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wake me up when september ends

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ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT

As Harvard College's weekly undergraduate newspaper, the *Harvard Independent* provides in-depth, critical coverage of issues and events of interest to the Harvard College community. The *Independent* has no political affiliation, instead offering diverse commentary on news, arts, sports, and student life.

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We belong to no one but ourselves.

THE FOUNDING OF HARVARD FACULTY FOR ISRAEL

New faculty-organized group signals support for Israeli students and provides a safe space on campus.

BY HANNAH DAVIS '25

Over the past year, Harvard has received extensive media attention, been called into a congressional hearing, and is now facing a lawsuit over antisemitism.

Many groups formed in response to this challenging time on campus, including the Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, the Presidential Task Force on Combating Anti-Muslim, Anti-Arab, and Anti-Palestinian Bias, and the Harvard College Jewish Alumni Alliance. Most recently, Professor Jesse Fried, the William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, and Dr. Matthew Meyerson, Professor of Genetics at Harvard Medical School, founded Harvard Faculty for Israel (HFFI).

Meyerson approached Fried several months ago about forming HFFI, expressing his concerns about what was happening to Israeli and Jewish students over the past year.

"I think it was really seeing how difficult it was for Jewish students, and especially Israeli students, on campus this past year, but also really going back in time," Meyerson said in an interview with the *Independent*. "I think there have been just been a number of examples of real exclusion and discrimination against students, and, especially students from Israel, in the classroom and extracurricular activities. And, you know, a number of these are public."

On Sidechat, a popular anonymous social media platform, numerous posts targeted Jewish and Israeli students. Fried and Meyerson cited a series of Sidechat posts exhibiting this rhetoric in their op-ed in *The Harvard Crimson*. One post used a common antisemitic trope to insult an Israeli student. The user said, "She looks just as dumb as her nose is crooked." Another student posted, "I would like us all to reflect how much power the Jewish population has over the media," referencing another antisemitic trope. A third post proclaimed that "we got too many damn jews in state supporting our economy."

The federal lawsuit from recent Harvard Divinity School graduate Alexander Kenstenbaum and Students Against Antisemitism, Inc v. President and Fellows of Harvard College and the Harvard Jewish Alumni Alliance report also reference a Harvard Sidechat message that said, "stfu pedo lover! All of you Zionists are the same. Killers and rapists of children."

For their report, HJAA interviewed 42 Jewish students and found extensive reports of antisemitic and anti-Israeli incidents on campus, dating back to even before Oct. 7. In March 2023, Kim Nahari '26 was asked to leave a classroom she was visiting after the professor learned she was Israeli.

Last fall, in Professor Marshall Ganz's "Organizing: People, Power, Change" class at the Harvard Kennedy School, three Israeli students were prohibited from working on a project seeking, in their words, "to harness and unite a majority of diverse and moderate Israelis to strengthen Israel's liberal and Jewish democracy" and prohibited from describing Israel as a "Jewish democracy."

"That was a really big factor in trying to support Israeli students and visiting scholars," Meyerson said, referencing the incident at the Kennedy School. HFFI's additional objectives include supporting Israeli students and scholars

and Harvard exchange programs with Israeli universities.

Doron Ben Haim '27, an Israeli student at the College, shared his view on the importance of HFFI and its efforts. "It is really significant for us, especially as it feels like people are more cautious about what they tend and tend not to say," he said. "The fact that they feel the obligation or the ability to openly support Israel is a major difference for us than we felt last year. It's highly appreciated and gives us a sense that there is a space for the Israeli community."

HFFI's membership includes hundreds of faculty from across Harvard's schools. Meyerson said the group has mainly spread through word of mouth, which likely explains why faculty from HMS and HLS comprise the majority of HFFI's current membership.

"My guess is that very few of [HFFI's membership] support the current government [in Israel]," said Fried in an interview with the *Independent*. "Personally, when I was in Israel in 2023, I demonstrated against the government. I think they're taking Israel in the wrong direction, and I'm very saddened about that."

Fried continued, "If this war hadn't happened, I would probably devote some of my energy to trying to fight the current government. But this has become sort of an existential threat, not just in Israel, but also for Jews and Israelis in the United States. So this is where I put my energy."

HFFI plans to host weekly open lunches in Cambridge and Longwood. Fried shared his perception of the one lunch held at Hillel so far. "It was very successful. People really appreciated it, because somebody from the University seems to care about them."

Maya Shiloni '26 is an Israeli-American student at the College who attended the Cambridge lunch last week. She said, "I definitely feel like it was a very supportive space. We don't get to experience a lot of support as Israelis on campus—we're mostly pushed away, not accepted. This was a really great experience to be in such an accepting space."

Meyerson will run the planned Longwood lunches each Thursday. Their first event took place on Sept. 19 and had about 25 attendees, including 10 faculty and 15 students and scholars, according to Meyerson. The attendees came from a mix of backgrounds, ethnicities, and religions.

"This was pretty informal. We just got together. We chatted mostly in small groups. But I definitely had the feeling, and obviously, formally from this one person," he said, referencing a text he received, "but informally from others too, that it was a good experience and meaningful for them."

Looking forward, Meyerson said HFFI is in a "listening and learning mode, hearing from visiting students and visiting scholars about their experiences, and really trying to understand the needs of those communities."

"When I started talking to undergrads and Israelis, I discovered to my horror that there was this pervasive pattern of Israelis being discriminated against and shunned," said Fried.

Peleg Samuels, a Ph.D. candidate in Economics at Harvard University, shared, "I've stopped attending spaces I previously did—I am gay, so LGBTQ spaces, or our union, because it's been made very clear that my acceptance

is conditioned on my capitulation to others' definitions of Jewish identity. The HFFI is like a small light in what has been a much more lonely, and, at least perceived by me, hostile Harvard."

Fried's conversations with students emphasized the importance of creating a space supporting students and faculty both within and outside Harvard. He felt compelled to build on his previous work in pro-Israel movements and decided to co-found HFFI and serve on the antisemitism task force at Harvard. His position in these organizations allows him to serve different but essential roles on campus.

"With the task force, I can't do some of the things I'm doing through HFFI," Fried elaborated, "I can't signal to Israelis on campus that there are a lot of faculty behind you and to Israelis outside of Harvard that there are a lot of people at Harvard who are behind you. I can't get people together for lunch where they feel supported through the antisemitism task force."

While the task force has a more institutional role, its efforts and discussions are more distanced from Israeli and Jewish students' day-to-day experiences.

Yet, Fried also underscored the importance of the task force's ability to collect data and make recommendations to Harvard. While the task force will make recommendations, some of which may be permanently implemented, the task force itself will not be a permanent fixture at Harvard. Its official charge ends with releasing a final report on its findings and recommendations.

"At some point, it's going to stop its operating. And so, HFFI will continue."

One of HFFI's main initiatives is supporting academic exchanges between Harvard and Israel. Meyerson explained, "There are a number of efforts that have attempted to or to really exclude or boycott Israeli universities."

The US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel has thousands of signatures and endorsements from faculty at American universities, international colleagues, and academic associations. In 2019, the NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis ruled in favor of non-cooperation with NYU's Tel Aviv campus. More recently in Feb. 2024, the Student Senate at Pitzer voted for the College to cut ties with Israeli universities. In addition, five Norwegian universities cut ties with Israeli universities. Academics for Palestine cites universities from around the world that are engaged in academic boycotts against Israeli universities.

In light of these global efforts to weaken or cut academic ties between Israeli universities and other universities and the antisemitic and anti-Israel incidents occurring on campus, Meyerson made a final request regarding HFFI's mission.

"Israeli students or scholars who are finding any challenges on campus, I would just say that they should feel free to reach out to our group either to individual professors who they know already or to Jesse or me. And we could see if we can provide support in any way or refer them to others who can," Meyerson said.

DO BOTS TEACH BETTER THAN PEOPLE?

Harvard courses test out AI tutors to supplement student learning.

BY CAROLINE STOHRER '28

As we enter the last week of September, school is starting to feel real again.

But as everyone is locking in following their summer hiatus, there is one topic no one wants a refresher on: AI and the use of ChatGPT in the classroom. Ever since ChatGPT shook the academic world, teachers and administrators have grappled with the role, or lack thereof, that AI should play in the classroom. This year, however, AI may play a much bigger role than previously anticipated.

Last year, physics instructors Gregory Kestin and Kelly Miller led a study of their Physical Sciences 2 (PS2) course, a biology-based physics course, where they implemented an AI tutor in the class. In the resulting article pre-printed along with Anna Klales, Timothy Milbourne, and Gregorio Ponti, students taught by the AI tutor outperformed students taught in an active learning lecture when tested after a week of lessons each.

After a pre-test to gauge previous knowledge of the concepts covered, the students were tested again at the end of the week to compare their relative learning. As quoted in *The Harvard Gazette*, “Learning gains for students in the AI-tutored group were about double those for students in the in-class group.”

Inspired by the results from the PS2 research, Math 21A Course Head Eva Politou decided to conduct a more in-depth study this semester. “Last year, we had the component of the workshops in 21A where we had mixed feelings from students

about it, [as] many of them say that it feels like an extra section of the week,” Politou said in an

interview with the *Independent*.

This year, 21A students were given the choice between an AI tutor-led workshop and an in-person workshop led by undergraduate course assistants (CAs), each of which would meet once a week. These workshops were designed to increase student understanding of the course material with real-world applications. Politou’s study will examine student engagement with the instructors, both AI and CAs, by analyzing the quality of conversations generated in workshop discussions.

“If students are just kind of saying, ‘What did you get for that question? Oh, I got the same. Okay, let’s keep going’— That’s a less quality kind of conversation,” Megan Selbach-Allen, an education research scientist who is working alongside Politou for the study, explained. “Are they kind of engaging richly with the tutor? Or are they asking kind of quicker, shorter, I-just-want-to-get-this-done type questions?”

An important feature of this study is the duration and breadth of the data collection. Because Politou wants to explore the benefits of AI and human teaching beyond one or two weeks of lessons, the researchers seek to analyze students’ work and conversations inside and outside the classroom.

“There’s going to be a lot of different metrics that we’re looking at. So it’s going to be the [AI/in-person] logs themselves and the quality of those questions that we observe. It is going to be the reflections. It is going to be the kind of results on p-sets or exams,” Selbach-Allen said. From

test scores to clips of student

discussions, the 21A research team hopes to have a comprehensive understanding of student learning.

However, with any sort of AI or technological innovation, it’s also important to think about who will be displaced as a result. The main goal of the workshops is to promote deep thinking about mathematical concepts. Depending on how beneficial AI is for students, CAs may or may not need more training for future workshops.

“If we find that it doesn’t really make any difference, we might keep both for just the flexibility aspect,” Politou said about the results regarding AI tutors. “If it gives more, then maybe we will have to reconsider training for the CAs to allow people that still want to do it in person to be able to do it in person. So maybe we could have smaller sections for the in-person [workshops] with more trained people.” Course assistants can rest assured that their jobs are safe, for now.

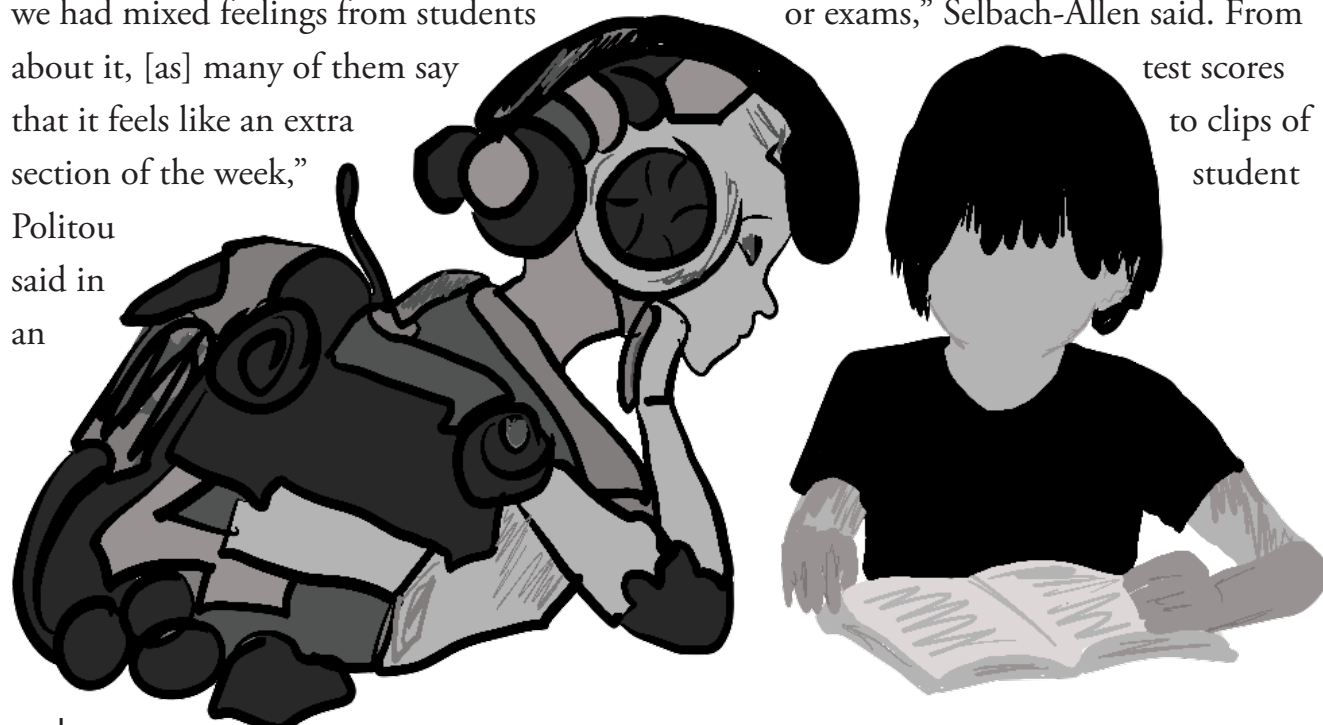
Considering the 21A study will take place over a longer period of time than the PS2 one, the results of Politou’s work will take at least a year, consisting of carefully reviewed data sourced from filmed conversations, question logs, and written reflections. “That’s what we would call qualitative research. It’s not going to be as clearly quantified, but we probably will come up with some degree of quantification based on a rubric, then codes, maybe how many questions are happening, and some rating of the quality of those questions.” Selbach-Allen explained regarding the data analysis.

Even if there is no conclusive outcome from the study, Politou hopes to use the lessons learned from the study to make the AI tool and workshops more efficient for next term. “I’m not necessarily expecting an outcome; I’m very curious to see how this evolves.”

CAROLINE STOHRER '28

(CAROLINESTOHRER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) DREAMS ABOUT THE AI APOCALYPSE WHEN SHE FALLS ASLEEP IN CLASS.

GRAPHIC BY ANNELISE FISHER '26



ARTS

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

A silent appreciator of art attends Student After Hours and the Print Rental Program preview at the Harvard Art Museums.

BY MIA TAVARES '27

Halfway through my third-ever visit to the Fogg Museum, one of the three museums that make up the Harvard Art Museums (HAM), I began to truly appreciate the surreal experience of walking through gallery rooms completely alone. Aside from the faint sounds of upbeat tunes and art-focused chatter echoing throughout the grand halls of the museum, it felt as if all that existed in the world was me and the selection of impressionist-inspired paintings that I'd stumbled upon.

As I sat upon one of the many wooden benches scattered throughout the rooms, I realized I hadn't ever had the opportunity to admire art in a one-on-one setting like this. In all of my wanderings through museums around the world, I'd never felt as at peace as I did here. At Student After Hours, there were no tourists with audio packs or small children being chased by parents who had hoped to enlighten their offspring at a young age. It was just me and the landscape painting that I'd circled back to for the third time within half an hour.

Excited to share my newfound enthusiasm for appreciating art in solitude, I ventured back out into the main hall of the museum. There, I was greeted by an intoxicating mix of funky jazz (courtesy of DJ Xavley), groups of enthusiastic Harvard affiliates sipping on specialty mocktails, and a plethora of opportunities to engage in rich dialogue about art. On the basement level, the Materials Lab was open, so I opted to linger there to talk to peers while being conveniently surrounded by art supplies that could provide an easy out to an awkward conversation. During the rest of the year, the Materials Lab offers public workshops focused on calligraphy, indigo dyeing, photo collaging, painting, and mosaic work.

Tonight, the diverse array of people present were working with markers and specialty postcards. Some people were undergraduates, like me, majoring in everything from Art, Film, and Visual Studies, to Philosophy, to Biomedical Engineering. Others were graduate students or the occasional faculty member. Some attendees dressed more formally, rocking a blazer and nice slacks or a mid-length dress, while others opted for a CS50 t-shirt and a zip-up hoodie. It seemed that everyone was welcome at Student After Hours, as long as you had a HUID to get through the front door.

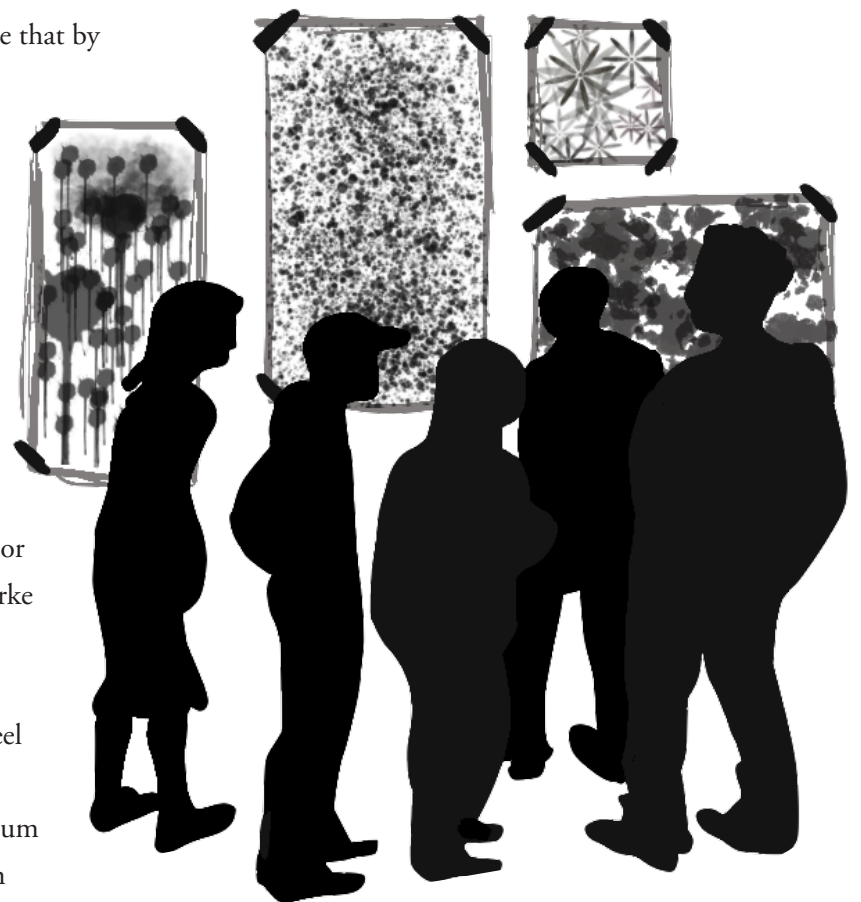
According to Jeanne Burke in an interview with the *Independent*, the Academic and Public Programs Coordinator for Harvard Art Museums, attracting a diverse crowd is exactly one of the many goals of events like Student After Hours. The event is "the museum's way of saying... welcome! We are here. We want you here. Here are some of the amazing things happening." For that to be effective, students in all forms need to feel a sense of acceptance from the museum and the community, regardless of their prior

experience with art. As she put it, "We hope that by coming to After Hours, you recognize and realize that this is a place for you. And you don't have to have any museum-going experience—you don't have to even have any art background."

The museum welcomes student engagement in all forms—whether it is "as simple as walking through the courtyard to go to your class" or something more involved, like getting a job at the museum as a Programs Assistant or a Student Guide. At the end of the day, Burke explained, it doesn't matter how a student utilizes the museum, just that they enjoy it. "We honestly just would love students to feel comfortable in our space." The dilemma, however, is that most of the time, the museum is completely open to the public, which can make it harder for students to feel relaxed. For the museum, it creates this "really interesting dynamic where, although [HAM is] open to the public, [the museum staff] really do think of it as a place for Harvard students." The annual Harvard-exclusive Student After Hours event is a step towards improving this dynamic and encouraging students to find comfort in the museums' stunning halls.

Another program that strengthens the bond between Harvard students and HAM is the Student Print Rental Program, which was previewed at Student After Hours on Sept. 19. Established in the 1970s, the program allows Harvard students to rent prints from the official HAM collection for the entirety of the academic school year. Compared to the prices and art quality you might find on Etsy, the program presents a unique opportunity to adorn your dorm room with an original print for only \$30 (provided you return it undamaged). Mary Lister, the Assistant Director for Collections at HAM, explained that all of the prints are specifically acquired "for the purpose of being part of the student rental program." As a result, students can select from a thoughtful curation of prints from artists that they might not have otherwise encountered.

As evidenced by its longevity, the Print Rental Program has demonstrated success time and time again. Not only has the HAM received "great feedback from students," but the program has also encouraged students to continue engaging with the museum. Students often return to re-rent a specific piece year after year or to discover more work from an artist they've previously enjoyed. "For everyone who's aware of the program, it's a really exciting event," Lister said. Another exciting aspect of the program is that there is no publicly available list of the prints. Other than the preview at Student After Hours, renters have no idea what their options are until they enter the building. "It's literally the coolest kind of shopping. I think of it



as a sample sale... You have no idea what's out there, and you literally have to go through and look through the containers," Lister explained. In her view, "It's all about that visual impact. That's the part of the day that's really fun for me. Just to hear students say, 'Oh my goodness,' this speaks to me."

Indeed, the eager energy in the room was almost palpable as I entered the sizable crowd that had gathered at the Student After Hours preview of this year's available prints. There was a mix of newcomers and returning renters, but the excited expression on all their faces as they scrutinized each print, mentally deciding which one would look best nailed above their twin XL, was the same. My face, too, likely betrayed the elation I felt at knowing that one of those beautiful works of art would be imminently hanging in my Lowell single. While the official rental day for the print program is Sept. 30, for the time being, I am content knowing that I'll soon get to bring the piece that I'd found tucked away in silence on the third floor of a Fogg exhibit to my very own room.

If you're interested in renting a print for your own Harvard-affiliated housing, then show up to the museum's Art Study Center anytime between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 30. Arrive through the Broadway entrance and choose one of the many beautiful print options available. Prints are rented on a first-come-first-served basis, so if you are looking forward to picking out a particular type, show up on time. Make sure that you are prepared to transport your print because you'll be walking out of the museum with it! It's all yours until May 5, 2025.

MIA TAVARES '27 (MIATAVARES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) DESPERATELY NEEDS A PRINT IN HER ROOM TO COMPLIMENT THE SINGULAR POSTER SHE HAS OF JESUS JUKING OUT SATAN IN A HEAVENLY BASKETBALL GAME. GRAPHIC BY ANNELISE FISHER '26

CREATIVE AFTER COLLEGE: TREASURE "SOL" FAITH BROOKS

An interview with a multidisciplinary artist, creative strategist, and changemaker.

BY KYA BROOKS '25

“I’m pursuing the path of a mogul, quite frankly,” SOL said, regarding her dreams. “I want to be able to act upon all of my creative imaginations.”

After graduating from Harvard College, multidisciplinary artist Treasure Faith Brooks '22 reinvented herself as SOL. “It was a process of self-possession and self-sovereignty, because I’ve been in institutions for so long,” she said.

One year ago, SOL co-founded a creative strategy firm called Sol Street Strategy. They advise companies on branding and strategic direction to scale internationally. They are also producing an original documentary-style television show. “Sol Street is sort of an imaginative place, like a literal street where we’re architecting the most ambitious, innovative ideas for the 22nd century. So we want to scale things bigger, to high ethical and creative standards, and we want them to last,” she explained.

SOL is an artist in ascent. She produced content for the Democratic National Convention and is speaking at the Ford Foundation for advancing human welfare, followed by her first month-long postgraduate artist residency to generate creative work for the upcoming year. After the 2024 U.S. presidential election in November, she will interview Frank Bruni, a political journalist for *The New York Times*, regarding how colleges can promote dialogue between students with opposing viewpoints.

“I’m just called upon,” she said, when asked how she finds such opportunities. “I tried to go into full-time work at a company here or there. But for one reason or another, I just felt like if I have enough patience and enough courage, and I’m savvy enough with this, then I can be self-employed and make this happen.”

Growing up, SOL attended performing arts schools. At fourteen, she went to boarding school in New York City, where she continued to train as a dancer and actor. She studied to become a professional dancer, attending summer intensives and apprenticeships under soloists from Alvin Ailey American Ballet Theater. But she learned that there is a small window of opportunity to dance professionally, and classical ballerinas typically do not attend college.

SOL, however, made the last-minute decision to attend Middlebury College, shocking her ballet company. There she studied gender, sociology, and international politics, while becoming known for political activism.

Despite spending most of her time on campus organizing, SOL explained, “I would still have this itch to be creative, and meld my intellectual capacities with my political activism with my creativity.” During her time at Middlebury, she co-founded a small media publication called *Problematic*. She planned to drop out and pursue *Problematic* full-time, but a mentor convinced her to apply to Harvard.

SOL, following her mentor’s advice, subsequently transferred to Harvard and concentrated in Art, Film, and Visual Studies. “I think I’ve always just been guided by the fact that I want to contribute to improving the world and helping people, and I want

to be creative,” she said. “I think a lot of my classes, obviously being in AFVS, were creatively oriented. Which kind of gave me my fix.”

SOL contributed to “different creative enclaves” during college. While at Harvard, she co-founded a feminist media company called



The Meteor. She joined student organizations like Eleganza, an annual fashion show, Omo Naija, an African dance troupe, and EXP, a competitive hip-hop team.

At Harvard, parts of the creative community felt exclusive. “I think that Harvard operates on a system where you have to punch, and you need to comp... honestly, it’s very bureaucratic,” SOL disclosed. “I felt like at the age that I was at, I was ready to just create and make and be my own person. I recognize that not everybody was necessarily at that point in their creative journey.”

Still, she nurtured intimate friendships with like-minded artists Shavonna Jackson '22 and Mai Anna Pacheco '23. They created a punk collective called Aw Sookie Sookie Now, which expressed political resistance through “party and play”—parties, street fairs, and support group circles. “I think that our artistic heartbeats made us feel like we don’t want to be isolated from people,” she said.

During senior year, SOL mentored the nascent Black Arts Collective by helping a group of first-years launch the organization. But by then, her professional ambitions took precedence. She produced, directed, and spoke for TED and *Teen Vogue*. She created film, video, and audio for live events, voting campaigns, advertisements, and podcasts. “I feel like I was trying to build my professional career simultaneous to being an undergrad, so I didn’t have that much time or bandwidth,” she explained.

After graduation, SOL moved to London for six months. She lived with Pacheco, who was studying abroad for her last semester. While Pacheco established herself in the international music scene, attracting fans and committing to weekly studio sessions and performances, SOL realized their artistic visions differed.

“I really realized that whole avenue of creatively producing things in a corporate capacity like [Pacheco], in a more popular culture space—I was like, ‘I’m not that.’ I think I’m an avant-garde artist. I think my voice is experimental. It’s radical. It’s not super commercial, and I want to keep it that

way,” SOL said.

Last year, Instagram named SOL in their inaugural “Future Makers” series, highlighting Gen Z artists and changemakers, in recognition of her avant-garde artistry. She created “Happy Birthday Private Person,” a moving-image installation with spoken word poetry, which they featured on the platform.

From there, she went on to co-found Sol Street Strategy with Jackson. The creative strategy firm evolved from their undergraduate collective Aw Sookie Sookie Now and is currently in the startup phase. “What we’re doing now was pollinated in college, in the relationships we built out there.”

SOL thinks critically about the market for cultural productions. “I have friends who I graduated with, and we’ve had these—dialecticals is what I’ll call them—of them being like, ‘Why do you need visibility? And why do things need money?’ There’s a whole starving artist complex that is seen as having valor, and as someone who comes from poverty, I don’t believe in that,” she said. “It’s a market, and we deserve to value our offerings appropriately to the rarity that they offer.”

Instead of gravitating toward self-promotion, SOL believes in naming your aspirations. “It’d be great if we lived in a world where people pick you, and they go, ‘Hey, I see this for you! I see a dream you’re too afraid to say!’ But I’m just now getting to the point in my creative career where I’m ready to raise my hand and say what I want, so that the people who are interested in helping scale these dreams—because they are big and they are ambitious—can step in and help me to do so,” she declared.

On the other hand, SOL warns young creatives against chasing fame. “Celebrity relies on attention. When you think about how long you can hold an attention span, that’s an intense thing to contemplate. In fact, it’ll drive you mad.” Rather, she believes that “it’s a lifelong journey. I’m always going to be an artist, and I refuse to not be a working artist.”

Growing up in performing arts schools, SOL watched many get their big break. The temptation of envy was always there, but she realized that the key was staying focused on her own clear vision. “When you really, really narrow in on what you—especially if you are an artist—want, then you’re also a visionary, which means that it hasn’t really been done before. So the more specific you can get, and the more tailored your dreams become to you, then the less sense of intimidation or competition you’ll experience,” SOL said.

She values creative expansion beyond insular spheres of influence. “I think as artists, especially as artists from Harvard, it’s really critical for the sake of making potent art that you break that supposed bubble, and step out and collaborate with artists from different walks of life, and go as far as fast as you can.”

SOL urges young artists to continue refining their craft. “It’s not a question of if the opportunity will come. The real question is, when it comes, will you be ready?”

KYA BROOKS '25 (KYABROOKS@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES ARTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.

PHOTO BY STEVEN HAWKINS

IS TWILIGHT OVER?

BY AJAX FU '28

Do you remember how the plastic fires
danced away as we tip-toed
late but unworried
I only remember you turning back for my smile
when you thought you recognized the song

Do you remember how many times
the wheel spun and how many
tickets we won
I only remember you asking that mother to
press our picture into
the shape of memory

Do you remember how much I spent
letting the panda slip by
and how many times I let go
I only remember how nostalgia tastes and Colde
fleeting on your shoulder

Now I'm starting to forget the little things
except for your fish tacos and how you like your chai (coconut, two sugars, and a kiss on the
neck), waiting for twilight to end—

**AJAX FU '28 (AJAXFU@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU)
WRITES ARTS FOR THE *INDEPENDENT*.
PHOTOS BY JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27**



IS THIS TWILIGHT?

BY AJAX FU '28

She drives home alone because she knows
he's afraid of the dark

he holds her closely when the rain pours
and the thunder reminds her

she traces their hearts and future on his chest
when they're the only two

he wraps himself over her worries
when the still dusk freezes over to what she calls twilight

they lean toward each other
when the same songs sing

but there's nothing to say
and it all keeps spinning

because forever only lasts as long they remember it



CONSULTING FAIR CHRONICLES

An original creative writing piece about the epic highs and lows of career fairs.

BY ILANA FEDER '26

Today is the day. Ever since I missed the McKinsey application deadline, I marked this day down in my calendar. I've been losing sleep, haunted by the McKinsey monster that invades my dreams each night. But today is going to make all of the nightmares finally go away. Today is the annual Business and Consulting Fair.

It's Friday, Sept. 13, to be exact. While Friday the 13th is typically an unlucky day, I began manifesting good luck for the fair by writing in my diary. I headed down to the dining hall at noon. I opted out of the greasy waffle fries and instead had an edible salad and a banana. I downed a glass of blue Powerade and began to lock in. I threw on the one business casual outfit I have for every business event, put on extra deodorant, and brushed a light coat of mascara on my eyelashes. I brushed my teeth not once, not twice, but three times, flossed, and took a shot of mouthwash for good measure. I went down to the Crimson Print printers and spent about 25 minutes asking myself how I got into this school if I can't even figure out how to print ten copies of my resume. After a long and unnecessary battle, I got my shit to print. It was now time to head to the Student Organization Center at Hilles (SOCH).

Harvard added extra shuttle rotations from the River to the SOCH on account of the fair, but I wasn't going to be no shuttle bitch. You think these consulting firms want someone who works smarter, not harder right? Wrong. If you can't walk 20 minutes on a nice day, good luck making it through an 80-hour workweek, pal. As I made it to the SOCH drenched in sweat, pit stains on my light gray blouse, I immediately sniffed out the shuttle riders and marked them down as non-threatening opponents.

I soon walked inside the big glass doors, donned a name tag,

and entered what seemed like an Econ-Bro zoo. I made a lap around the room, taking note of which companies I wanted to speak to first. I jumped into a big line for the first booth and waited patiently for my turn to introduce myself. As I played with my hair and subconsciously thought of ways to not stand so awkwardly, I noticed that I was still in the same spot in line that I had been 10 minutes ago. When I looked to the front of the table, I noticed the same girl was still there chatting up the 24-year-old Harvard alum whose name could have been either Greg or Craig. All of a sudden, Greg/Craig shook her hand and wrote down her name with a big star next to it. Fuck, I should've put on a second coating of mascara.

I quickly moved on to the next company, hoping the line would go faster this time. There was only one boy ahead of me, asking the recruiter how to best prepare for the interview stage. Sweat was dripping down his face as he tightly squeezed his left hip as if fighting off the worst cramp of all time. Suddenly, he cut his conversation short. No time to even pull out his resume from the Harvard folder he got this morning from The Coop. He sped-walked towards the bathroom with his hand still fixed tightly to his hip.

He must have had the waffle

fries.

Some students seemed to be

facing the opposite dilemma as they prioritized making their way to the vending machine instead of PwC. One student glistened at the snacks for five minutes, unsure whether to go for the Peanut M&Ms or the Nacho Cheese Doritos. In the end, he went the cheesy route and left a signature orange fingerprint on his resumes for the remaining time at the fair.

Many students looked more casual than business casual in a classic pair of straight blue jeans, while others looked like they were already headed to their Superdays. Suit and tie, briefcase in hand, and ready to take on the world! I mean—the Business and Consulting Fair!

After an hour and a half of scanning barcodes and shaking hands, I knew my work there was done. I made my rounds and flexed my pit stains to showcase my dominance and determination. I stepped outside, delighted to see the sun again, and embarked on my journey back home. I can't say if my passion for consulting is as strong as my passion for people-watching, but I still felt accomplished just for making an appearance. My sleep that night was nightmare-free.

ILANA FEDER '26

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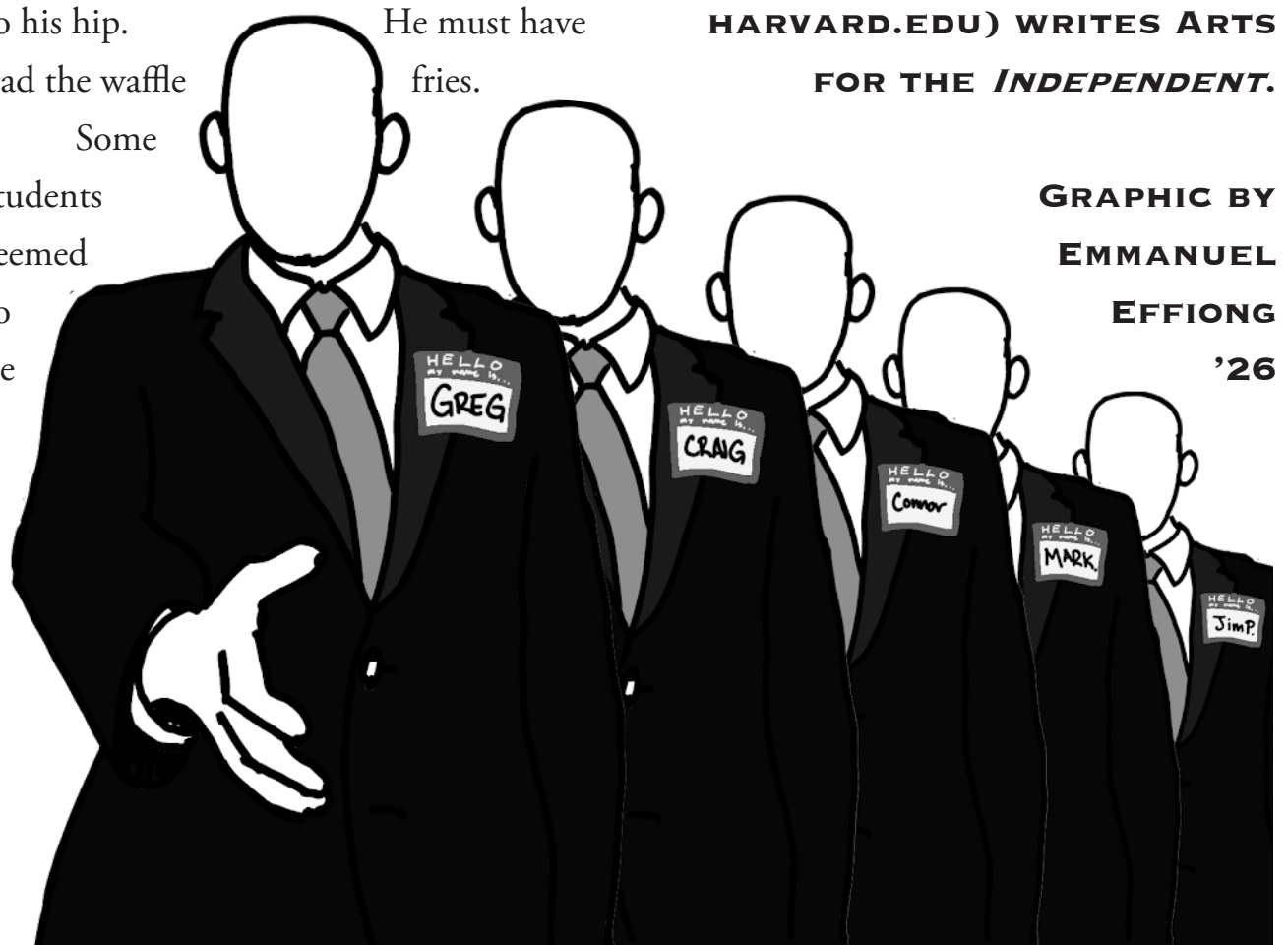
FOR THE *INDEPENDENT*.

GRAPHIC BY

EMMANUEL

EFFIONG

'26



SPORTS

"UNKNOWN, UNDERLOOKED, AND UNDERAPPRECIATED"

A spotlight on the Harvard Nordic ski team.

BY PIPPA LEE '28

Have you ever heard of Nordic skiing? Did you know it was a varsity sport at Harvard? No? Well, until recently, neither did I. With 10 people on the team—six women and four men—the Nordic ski team is one of the smallest sports teams at Harvard. Many of these members feel as if their sport, also known as cross-country skiing, goes largely unnoticed at the College. Nordic skiing is time-consuming and difficult to break into; not many high schools and elementary schools have Nordic ski teams, and there aren't many places where one can practice regularly. So how did these team members find out about this sport?

"I'm from Anchorage, Alaska," Elias Soulé '28 explained. "[Nordic skiing] is kind of what everyone does when they're growing up. My parents had me in Junior Nordic, which is the Junior Nordic skiing program that everyone does in town. I started that when I was five. I was honestly just skiing around with my parents before that, so maybe three years old is when I started skiing," said Soulé.

The Anchorage to Harvard Nordic ski pipeline didn't just start with Soulé; the captain of the women's team, Quincy Donley '25, is from the same hometown. "I actually started Nordic skiing before I started walking. Both my parents skied, so they put me on skis at a very young age—I think [at the age of] one and a half or two," said Donley.

Nordic skiing is not without rigorous training. Not only are the hours intense during the winter, but team members explained how their time-intensive training regimen starts in the summer. "The summer is when we train the most, and truthfully, it's like a part-time job in the summer because it ranges anywhere from 20-30 hours of just pure training time. I think that makes it really

difficult to have a job or get an internship or do other things you're excited about," said Bennett Hutchinson '28.

Donley echoed this sentiment, explaining the rigor of the training in the fall. "We have practice every Saturday and Sunday morning. We hop in our team van and drive somewhere to go roller, ski, or run. Then during the school week, we have practice in the morning, usually at seven, and then we'll do an afternoon session, usually starting at around 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.," said Donley.

Soulé also noted the long hours during off-season training,

saying, "Last week, we did 16

hours of training time total." In comparison, the Harvard alpine ski team, also in their off-season, currently practices five hours a week. The Harvard men's soccer team, currently in season, trains 15-18 hours a week. "Honestly, doing Nordic skiing is a similar [commitment] to taking Math 55," said Soulé. The athletes on this team have had to excel at balancing their training with the rigorous workload at Harvard.

Donley explained another difficulty that comes with this sport at Harvard: location. "We can't exactly just walk out our back door onto ski trails or more traditional ski trails, so we do have to improvise a little bit. We ski at a golf course nearby called Weston Ski Track; they make man-made snow there in the

winter," said Donley.

The competitive aspect of the Nordic ski team provides a sense of community and belonging for the team members. "My favorite part of Nordic skiing is honestly the competition. Once you reach a certain level, you kind of know everyone in the sport. And then you travel around, and you race the same people, you get to know everyone—it becomes a very tight-knit community. The races are brutal, but after, they're a lot of fun. And it's a sense of accomplishment that comes with doing

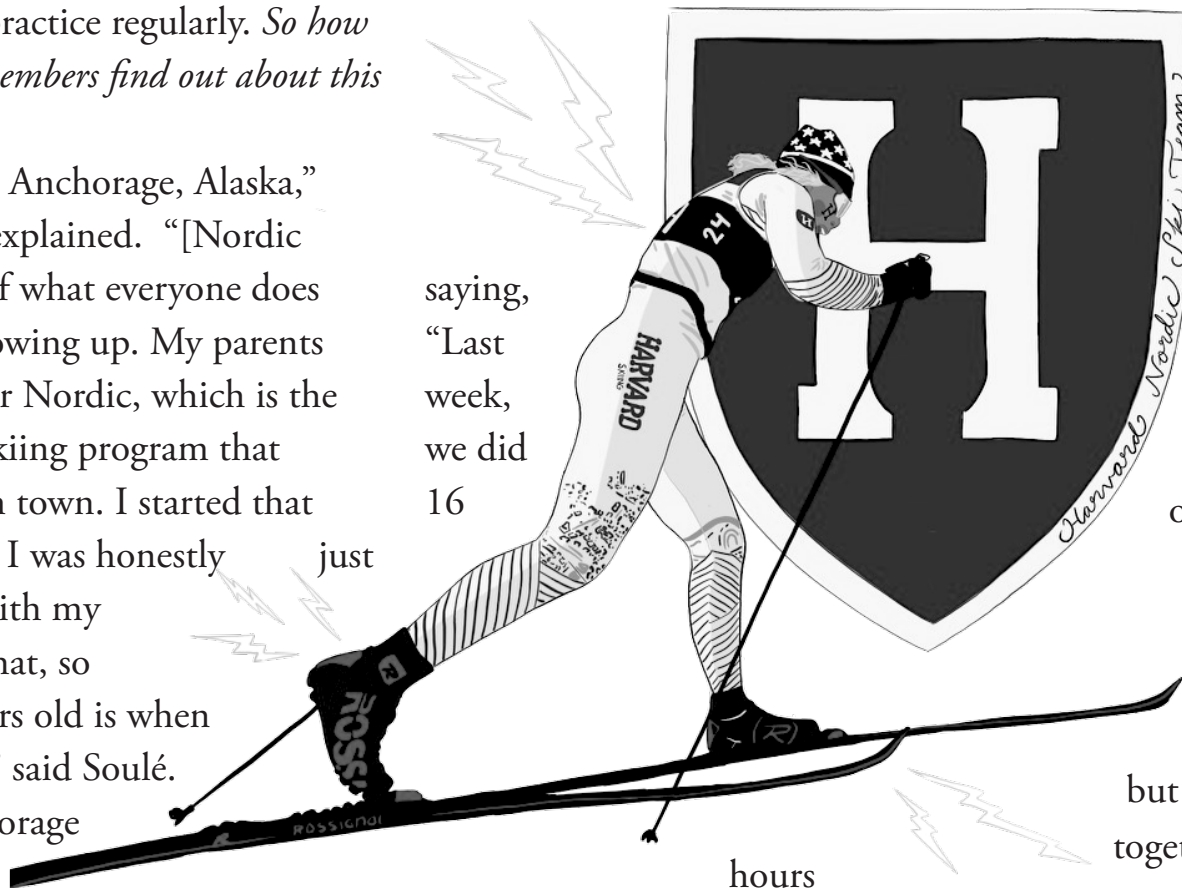
one of the hardest endurance sports in the world," said Soulé.

When asked about her favorite part of being on the team, Donley explained how she loved traveling to races. "Pretty much every weekend, starting after Christmas break, we are traveling to carnival races. So that's our collegiate circuit, and it's super fun to stay with the team during the weekends and race against other colleges, and to have a little vacation every weekend, but also get to ski race and work hard together," said Donley.

The Harvard Nordic ski team is one of the most impressive teams on campus, yet not enough people know about them. Our school spirit shouldn't just appear once a year at the Harvard-Yale football game. As a college, we should support all of our amazing undergraduate sports teams and the talented athletes that comprise them. So, put on your beanies, puffer coats, and scarves, and come support the Nordic team at the Dartmouth Carnival at Oak Hill on Feb. 7 and 8!

PIPPA LEE '28 (PIPPALEE@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES SPORTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27 SPORTS | 9



INDY SPORTSBOOK: SOCCER'S BIGGEST STAGE

Some simple bets for the 2025 winner of the UEFA Champions League.

BY LUKE WAGNER '26 AND ANDREW CHRISTIE '26

With the college and professional football seasons kicking off, baseball approaching the postseason, and the NBA and NHL entering preseason soon, one sport in America often goes unnoticed: soccer.

The UEFA Champions League (UCL) is Europe's premier soccer competition, where the best teams from each country compete for the Champions League title. While most soccer leagues started in mid-August (Premier League, La Liga, Serie A), we witnessed the Champions League's return last week. There is no greater accomplishment for a team than winning the Champions League trophy, a lasting mark of an incredible season.

The UCL began in 1955 when it was introduced as the European Champions Club's Cup. At its inception, it was a knockout tournament between the champions of the various domestic European leagues. Several decades later in 1991, a round-robin stage (a format in which each team plays every other team an equal number of times) was added to the competition. The following year, the tournament was officially rebranded to the UEFA Champions League. In 1997, non-league winners were allowed to join, which gave rise to the format we are most familiar with today.

Historically, this tournament has been Real Madrid's (ESP) event. They have won the title 15 times since 1955. In second place is AC Milan (ITA) with a mere seven. To put Real Madrid's success into context, since the 2013-2014 season, Real Madrid has won the title six times alone; this is one less than all of AC Milan's titles, and tied for second place. Liverpool (ENG) and Bayern Munich (GER) round out the most dominant teams in Champions League history with six titles apiece, both having won the tournament most recently in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

Whether it was to appease the fans who wanted more games or an attempt to make more profit, the Champions League now boasts many more matches and has ditched the old format of a four-team round-robin. Now, each team plays eight teams across four different groupings and gets placed into a table of all 32 teams. The top eight automatically qualify for the round of 16, the next 16 battle for the remaining eight playoff spots in a playoff, and the bottom eight teams get eliminated from the competition.

Players on teams now competing in four different competitions (two domestic

cups, their league, and the Champions League) have spoken up about a higher frequency in matches. A month ago, Liverpool's star goalie Alisson Becker commented that the new format has "too many matches" in a press conference. Just earlier last week, Manchester City's star midfielder Rodri, one of the premier midfielders in the world with the second-highest betting odds for the Ballon d'Or, also spoke up last week about playing too many games and noted that some players are close to going on strike. Two days later, he suffered a season-ending ACL injury.

With these new developments in mind, this season in the Champions League is going to be one we have never seen before. The new format could provide some shocking upsets along with the increased frequency in matches making it more exciting for the fans. It could also prove to be a lot less predictable with the likely increase in injuries throughout the course of the season. To that, below are our picks to win the UCL in 2025:

Real Madrid (+330): Once again, Real Madrid are the favorites to lift the UCL trophy at the end of the season, and rightfully so. Not only did they top La Liga by an impressive ten points last season, but they are also coming off the back of their 15th successful Champions League campaign. To date, they have won the tournament eight more times than the next most successful team. They looked poised for success again after adding one of the world's bests, Kylian Mbappe, to an already stacked squad.

Arsenal (+850): In the 2023-24 Season, Arsenal came up short when it mattered most. They challenged Manchester City all the way until the final day of the Premier League season, ultimately losing by two points. In the Champions League they fared similarly. However, after they managed to pull ahead against the Etihad until the 90+8 minute tie last weekend, we think that Arsenal is finally a legitimate title contender. They have looked great to start out the Premier League season, and without injuries could be one of the best teams in world football.

Liverpool (+1100): We know

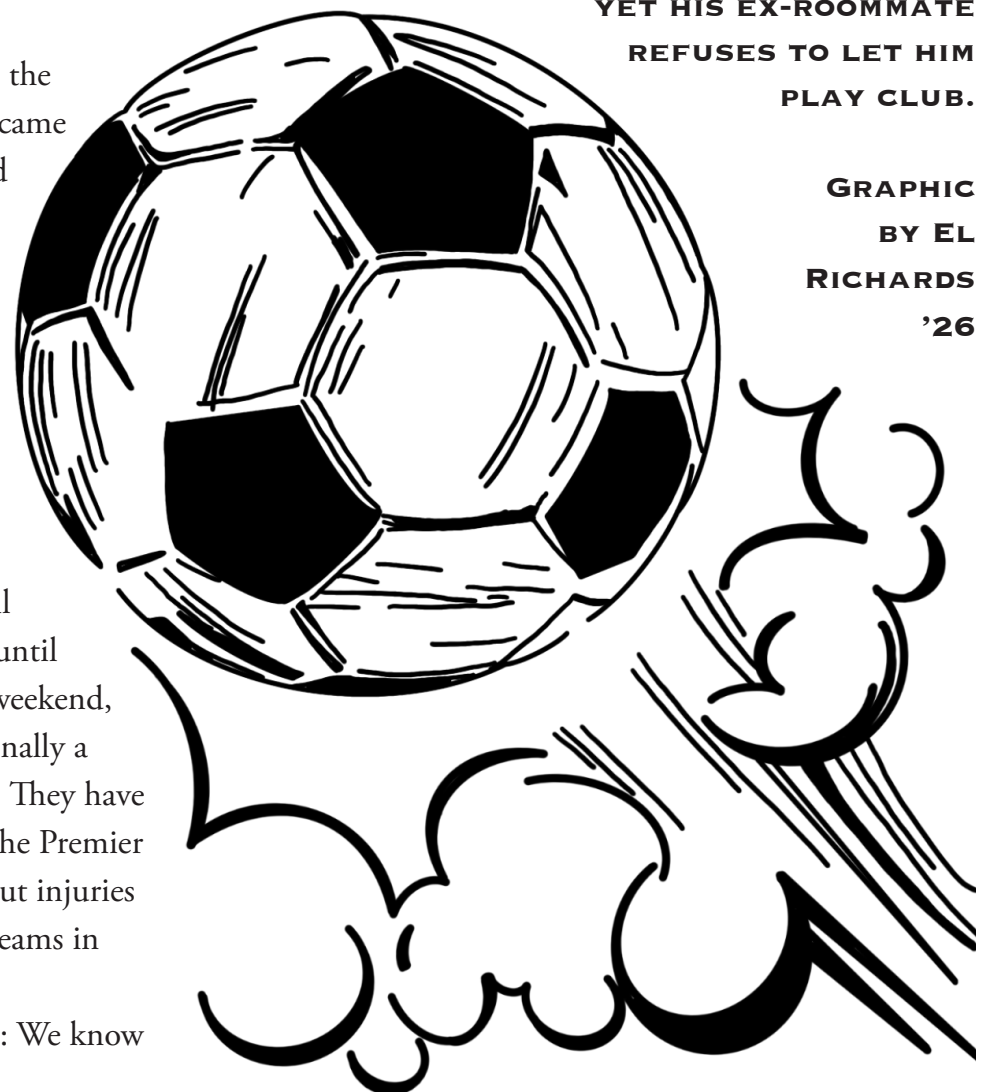
that this Liverpool team is in the middle of a massive rebuild, but we at the Indy Sportsbook think that the team is a lot farther along than everyone would have thought. Yes, they did lose to Nottingham Forest at home, in notably one of their worst losses in recent memory; however, they bashed Manchester United at home 3-0 in a match that they were controlling the whole 90 minutes, and beat AC Milan 3-1 at the San Siro. For these odds, we think it's foolish not to sprinkle a little on the team that has been to three finals in the last five years.

Now, one might ask why not include the (debatable) best team in the world: Manchester City. We kept them out for two reasons. First, they do not have great odds at +275, and we think the value is not there. Second, they just lost their best player, Rodri, to a season-long injury and will therefore not be as good. This will be Pep Guardiola's (Manchester City's manager) biggest test as a Manchester City manager.

Only time will tell who will be the winner of the 2025 UCL. But for everyone's sake, let's hope and pray Real Madrid does not win another title this season.

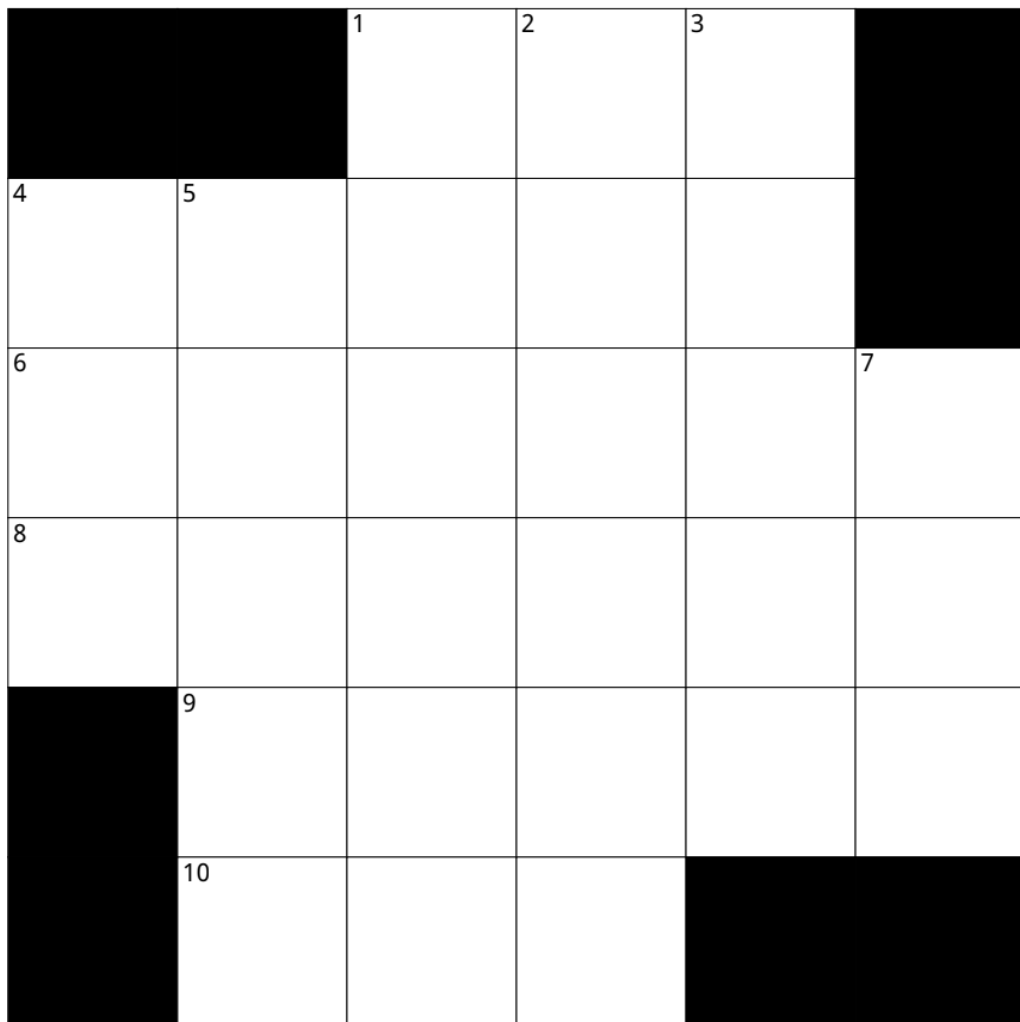
ANDREW CHRISTIE '26 (ANDREWCHRISTIE@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES SPORTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT. LUKE WAGNER '26 (LUKEWAGNER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) HAS A CAREER SIX G/A IN FOUR IM GAMES, YET HIS EX-ROOMMATE REFUSES TO LET HIM PLAY CLUB.

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26



CROSSWORD: MIXED BAG

BY HAN NGUYEN '27

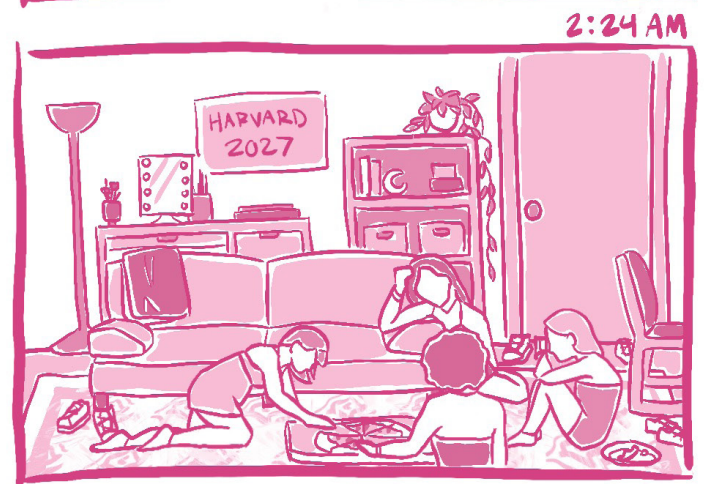
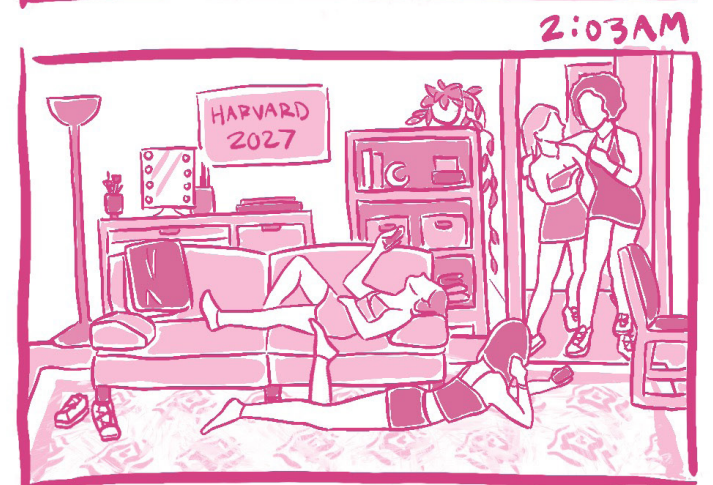
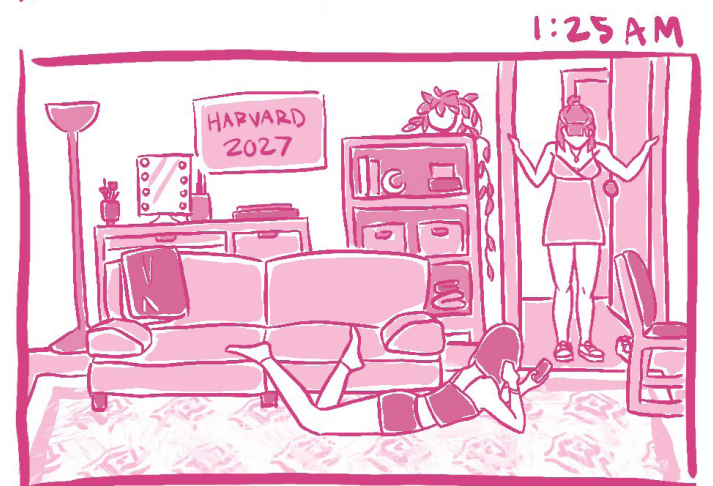
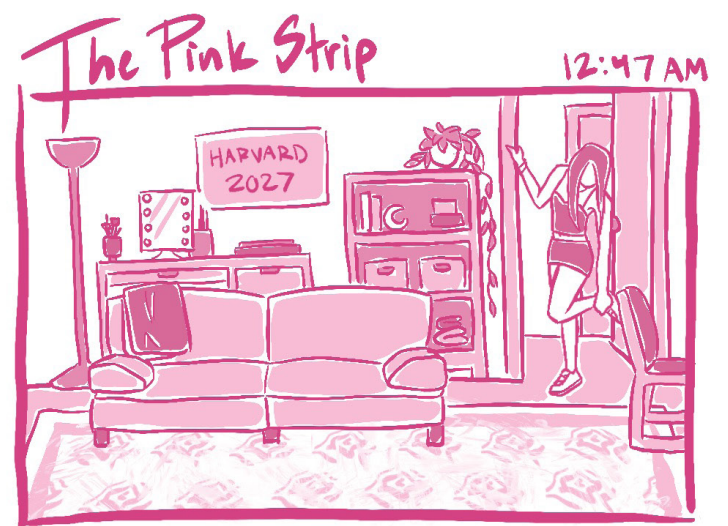


DOWN

- 1 Servant's uniform
- 2 Poet Wylie
- 3 Elizabeth of "WandaVision"
- 4 Opposite of debits: Abbr.
- 5 Very, in slang
- 7 Actress Longoria

ACROSS

- 1 Zodiac lion
- 4 Kick back
- 6 Edit
- 8 End of an act, maybe
- 9 Swedish money
- 10 Scottish seaport



Riley Cullinan

09.26.24

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