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HARVARD

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# independent

THE STUDENT WEEKLY SINCE 1969



HARVARD  
INDEPENDENT

THE STUDENT WEEKLY

SINCE 1969

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# MASTHEAD

March 21, 2024

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# Beyond Stereotypes: Finding Home with PBHA

Unveiling Harvard's commitment to social responsibility through PBHA.

BY MISHELLE WIEWIORA '27

Within Harvard, the stereotype often prevails: it is “a place where people prioritize making money over changing the world,” Alexandra Ruo '27, a student in the Harvard Undergraduate Legal Committee (HULC), acknowledges. This perception stems from the College's prestigious reputation and the predominant notion that its students are solely focused on personal achievement. Beneath this stereotype, however, lies a vibrant community of individuals committed to making a positive impact beyond the university walls.

The Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) is “a student-led organization [that] mobilizes volunteers in collaboration with Boston and Cambridge partners to address gaps in opportunities in resources,” as written on the PBHA website. Around 1,500 Harvard students actively volunteer each year, dedicating their time and energy to various causes to benefit the wider community. Through their efforts, they demonstrate a genuine desire to contribute meaningfully to society and make a difference in the lives of others, showcasing a side of Harvard that often goes unnoticed but is undeniably significant.

Participating in PBHA not only allows students the opportunity to make an invaluable impact on the community but also provides “transformative growth experiences for our volunteers,” as stated by Talia Levitt '25, Vice President of PBHA. Levitt said PBHA has a “dual mission’ of both meeting community needs and developing student leadership.”

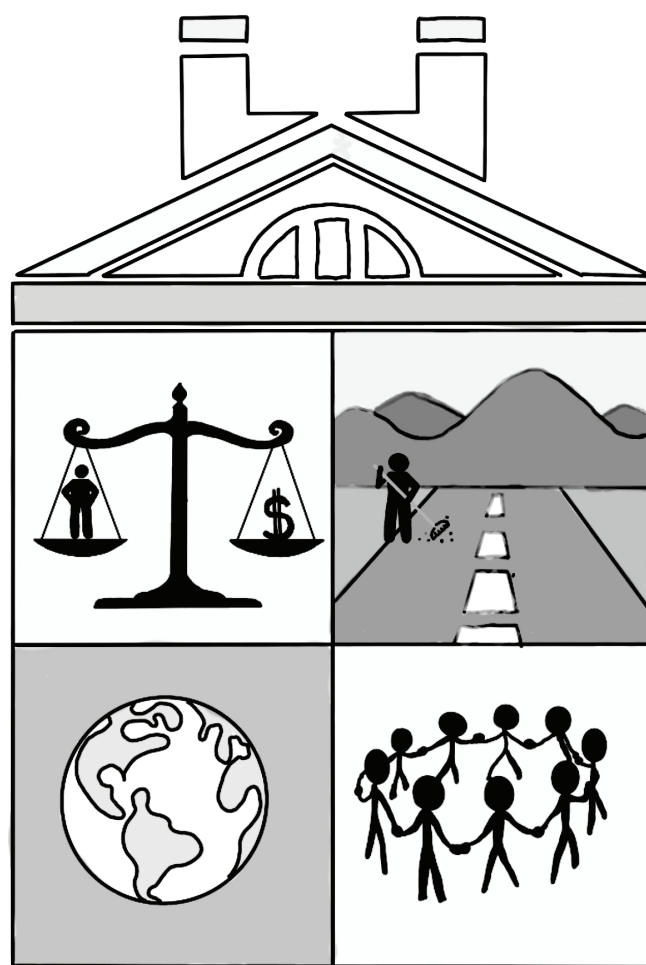
The Summer Urban Program (SUP), one of PBHA's most popular programs, is a summer day camp and an evening ESL program that engages over 1,000 low-income youth and teens from Greater Boston. It provides high-quality and low-cost summer learning to individuals, which is made possible through PBHA's volunteers. Khin Oo '24, the Programming Chair of PBHA, reflected on the profound impact of the SUP program. “College students have been able to develop their skills to lead their classrooms and learn about the communities where their young ones come from,” said Oo. Her statement showcases the program's ability to teach students to develop skills in leadership, communication, and teaching.

Ruo echoes Levitt's and Oo's sentiments. For Ruo, PBHA became a beacon of social justice and empowerment, offering firsthand experience in public interest law and advocacy. Through related programs like HULC, students delve into various legal fields, working alongside advocacy groups to bridge legal gaps and provide essential representation to marginalized individuals. “I decided to join the Harvard Undergraduate Legal Committee (HULC) because I aspire to pursue a career in law,” Ruo explained. “This program provides an ideal opportunity for me to gain an

understanding about the dynamics of legal advocacy while serving my community.”

Ruo's involvement in the HULC Sensitivity Training Series underscores PBHA's commitment to equip volunteers with the necessary skills for effective community engagement. Through seminars focusing on negotiation, trauma-sensitive interviewing, and self-care, PBHA ensures volunteers are well-prepared to navigate challenging legal situations while prioritizing emotional well-being. “Through this process, I am gaining valuable insights I will need as a volunteer to engage in effective communication, conflict resolution, and maintaining emotional well-being in challenging legal situations,” Ruo stated.

Reflecting on her experience, Levitt acknowledges PBHA's pivotal role in her personal and professional growth, highlighting the organization's emphasis on holistic leadership development. She underscores PBHA's transformative impact, not only in shaping her values and leadership style, but also in fostering a sense of belonging within a compassionate



community. “My involvement in PBHA has truly been the single most transformative experience I've had in college,” Levitt shared. “I can't overstate how pivotal PBHA has been in my personal and professional growth.”

PBHA also works to create a community within its volunteer base. “Ensuring community and belonging amongst volunteers is really important to us,” Levitt said. PBHA Street Crew volunteer Mary Mangan's '27 experience further illustrates the organization's impact on community engagement. By repurposing leftover food from dining halls to serve the homeless population around Harvard and Central Square, Mangan exemplifies PBHA's ethos of utilizing resources to effect positive change. “I wanted to give back to the community and meet new people,”

Mangan shared. “Volunteering with PBHA has helped me meet new people and has allowed me to spend time giving back.”

Levitt also described various events PBHA offers to connect its volunteers, emphasizing their importance in fostering community spirit. “We host an Open House at the beginning of every semester to help prospective volunteers find a program that most resonates with them,” she explained. Throughout the semester, PBHA continues to nurture its community with regular study breaks and appreciation events for volunteers and directors. Levitt further highlighted: “At the end of every year, we have an event called the Public Service Celebration, which all PBHA volunteers are invited to, to celebrate the amazing work that we have all done and recognize our most dedicated volunteers with special awards.” These events serve as key opportunities for volunteers to unite, bond, and reflect on their collective achievements throughout the year.

As PBHA gears up for its annual Community Cabinet in March, it reaffirms its commitment to community engagement and advocacy. “We invite community partners working in service and advocacy across the city to share their work, experiences, and ways for our students to plug in. We have a really exciting line-up of community leaders coming this year!” Levitt said. Through events like the Public Service Celebration, PBHA celebrates the collective efforts of volunteers while fostering a sense of community and belonging. PBHA is a testament to Harvard's dedication to social responsibility and community engagement. Through its unwavering commitment to social justice, PBHA continues to inspire meaningful change within Harvard and beyond to break the Harvard stereotype.

“PBHA challenges this stereotype by gathering a community of individuals who volunteer their time and effort without expecting monetary compensation,” Ruo said. Instead, volunteers get a “rewarding feeling that comes from helping others!”

As Mangan aptly advised, “Every bit of time volunteering helps.” With over 60 active programs spanning diverse sectors, such as after-school/in-school initiatives, mentoring, adult services, advocacy, health, housing, and SUP, PBHA offers many volunteering opportunities, so there is something for everyone to try. As Oo shared, “PBHA is my home away from home.”

**MISHELLE WIEWIORA '27  
(MWIEWIORA@COLLEGE.HARVARD.  
EDU) HAS FOUND HER HOME IN  
PBHA'S Y2Y AND HSHS PROGRAMS.**

**GRAPHIC BY ISABEL EDDY '24**

# 50 Shades of Green

The verdict is in: Boston's St. Patrick's Day Parade is overhyped.

BY NATALIE FRANK '27

Chicago dyes its river green; New London, Wisconsin, changes all its signage to New Dublin for the day; Portland, Maine, takes a Paddy's Day Plunge into the freezing cold Atlantic Ocean; even a Commander at the International Space Station sings "Danny Boy." No city, however, celebrates St. Patrick's (Paddy's) Day quite like Boston, Massachusetts—at least that is what locals and seasoned Harvard students claim. I decided to see for myself this year and answer the pressing question: *Does Boston's Paddy's Day Parade live up to the hype?*

The parade route started at Broadway station and ended 3.5 miles later in Andrew Square, all within the neighborhood of South Boston, familiarly known as Southie. The parade is not just a spectacle of marching bands, floats, and shamrock decorations, but a cherished tradition that brings people of all backgrounds together to celebrate Irish and Irish-American culture.

The famous Southie parade dates back to 1901 and uniquely celebrates not only St. Patrick's Day but Evacuation Day as well. On March 17, 1776, British forces finally evacuated Boston following the Revolutionary War. Combining Irish heritage and American patriotism, what could be a better cause for celebration?

Because of the holiday's popularity, actually getting to the celebration was no easy feat. I started my day at 7 a.m., which any college student knows is criminally early. In order to properly participate in the Southie parade, you have to cram yourself into a train car on the T's Red Line. I met a group of friends at Harvard Station, and we began our journey to Southie. The train was packed to the brim. People clad in green clothes and orange wigs banged on the windows at every stop, desperate to board the train.

There was yelling, drinking, pushing, and chanting throughout our trip. Hours later, after what seemed like a train ride from hell, we arrived at Broadway Station where the parade began. It

seemed almost as cramped outside as it did in the train car, and

people were even more aggressive. Harvard freshman Ben Kelly '27 described a physical altercation he witnessed between two adults: "She almost killed everyone. There was [a woman] trying to push everyone."

This was Kelly's first time at the parade, and he was not a fan. He characterized the atmosphere as "too aggressive [and] not friendly." When asked to comment on his experience at the parade, he responded, "It lowkey just sucks. What are we doing?"

Swarms of people pushed up against the fence lining Broadway Street. The people on the parade floats threw candy and beaded necklaces at



the masses, sometimes hitting them in the head. If you were close enough to see the parade as it went by, it might have been a more entertaining afternoon. Most people, however, were stuck behind rows of spectators guarding their positions like hawks.

Ella Crimmins, a student at the University of Pittsburgh, had mixed feelings about the event. "The culture is very much...get absolutely wasted and just scream and be mean to people," which made it a much less enjoyable experience. Nonetheless, she said, "It was fun to observe."

Crimmins warned that "people aren't very spatially aware. I have been trampled before." Yet, what made up for this chaos was the spirit. "A lot of people are just excited to celebrate Irish heritage and St. Patrick's Day. It's exciting [and] there's a lot of happiness in the air." She gave the parade a six out of ten overall rating. "Spirits are high, but it's also kind of miserable."

The amount of drugs and alcohol was

overwhelming, even for a college student. Empty cans and cigarette butts littered the ground. Anyone who arrived with white shoes would be leaving with footwear of a completely different color, stained with mud and alcohol. Many of the attendees were heavily intoxicated, likely due to skipping breakfast and lunch to drink. There were paramedics at the ready for anyone overly inebriated, but there did not seem to be enough medical staff for the number of drunk students.

Dave Brewer, a Cambridge resident who recently moved from Colorado, is far beyond his college years. He explained the only con to the parade was "the lack of restrooms." Though in the

middle of the miles-long route is a line of filthy porta-potties, a few more restrooms would likely prevent the amount of public urination and vomiting. Brewer recommended that non-locals come to the parade with "somebody that knows how to navigate the area."

The crowd that seemed most pleased with the parade were local high school students. Mykenna

Galluzzo, a junior at Medford High School, looks forward to the festivities each year. "My experience is losing my friends and being alone and then finding my friends," she said. "It's a little claustrophobic, but I do feel safe." She felt "[the parade] had been really fun. I loved it."

While the parade itself is family-friendly and celebrates Irish culture, the sidelines could be more welcoming. So if a chaotic afternoon around drunk and sweaty teenagers sounds fun to you, Boston's St. Paddy's Day Parade is the perfect place to go. Otherwise, walk over to Grafton Street Pub & Grill and listen to some live Irish music.

**NATALIE FRANK '27 (NFRANK@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) SPENT \$40 ON AN UBER BACK TO CAMPUS FROM SOUTHIE.**

**GRAPHIC BY LUCIE STEFANONI '27**

# Liberté, Égalité, ~~Fraternité~~, Sororité

In a global first, France enshrines women's constitutional right to an abortion.

BY RANIA JONES '27

Myoncé's "Run the World (Girls)" belled throughout Trocadéro Square in Paris, France on Monday, March 4, as hundreds of Parisians celebrated France becoming the first country to explicitly inscribe access to abortion in its Constitution. France's historic enshrinement stands as a rebuke to the U.S.'s rollback of reproductive rights and a beacon of hope for women fighting for bodily autonomy around the world.

The U.S. has a multitude of things to learn following France's constitutional amendment. It has been shown time and time again in the U.S. just how incredibly dangerous and devastating it is to undermine abortion as a right. The World Health Organization found that in countries where abortion is highly restricted legally, only 25% of abortions happen safely. This vote in France needs to pave the way for stronger protection of access to abortion everywhere, sending a message to the world that women's rights are fundamental rights.

Lawmakers within the French Senate (the upper house of parliament) and the National Assembly (the lower house of parliament) met and passed the historic amendment in an overwhelmingly approved bill, amending Article 34 of the French Constitution to allow "a woman's guaranteed freedom to have recourse to an abortion."

"We are sending the message to all women: Your body belongs to you and no one has the right to control it in your stead," Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said before the vote. The vote stood 780-72 in favor of the measure, undoubtedly surpassing the three-fifths majority needed to amend the French Constitution. Almost the entire joint session stood in a long-standing ovation following the vote.

Unlike the U.S., the issue of abortion in France is not politically charged or highly divisive. Rather, most French people believe abortion is a basic public health service and a woman's right. A survey across 29 countries

showed France with the second-highest support for legalized abortion in the world, after Sweden. While abortion is broadly legal throughout Europe, governments have started to expand abortion rights even further. Governments have started to expand abortion rights throughout Europe, where the procedure is broadly legal overall.

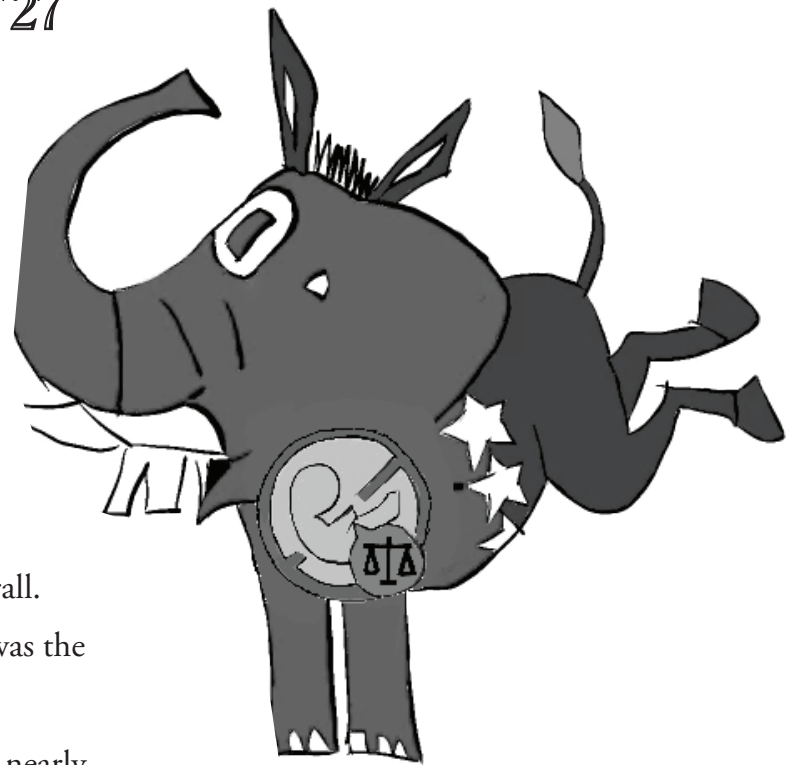
The catalyst for the amendment was the 2022 U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, effectively ending nearly 50 years of federal abortion rights in the U.S. This decision, coupled with the enactment of trigger laws in several states like Alabama that almost immediately banned abortion, served as a stark reminder of how no democracy—not even one as large as the U.S.—is immune to the stripping of protected, fundamental rights.

As the U.S. started rolling back abortion rights, President Emmanuel Macron promised that France would ensure the right to abortion was protected in the event of any similar moves to restrict access in the future.

France first legalized abortion in 1975, when female Health Minister Simone Veil successfully pushed through a temporary law decriminalizing abortions. In 2022, the legal limit for abortions was extended from 12 to 14 weeks of pregnancy, following anger that French women often found themselves forced to travel abroad for the procedure.

Throughout the recent legislative session, lawmakers paid tribute to Veil. Senator Laurence Rossignol, a former women's rights minister, said "We have followed in your footsteps and like you, we succeeded." Addressing more conservative politicians, like Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin, Rossignol stressed that French feminists would fight against "those who resist" on the international stage.

The amendment was officially inscribed in the Constitution on Friday, March 8th, International Women's Day, during a ceremony in central Paris that was open to the public. At



the ceremony, Macron declared, "Today is not the end of the story but the start of a fight." Drawing cheers from the crowd in Paris, Macron continued to explain that he hopes to enshrine that guaranteed freedom to abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The amendment intrinsically reshapes the mold of France's fundamental text which was written by men, for men, just as every other major constitution worldwide. Around the world, the narrative needs to be dismantled, destroyed, and rewritten to legally declare that women exist as greater beings beyond the role declaration of "breeders and caretakers" by constitutions, as author Ruth Rubio-Martin points out.

It was Simone de Beauvoir, a French feminist intellectual, who said that women's rights were the first freedoms to be attacked. As women's groups and defenders of abortion and other sexual and reproductive rights in the U.S. are increasingly disillusioned by the U.S. government, France's recent success sends a small message of hope and solidarity around the world. The unwavering dedication, passion, and commitment exhibited by feminists in France shows that nothing is impossible when you mobilize a community.

**RANIA JONES '27 (RJONES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) READS SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR FOR FUN.**

**GRAPHIC BY EMILY PALLAN '27**





# In Poetry, In Love

A heartfelt encounter with the Grolier Poetry Book Shop.

BY MIA TAVARES '27

When This Is Done

And the young become old  
the old become elders  
and elders become spirits —  
and spirits, what  
can be said of them?

— Ifeanyi Menkiti, *Coming To America*  
(2022)

Nestled between Harvard Book Store and TD Bank on Plympton Street lies the quaint, picturesque Grolier Poetry Book Shop. As I wrestled with the matured door handle and stepped into the small space for the first time, I immediately became overwhelmed with a sense of nostalgia. I quickly felt affection towards the cramped shelves and old-book smell, the damp lighting, and the manager who promised to find me poetry that would truly speak to me. I became attached to this newfound place that felt as well-loved and worn as my favorite novel. I imagined myself sitting on its steps, poring over crisp pages,

determined to discover a fascinating new poem. At the time, I was not aware of Grolier's weekly poetry readings or the family who recently breathed life back into it. All I knew was that I wanted to learn more about this venerable house of poetry.

The cozy Grolier boasts a rich history as the "oldest continuously operated poetry bookshop dedicated solely to the sale of poetry books." Since its opening in 1927, Grolier has remained a cultural hub for verse. When Louisa Solano took ownership in 1974, she did so as part of her "mission in life...to make sure that poetry stays alive in America." She organized poetry

festivals on Plympton Street and stocked the store's narrow shelves with about 15,000 poetry volumes. Solano played a critical part in bringing Grolier back to life. But Grolier's true uniqueness is in what the store has come to symbolize under the care of the Menkiti family since they took ownership in 2006. In current co-owner Ndidi Menkiti's words, Grolier represents the "power of cultural institutions to foster community and discourse... It's the experience and the people and the community that the art form [poetry] brings together."

As I spoke to Carol and Ndidi Menkiti, I could feel the adoration in their voices for both the store and their loved one, Ifeanyi Menkiti. In 2006, Grolier was almost forced to close because Solano was unable to financially support it any longer. Ifeanyi Menkiti, acclaimed poet and, at the time, a philosophy professor at Wellesley College, bought Grolier with money he had saved from his real estate ventures. The poet had loved the shop for years and often spent hours on end enjoying the space. The purchase had a profound effect on the Menkiti family. His four children, particularly his eldest daughter Ndidi, came to understand poetry as a universal language that "[brings] together people from different cultures and different backgrounds." Ifeanyi himself, according to his wife Carol, "wanted the store to be a community of poetry." When Ifeanyi passed away unexpectedly in 2019, Ndidi and her siblings "felt a duty to help [their] mom, to continue that legacy and not let the store die with [him]."

The celebrated poet and shop owner's legacy lives on through Grolier, a continual reminder to the Cambridge community of his impact. The shop has held multiple events that meld poetry and music together. Through street parades and crowded readings, Grolier has become a mixing pot of culture and form. Ifeanyi, despite being an immigrant from Nigeria, was deeply involved in the Cambridge arts scene and used it as an opportunity to uplift his cultural heritage. As a long-time board member of Revels, an organization that creates theatrical events, he also participated in the performing arts. Ifeanyi made his stage debut in the 2002 Spring Revels, during which he acted out guiding a cultural voyage to West Africa and

performed a musical adaptation of his poem "Common Soil".

Ifeanyi carried a heartfelt devotion to his old and new homes up until his final breath. A lifelong appreciator of the "musicality of words," he passed away holding a pencil and paper covered in his own lyrical musings. When Carol found him, he had been "writing the first few lines of the first poem in his book, *Coming to America*." The rest of his finished manuscript, which during his lifetime he had referred to as his "opening prayer," was later found, and Grolier Poetry Press has since published it posthumously.

Alongside his poem, on the same piece of paper, Menkiti wrote the words "I love America. I love Africa." In buying and supporting Grolier, he accomplished more than just fostering a community and building poetic bridges across cultures. He cemented a legacy here in Harvard Square and created a way for immigrants and children of immigrants to connect with the same Cambridge that he so loved.

As a daughter of two immigrants from very different countries, I have struggled with finding my sense of belonging in the U.S., despite being born here. In high school especially, poetry became a safe haven and means of expressing my own conflicted notions of identity. Stepping into Grolier now reminds me of where I am from and who I might become as a Harvard student. It's a place where I can be sure to find words and people that I identify with—experiences that I know we will share. By the time I graduate from Harvard, Grolier will have been around for a century, its longevity evident in the crease of every page. And while the future of Grolier continuing as a stand-alone bookstore is uncertain, Ndidi assured me that Grolier will continue to be a cultural institution centered on poetry, perhaps just in a different form.

**MIA TAVARES '27 (MIATAVARES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU)  
SELF-DIAGNOSED HERSELF WITH  
ASTHMA AFTER ONE TOO MANY  
UNCOMFORTABLY LOUD SNEEZES IN  
GROLIER.**

**GRAPHIC BY LAUREN ZHANG '27**



# Here's the Tea on Bubble Tea

Ten One Tea House: Harvard Square's newest boba shop addition.

BY LUCIE STEFANONI '27 AND KAITLYN HOU '27

If you are an avid bubble tea fan, like many college students are, here is some exciting news: on March 1, a brand new bubble tea shop, Ten One Tea House, opened in Harvard Square on the corner of JFK and Winthrop Street. This Boston-area chain has finally come to Harvard's campus. Priding itself on "artisanal healthy drinks for tea lovers," according to its website, Ten One Tea House has achieved great popularity on social media, amassing over 3000 followers on Instagram.

This location might ring a bell to Harvard bubble tea connoisseurs—it was once home to Möge Tee, a bubble tea shop known for its fruit slushes and frappe-style teas. If you were one of the Harvard students sad to see Möge Tee go, no need to sweat. Ten One Tea House offers equally promising fruit slushes while setting itself apart with its

assortment of milk and green teas.



Ten One Tea House, a chain like Möge Tee, has noteworthy locations in the vicinity, such as Somerville, Fenway, and other Boston

Newbury. Cambridge's Ten One Tea House maintains a pristine interior with its white walls, illuminated menu, and sophisticated furniture, making it more luxurious than its bubble tea shop counterparts. The shop's sophisticated aesthetic seems to translate into the tea flavors they offer on the menu: osmanthus honey, Earl Grey milk tea, and strawberry green tea, to name a few. Even if these untraditional flavors are not your cup of tea, Ten One Tea House has many staple flavors to appeal to the more conservative bubble tea drinker, such as brown sugar, matcha, or taro milk tea.

Another intriguing aspect of this bubble tea shop is its variety of toppings. When we went earlier in March to try their bubble tea, we asked for matcha latte milk teas with boba. In terms of price and size of the drinks, Ten One Tea House is on par with the other shops in the Square, to the dismay of bubble tea fans who may want a less expensive alternative. But, its creative flavors are what very noticeably set the shop apart.

The worker asked us to clarify which type of boba we wanted. To our surprise, we learned that they had three other types of boba in addition to brown sugar: white honey, blue butterfly, and dragon fruit. Tiger Sugar only offers the traditional brown sugar tapioca option, and while Kung Fu Tea has variety in its toppings, it has none of the same flavors. Our original conception of the bubble tea places was that there was not much disparity in the quality or

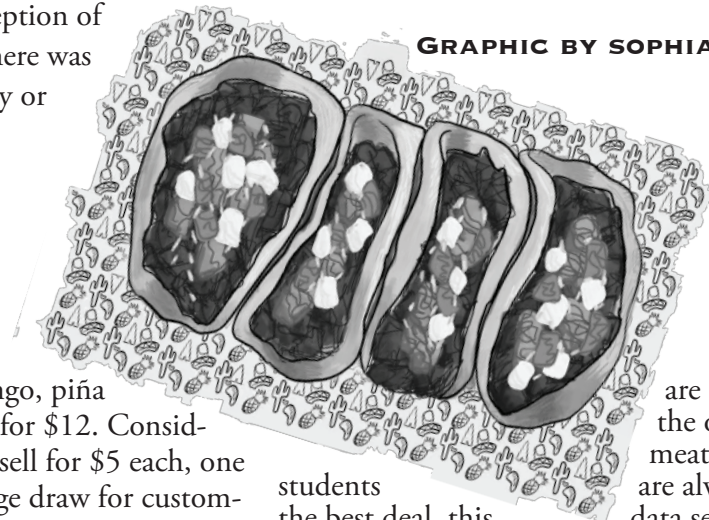
variety of their teas. Knowing the differences in their menus, not only will it be fun to vary up your bubble tea outings when strolling through Harvard Square, but now you can build your excitement to try a more novel option.

With the existing knowledge that Möge Tee had to shut its doors, does Harvard Square really need another boba shop? Shops like Kung Fu Tea, Gong Cha, and Tiger Sugar are already clearly established in the Square, so what is the benefit of adding another destination for bubble tea? This skepticism, however, may fade after giving Ten One Tea House a chance.

What does Ten One Tea House bring to the table? The shop's attention to the quality and variety of its ingredients, as well as its expansive menu options, make Ten One Tea House extra special. But will this be enough to compete with the rest of the boba shops in the area? Only time will tell. Ten One Tea House's unique array of flavors holds the potential for a promising future. If one craves a sweet drink with notes of fruitiness and fragrant tea, then this is the new ideal boba shop to try.

**LUCIE STEFANONI '27 (LUCIESTEFANONI@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND KAITLYN HOU '27 (KAITLYNHOU@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) BOTH PREFER MATCHA TEA OVER COFFEE AS THEIR CAFFEINE OF CHOICE.**

GRAPHIC BY SOPHIA RASCOFF '27



## Let's Taco-bout it. A review of Achilito's Taqueria.

BY BREAGH BRIDGE '27

Every Harvard student's good night out ends at one of the Square's renowned late-night Mexican-style eateries. With this comes a fun debate on the walk home from a party over whether Jefe's or Felipe's will ultimately satisfy that 2 a.m. craving. The die-hard fans of each of these establishments will happily engage you with their points as to why one is better than the other, so much so that "Jefe's or Felipe's" should probably be added as a standard part of the Harvard introduction. However, one new restaurant may begin to shake up the debate and add itself into the conversation. Could Achilito's Taqueria, new to Harvard Square, sway students to betray their old favorites?

The family-owned restaurant, native to Jamaica Plain in the South Boston area, was founded in October 2018. Harvard Square is now their third location, implicating success at their previous two establishments. Upon arrival, customers should expect the expediency of Jefe's rather than the home-style feel of Felipe's. Achilito's is decorated with brightly colored walls, Bandera de México hanging from the ceiling, and vivid orange chairs, with minimal seating space. The experience is meant to be quickly paced.

Harvard students are known for constantly berating HUDS dining options and, rightfully so, complaining about the d-halls shutting down at 7:30 p.m. One would expect that despite its current lack of reputation around Harvard, a new restaurant in the Square should be busy because it offers an escape from students' meal plans. Boasting hours of 10:30 a.m.-4 a.m., Achilito's certainly caters to the college scene. While up late p-setting or socializing, there is an endless list of reasons why students may find themselves with late-night cravings. Currently, Achilito's has a Taco Tuesday Deal

that offers three tacos and a mango, piña colada, or lime virgin margarita for \$12. Considering that these drinks typically sell for \$5 each, one would anticipate this to be a huge draw for customers. Additionally, you can purchase their alcoholic margaritas for \$11 each until 1:45 a.m. every night of the week.

Considering this deal, it would not be surprising if Achilito's became the next wildly popular food option in the Square. Despite it only being advertised with some "Taco Tuesday" signage outside the restaurant, the offerings of the advantage speak for themselves. Something to note is that their signs portray what appears to be a Stock Image of hard shell tacos, however Achilito's sells flour or corn soft shell tacos. It is a great bonus that they have the option of corn or flour tortillas for no difference in price. For this Taco Tuesday deal, customers choose between chicken, spicy chicken, or beef along with the options of pico de gallo, cilantro, crema, and onions for toppings free of charge. Other toppings are 50 cents, and the salsas are an additional dollar. They have a wide range of protein options if you're not ordering with the Taco Tuesday deal—these range from baja shrimp tacos to the greasiest pork you've ever tried. If this is what you are looking for in a taco, then you have come to the right place.

Although their Taco Tuesday deal is perfect for a cheap bite, the same cannot be said for the rest of their menu. Their burritos come in either a regular or large. The regular size ranges from \$10-\$14.50 (depending on the protein option) and they charge \$2.50 to upgrade to a large. This comparatively high price does not bode well for competing in the already saturated Mexican food market in the Square. At Felipe's, burritos cost \$7.50 for a regular and \$8.50 for a super burrito, and at Jefe's, they

are \$10.30 with the option of any meat. Since college students are always looking for the best deal, this into support of Felipe's or Jefe's being the preferred option. This being said, Achilito's has phenomenal churros and chips with guac or queso. These both retail for a mere \$3, which is comparable to other restaurants. So, the quality of Achilito's and the convenient experience it offers is undeniable, making it still worth a shot for those willing to try out somewhere new.

We have seen such a phenomenon before with Noch's vs. Joe's or Tasty Burger vs. Shake Shack. All of these options also serve the perfect amount of grease to soak up the alcohol after a night out and have their band of loyal followers. And now, Jefe's, Felipe's, and Achilito's all offer various options for Harvard students to fulfill their late-night quesadilla, bowl, or burrito craving in the Square. It seems pretty simple really—Harvard students love their Mexican food, so why not more?

If history were to repeat itself then in the coming months, we would see that there is always room for another comforting, hand-held, late-night food option on a college campus. Especially with fun drinks and easy-to-grab snacks, it's easy to see how Achilito's could become an institution. Alternatively, the disappointment in the lack of cuisine diversity, and love of old favorites could keep Harvard students away from Achilito's, despite their fun deals and late-night hours. Next time you are out late and craving a taco, stumble into Achilito's to try something new.

**BREAGH BRIDGE '27 (BREAGHBRIDGE@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) GO-TO MEXICAN FOOD ORDER IS A PORK CHIMICHANGA.**

GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27

# Harvard Women's Tennis: No Strangers to Winners

The team remains hot on a nine-game win streak.

BY ANDREW MORRISSEY '26

The women's tennis team is off to their best start in program history. Their three most recent wins on the road have put them at a 13-2 record this season, with nine straight wins including five 4-0 shutouts. After their last 4-1 win at Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles, the team surpassed last year's 12-10 record and is now poised to put it far in the rearview mirror.

The team has only lost matches to Texas A&M and Yale—an incredible achievement for both the players and head coach Traci Green. They have now wrapped up their indoor season and just recently hit the outdoor courts with their trip to the West Coast over spring break. They come back to Cambridge for their final non-conference game of the season vs. UMass on March 30.

Holly Fischer '25, playing No. 1 singles, offered her perspective on the reasons for their recent success. "It just feels really good. The team has been putting in a lot of work this year on and off the court. I think we've all made a huge effort to not only train hard but also bond with each other off the court... So it's nice to say that our work is showing in the results and paying off." Fischer now sits at a singles record of 13-3.

Stephanie Yakoff '27, playing No. 2 singles as well as No. 1 doubles with Fischer, added, "We've been building together on and off the court since the season began, and even in the fall, it's just great

ing start, and hopefully [this] continues for the rest of the season." After a recent decisive 6-2 victory against LMU, Fischer and Yakoff have racked up an impressive 8-3 record together in doubles play.

Coach Green credited their success in part to physical fitness and praised the team's dedication and depth: "I'm really proud of the fitness of our team. I think it's been showing in the last few matches, and we hope to continue dominating in that area going forward," said Green. "I think we have an awesome amount of depth on our team. And just the hard work and dedication [and] how much our team loves the game really shows day in and day out at practice. We're going to keep on riding this wave as long as we can and have fun."

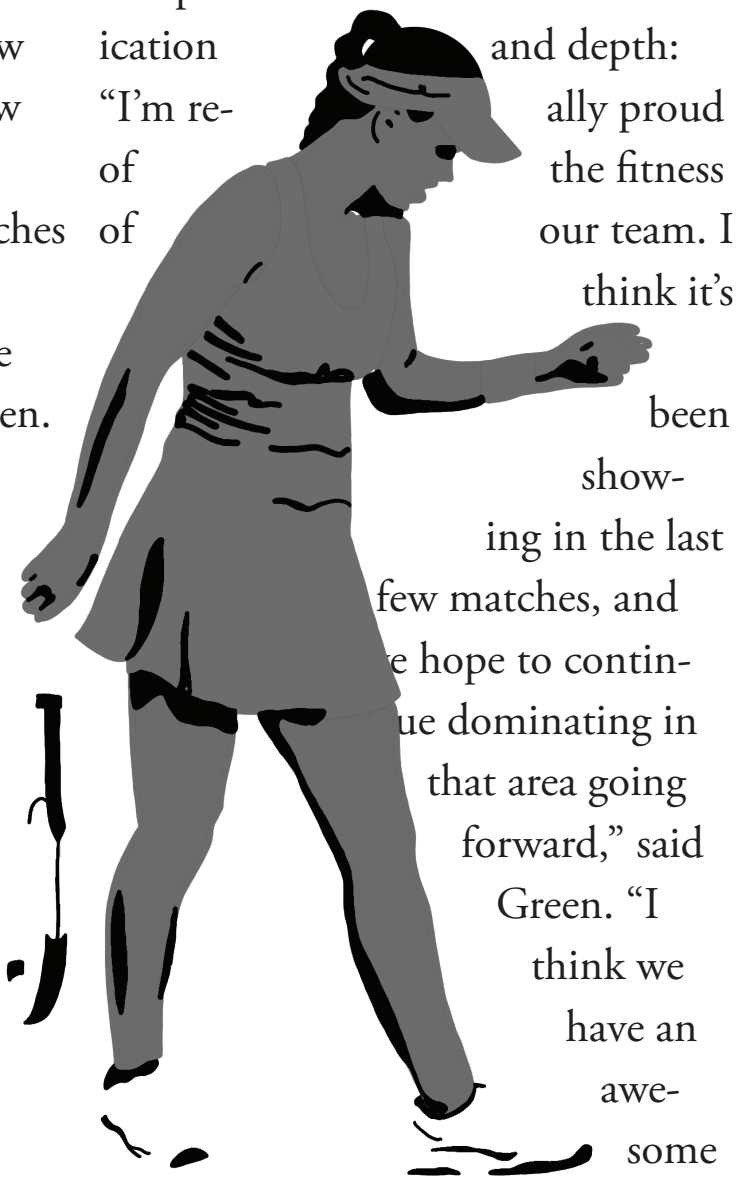
The real test is yet to come, however, with the Ivy League Championship on the horizon. The early 0-4 loss to Yale remains a sore spot for chances at the championship this year, but the shutout score does not provide the full story. Harvard led in all three unfinished matches and put up a close race in

the doubles position, winning the No. 1 position and losing the No. 2 and 3 positions 6-2 and 6-4 respectively. Despite this loss at the ECAC Championship, Fischer remains optimistic about their chances at the title this year. "I think we're definitely on track [for the Ivies]—our team has gotten better and better," said Fischer. "I think we got a chance to see some of the Ivy League Schools at ECACs so we kind of know the types of players we're going to be playing against. I think, with the people on our team, if everybody keeps going in the right direction, we definitely have a shot." The team last won the annual championship in 2017 with a record of 17-8, sharing the crown with Dartmouth and Cornell.

Green added, however, that the most important match is always the next one. The team looks on to their final non-conference match, relying not on the momentum to succeed, but instead on laser focus and grit. Coach Green highlighted their current objectives, explaining, "Right now, we're working on making the transition to outdoor tennis. There's a little bit of a difference between indoor tennis and outdoor tennis, so we'll be looking to be a little more patient on the court and add a little more spin to our game." Green's 17th season as head coach of Harvard's tennis team is off to a historic beginning, but, when it's over, all that will be remembered is the end—it is up to the players to finish it strong.

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GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26



# Indy Sportsbook: March Madness

A preview of the magic and eroticism to come in this year's dance.

BY LUKE WAGNER '26 AND SANTI KELLY '26

As March rolls in, so does the biggest NCAA Men's Basketball tournament of the year. March Madness is a once-a-year extravaganza that brings people together in celebration of the game we love. Win or lose, savor every moment of the tournament experience. Cheer for the buzzer-beaters, marvel at the upsets, and relish in the joy of being part of something bigger than yourself. After all, it's called March Madness for a reason.

For college students nationwide, March Madness isn't just a basketball tournament—it's a cultural phenomenon. The excitement, the upsets, the brackets—it's all part of the experience. Sadly, for Harvard students, the men's basketball team did not qualify for the tournament. As the 2024 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament approaches, students are gearing up for weeks of intense hoops action. Whether you're a die-hard fan or a casual observer, here's your ultimate guide to navigating March Madness like a pro.

First things first, embrace the madness. March Madness isn't just about basketball—it's about camaraderie, competition, and community. Get involved in bracket pools, join watch parties, and let yourself get swept up in the excitement of the games. Do not sit in your dorm room with Cheetos and Miller Lite, silently indulging as you watch yourself win or lose thousands of dollars.

Before filling out your

bracket, it's essential to know the teams. Familiarize yourself with the top contenders, the underdogs, and the potential Cinderella stories. It is usually a good strategy to have the No. 1 seeds in each part of the bracket win the first couple of games. However, knowing the history of these teams is important. We at the Indy Sportsbook will be staying away from betting on Purdue—no matter how good they look before the tournament, they will always crumble under pressure.

Keep an eye on powerhouse programs like Duke, Gonzaga, and Kansas, but don't sleep on the mid-majors and smaller schools known to make deep runs in the tournament. Understanding each team's strengths, weaknesses, and key players will give you a competitive edge when making your picks. There are thousands of hours of data to sift through, and most people do not have time to do that. However, if you want to make some quick picks, look at NET rankings and fast-break efficiency.

The bracket is the heart of March Madness, and studying it is crucial to success. Analyze matchups, seedings, and potential upsets to inform your picks. Look for trends, such as lower-seeded teams that historically perform well or conferences that have shown strength in the tournament. Remember, no bracket is perfect, so don't be afraid to trust your instincts and take calculated risks.

While it is impossible to predict even the first-round matches, here are some upsets we at the Indy Sportsbook love:

No. 11 New Mexico to beat No. 6 Clemson, No. 10 Nevada to beat No. 7 Dayton, and No. 9 TCU to beat No. 8 Utah State.

Outside of round one upsets, we can provide some help in betting on the winner of the 2024 NCAA tournament.

## INS:

No. 4 Auburn (+1600). Auburn is a really exciting team and has been playing good basketball all year. We are usually not huge Auburn fans, but we

believe that the Tigers could go far this season. They just slammed the entire SEC and are going to be hungry heading into the tournament. The only real negative is that they are a four-seed and their road will be tough considering they could face UConn in the Sweet Sixteen.

No. 3 Creighton (+2500). The value of Creighton winning the tournament could be the best in the entire tournament. We think that Creighton is one of the best teams in the country and should have been a one-seed. They are a little hit or miss but did just smash Marquette, one of the best teams in the tournament.

## OUTS:

No. 1 UConn (+375). In the last 60 years, only two teams have ever won back-to-back NCAA championships. UConn won the tournament last year, and while we know this is flawed logic, it just does not feel like they are going to have the magic again to create the madness. We are staying away from UConn.

No. 1 Houston (+500). We love Houston this year, but Drake bet massive amounts of money on this team and has been seen supporting their jersey. We believe in the Drake curse and will be staying away from them.

No. 1 Purdue (+700). As a Big Ten fan, we always select Purdue to go deep into the tournament, but for as long as we can remember, they have always let us down. This year will be no different, and even though they have the third best odds, they might not even make the Elite Eight.

Now, these are just some of our initial thoughts, and a lot is subject to change. Some players will get injured, some will start shooting very poorly, and who knows, someone might even catch fire. You never know. That is the nature of the madness.

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GRAPHIC BY DHATI OOMMEN '26



OPINIONS OF FORUM PIECES BELONG ONLY TO THE WRITER AND DO NOT REFLECT THE VALUES OF THE *INDEPENDENT*.

# Spring Forward

BY REBECCA ACKERMAN '25



## DOWN

- 1 Typist's left hand home keys
- 2 Faithful, to a Scot
- 3 Prefix with -phile
- 4 Microbrewery jug
- 5 "Just Putting It Out There" comedian Nancherla
- 6 One in distress?
- 7 Courses for coll. credit
- 8 Ran into
- 9 Live
- 10 "I'm in heaven!"
- 11 Musical deficiency
- 12 Glacial ridge
- 13 Oral traditions
- 19 Like a weak excuse
- 21 Alleviates
- 24 Matzo \_\_\_\_ (egg dish)
- 25 German article
- 26 Luggage
- 27 On the ocean

- 28 It gets flatter as it gets older
- 29 Venomous snake
- 33 Not esto or eso
- 34 Cranny's partner
- 35 Wide shoe sizes
- 38 Clerical vestments
- 39 Nair rival
- 40 Milkshake insert
- 43 Feelers on fish
- 46 Wouldn't go away
- 48 Minus
- 49 Under control
- 50 Ones getting root touch-ups, perhaps
- 51 Hotel amenities
- 52 Tag number
- 53 Composer Copland
- 56 Hawk
- 57 Caramel candy brand
- 58 Webzine
- 59 "Great" dog
- 61 Taxi
- 62 Brazilian hotspot

## ACROSS

- 1 Sleep like \_\_\_\_
- 5 "Battlestar Galactica" commander
- 10 Fastidious to a fault
- 14 Prophet
- 15 Origami need
- 16 Prefix with scope
- 17 Five-O cop
- 18 Import from Holland
- 20 Wild bunch?

- 22 Winged
- 23 Bowling alley
- 24 Covers with mud
- 26 Out of college offers
- 30 Stick out like \_\_\_\_ thumb
- 31 Room with a remote
- 32 Loudness unit
- 36 Option for a H.S. dropout
- 37 Shortbread

- 41 Low digit
- 42 Swedish auto
- 44 Director Spike
- 45 Spasm
- 47 Comedic actor who wrote the dystopian novel "2030"
- 51 Most minimalist
- 54 Patron saint of Norway
- 55 Spirited horses

- 56 Cleaned up
- 60 It keeps sparks off the carpet
- 63 Capital of Italia
- 64 Environmental sci.
- 65 Wasn't well
- 66 Flair
- 67 Chamber workers: Abbr.
- 68 Pods of cotton
- 69 Venetian VIP

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