moment of the concert must have been when an inflatable boat resembling a life raft was lifted into the sky, rode by SZA singing "Supermodel." As she moved over the crowd towards the back of the audience, her fans went wild as she closed the distance between her and screaming bodies. While on top of the boat, she made a short speech, thanking the crowd and introducing her next song. She then sang "Nobody Gets Me" while the boat in the sky moved towards stage right.

To end the show, SZA returned to the scene of her SOS cover, sitting on a diving board, but now in a flowing orange tulle and ruffled dress, with a piercing sunset displayed behind her. The crowd was singing along to "Good Days," one of her most popular songs, a single released in 2020.



SZA took the same approach to her wardrobe as often seen with Billie Eilish; she achieved respect and complete adoration from her screaming fans without objectifying her body. As a recently rising star who has now been named the Billboard Woman of the Year, she stands a role model to all. Even while avoiding revealing clothes, SZA stunned the audience with the rawness of her vocals. She began the concert wearing black cargo pants and an oversized jersey with an S which contrasted the ocean and boat stage design.

ELIZA KIMBALL '25 (ELIZAKIMBALL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) GOT HER DRINK STOLEN BY A TWERKING MAN.

BECCA ACKERMAN '25 (ACKERMAN@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) DANCED WAY MORE THAN THE CRIMSON WRITERS TO HER RIGHT.

Shucking: A Short Story

AN ORIGINAL CREATIVE WRITING PIECE.

ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTION

The last-call bell inside the restaurant rang and the last guests left in succession like seaweed washed away by waves. Their whirl of plaid and pastel gave way to the road which stretched alongside the bay. But one red dress stayed behind.

She trotted covetously to the counter side. Her red dress glazed the dirty, muddy counter and she rubbed the oyster mud down off her dress and then down off her thigh and then grabbed my cloth and rubbed it down again.

She reached across the counter to grab an oyster. She jolted as it slipped into her mouth. Her head tilted back—impossibly back.

We had done this every few nights for a summer now, sharing an oyster and a glance. Yet we hadn't shared a word, and the summer was coming to a close as the setting sun sunk into the cliffs of the bay.

"Is it hard?" her lips asked, quivering from the salt as she broke the silence. I shook my head.

"But it must hurt a little?" I shook my head again and she licked her lips of the brine and the shards of shell in the same motion.

"What is this called?" she asked. "I mean,

what do you do?" Our eyes met and I could see her eyes watering from the mignonette.

"I shuck," I said. "Haven't you ever shucked before?" I asked.

Her breath stopped as her blonde hair waved with a shaking head. "I've tried," she said, "but I've never finished one."

She grabbed another oyster. Head back again she slipped it in with a jolt.

"Are you good," she hesitated, "at shucking?" She looked up at me as her wet lips, still wet, spoke still soaking from the brine.

"Depends," I said.

"On what?" she asked.

"On the oyster," I said. "Some are harder to shuck than others."

She took hold of a raw, whole shell and traced her fingers in a circular motion around the hinge. "How about this one?" she offered.

"I've been trying to shuck that all night," I said. "Just won't open."

"Then show me how," she ordered.

Not leaving time for an answer, her hand reached toward me. The sun was setting now in a deep red and the sea was calm in the bay save the moon tide.

I took her hand in mine, and guided it towards the blade shaft of the shucking knife, clenching it tightly.

She gazed down at the blade shaft and then at me. The oyster was rough and sharp yet smooth on the bottom and her hands were soft. I placed it in her grip, the shell dripping and the drips trailing down her arm.

"Hold it like this," I said, motioning with the oyster in my hands. She held it softly in her hands as I held her hands in mine.

"Now push it in, slowly. Back and forth. Side to side. Like this." I showed her and she grasped the blade hard. I held her hand firmer.

I could feel her breathing heavier but steadily now. And the moon tide continued as a mirror of the setting red sun.

We pushed harder together, gently. Her breath steadied now as the back and forth deepened into the hinge. The blade slipped but she pushed it back in, harder and deeper this time. It was giving way.

The hinge was softening now, widening, as the blade entered. We could feel the blade coming through to the inside. It was so close.

"So close," she whispered.

"Keep going," I urged. "It's almost finished."

Her wet arm was on mine and the bass were jumping and the blushing sun let out a final flash. The blade pushed all the way through with a final thrust. Her hand now grasped mine and mine hers and the shell burst open with a jolt.

I Want to Take a Ride on That Scooter

AN ORIGINAL CREATIVE WRITING PIECE.

ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTION

Shit. I should've sat on the balcony. It's the first day of my big lecture class in Sanders Theatre and I'm regretting my seating arrangements, seeing all the hot boys sitting up there. I know I should be focused on the presentation in front of me, but I can't help playing "Smash or Pass" in my head.

As my eyes scan the room, they stop on him: dirty blonde hair going every which way, eyes fighting hard to stay awake, long legs draped over the row in front of him. An athlete for sure. Doesn't matter which sport, I want to take a ride on that scooter. I force myself to snap out of my daydream. He'd never notice me. He's a balcony boy, I'm a ground-level girl.

Shit. He's in my section. I can't tell if my stomach is in knots out of nerves or because I just ate a bowl of chili and seven chocolate chip cookies from the dining hall. The TF wants to do an icebreaker. Drops of sweat start to surface on my forehead. Why is thinking of a good icebreaker response harder than the class itself? "Let's go around and share our favorite ice cream flavor." Fuck, what ice cream flavor will make me sound the sexiest?

Balcony boy shares his first. "Cookies and cream." Perfect, I can make that for him. I'll steal the Oreos from Flyby. He just needs to provide the cream.

It's my turn. I can feel everyone's

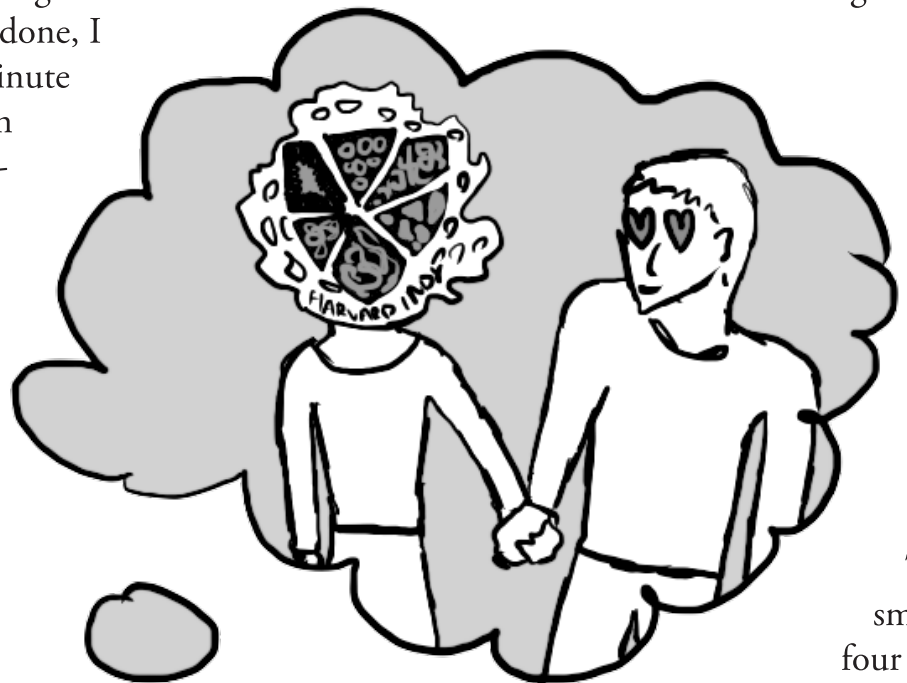
eyes on me as I introduce myself. I lock eyes with him and say, "Chocolate. But I like it hard, not soft." Here I am, at Harvard, making sex jokes about ice cream in an attempt to get a boy's attention who doesn't even know my name. I'm blowing it, and unfortunately not literally.

Shit. The TF assigned us in the same group for the upcoming project. I get a closer look at him—he's wearing his Harvard athletics sweatshirt. I'm not sure what specific type of balls he plays with, but I know that I want to join. We go around and exchange phone numbers. He hands me his phone, our hands briskly touch. I'm never washing this hand again. I can't believe *he* has *my* phone number and I have his. I know that it's just for class, but a girl can dream.

It's Friday night. All my roommates went out and I'm in bed working on my P-Set due at midnight. For every question I get done, I allow myself a 10 minute Tik Tok scroll. I'm in the middle of watching "Only eating McDonalds for a whole day" when a text no-

tification pops up on the top of my screen. My heart sinks into my stomach. It's from *him*. "Hey what r u doing tn? Wanna work on the project?" I almost pass out, but then I realize I wouldn't be able to turn in my P-set unconscious. He didn't text the group chat, he only texted me. Does balcony boy really want to do work on a Friday night or is there more to it? I have to find out for myself.

Shit. I told him I'd be there in 15. I grab my backpack and throw in chapstick, a mint, and my calculator. I shoot down some Pepto Bismol and I'm on my way. I scan my ID and enter into the unknown. Suddenly, I'm at his front door. I try to stop the nervous shakes to steady my hand so I can knock. The door opens. There's the scooter, and there's the balcony boy. He explains that one of his roommates is studying in the common room, so we should work in his single.



The smell of four day old Bud Light and Axe body spray fill the air. He shuts his door behind me.

Sadly, he really does want to work on the project. But, an hour passes and suddenly he shuts his computer. "My brain is getting tired, let's do something else." He moves closer to me. My heart is racing and I can't comprehend the reality of the situation. Am I still in a lecture daydream? I stop him before he gets too close. I say, "You don't even know my name." He halts, looking very confused. "Your name? I know your name. I just wish I knew more. I remember the first time I sat in lecture and looked down and saw you. I was struck. But, I knew you'd never talk to me. You're just so smart. I sit on the stupid balcony. You sit on the ground-level." I couldn't believe what I was hearing. But, it was time to stop talking anyways.

Shit. How do I tell him I'm a virgin?



GRAPHIC BY DAVID LI '25

Andy Sportsbook: No More Vanilla Betting

A GUIDE TO PUSHING THE LIMITS WITH SOME LESS THAN COMFORTABLE SPORTS.

BY DECLAN BUCKLEY '24

The Sex Issue is the *Harvard Independent's* biggest theme of the year, but it has proven to be a little tricky for us over here at *Indy Sportsbook*. While we consider both gambling and sex very worthwhile vices, the overlap between them is few and far between. Gambling is certainly not the “sexiest” subject—good luck trying to bring someone home from TITS with the story of your winning parlay—and most gambling that involves sex is too problematic to write about. Needless to say, we felt a bit tied up (no pun intended) when brainstorming this week's column.

When taking a closer look, it is clear both acts boil down to risking something in the hopes of achieving greater pleasure. Regardless of if that risk comes in the form of your money or your dignity, the stakes are all too real. With these stakes comes the potential for great rewards. You may someday find a hookup worth walking to the Quad to see, and that eight-leg parlay might finally hit. It certainly pays to get lucky.

People who consistently perform well during sex might seem few and far between, and we ask that you extend us the same leeway when analyzing our picks. We definitely had some wonderful nights over the past month, as well as some pretty brutal wakeups. This is best exemplified by our Champions League performance; we absolutely nailed our prediction that Real Madrid would beat Liverpool but misfired on picking PSG over Bayern Munich.

In extremely fitting news, we fared particularly poorly when it came to women's sports. Though we correctly chose Amanda Ribas to beat Viviane Arujo, the rest of UFC 285 was a disaster. We told bettors to stay away from winner Alexa Grasso, and incorrectly thought her fight would last more than 4.5 rounds. At the ATX Open, neither Sloane Stephens or Alycia Parks even made it to the final. Let us hope this was simply bad luck and not indicative of a fundamental misunderstanding of women.

Just like sex, gambling is a test of people's appetites for the extreme. Do you stick to what you know, or branch out and take risks? The *Indy Sportsbook* is not one to pick shame, so we have outlined both the mundane and the bizarre events coming up. Whether you like to stay tried and true or

got you covered.

Much as many people will not stray from their favorite few positions in bed, there are plenty of vanilla bettors that only enjoy wagering on the NFL, the XFL provides a worthy substitute. We are looking for the Seattle Sea Dragons (+145) and St. Louis Battlehawks (+110) to take wins this weekend. If you truly need to stick to the majors, you could always look towards the NFL draft. Though CJ Stroud is too heavy of a favorite for first overall pick at -300, we particularly like his teammate Jaxon Smith-Njigba to be the first Wide Receiver taken at +125. While we are happy to talk about football forever, we also hope that these unadventurous bettors can at least muster up the courage to look at our March Madness column, which was published online last week ahead of the tournament.

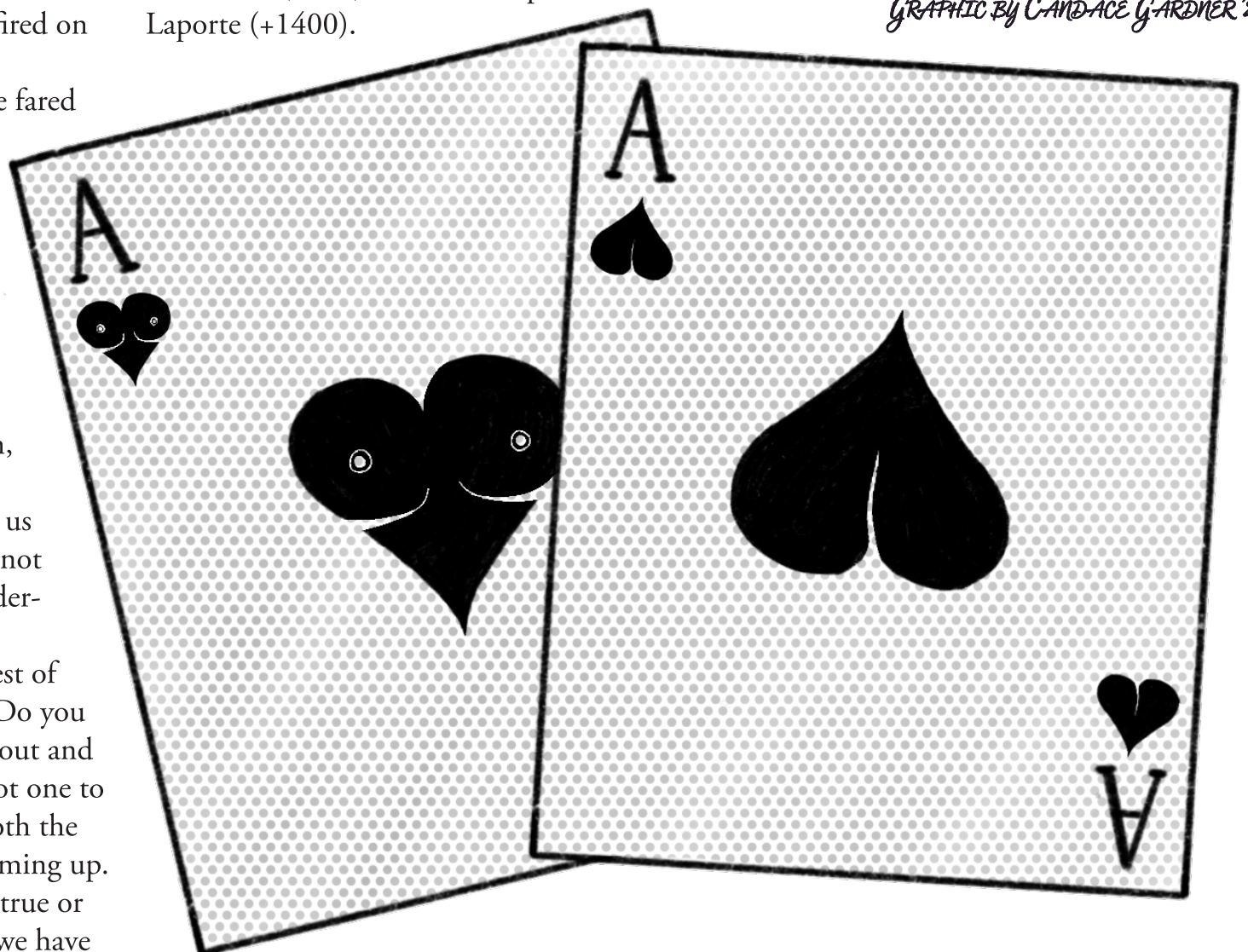
For those looking to spice their betting game up a bit, we suggest you divert your attention to the cycling season. Springtime brings two of the biggest races on the calendar: the Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix. The beauty of cycling gambling is that even the favorites have high odds due to the sheer number of people who could potentially win. We think Flanders will come down to a battle between Mathieu van der Poel (+450) and Tadej Pogacar (+500). For Roubaix, take the Team Jumbo-Visma trio of Wout van Aert (+350), Dylan van Baarle (+800), and Christophe Laporte (+1400).

While we are admittedly not as well-versed in this behavior, in the spirit of the Sex Issue, we are stepping outside our comfort zone to target bettors who are unafraid to go through a little pain (betting on games no one cares about) for a lot more pleasure (winning money on said games). The Women's Handball Champions League is currently in full swing, and we foresee Rapid Bucuresti defeating RK Krim at +120. We are also taking a way-too-early look at the PDC World Darts Championship, where we expect Michael Smith to defend his title at +275. While we can in no way be confident about getting these right, something may awaken in us if we do.

We wrote this column with the aim of presenting options for all types of gambling preferences. It can be hard to truly know what you like best until you have tried everything, so hopefully this serves as a start. At the very least, it will help you stop fantasizing about riskier plays and embrace the uncomfortableness of it all. If you are feeling even bolder than we suggested, you could try your hand at turning these picks into a parlay. Just do not lose the metaphor and think that will actually make you better at sex.

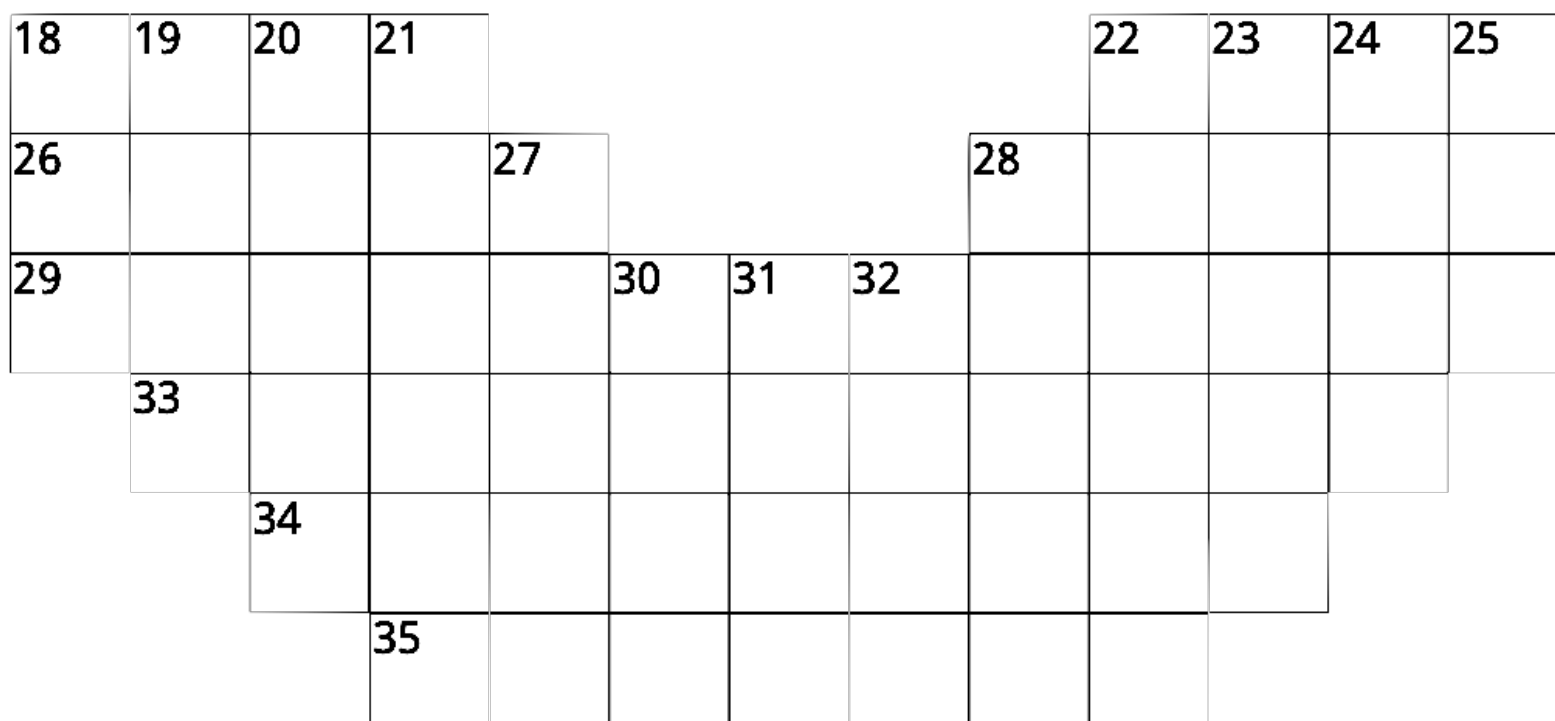
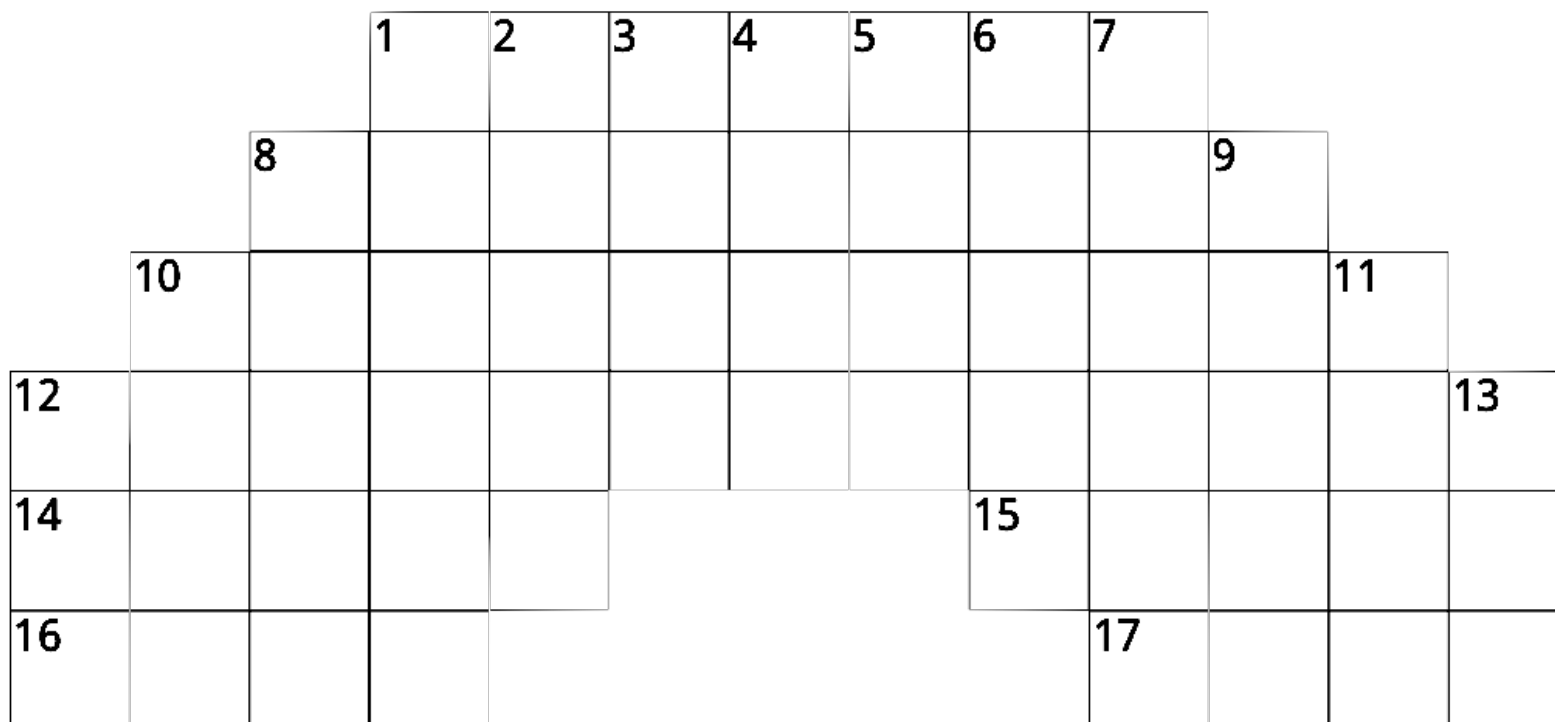
DECLAN BUCKLEY '24 (DECLANBUCKLEY@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) IS VERY EXCITED HE SNUCK CYCLING CONTENT INTO THE SEX ISSUE.

GRAPHIC BY CANDACE GARDNER '25



Hole in One

By BECCA ACKERMAN '25



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COVER ART + LAYOUT BY PIPER TINGLEAF '24

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