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THE HALLOWEEN ISSUE



MASTHEAD

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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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NEWS

HESMA RESULTS RELEASED

Results from Harvard's Student Survey on Sexual Misconduct and Awareness (HESMA) demonstrate University progress alongside room for improvement.

BY LAYLA CHAARAOUI '26

“We have more work to do,” President Alan Garber '76 wrote, describing the results of the 2024 Higher Education Sexual Misconduct and Awareness (HESMA) survey in an Oct. 21 message to the Harvard community. Conducted in April, the survey polled 10 universities and gathered responses from 8,439 Harvard undergraduates and graduates, representing 35.1% of the University's total student body.

2,862 undergraduates and 5,577 graduate students completed the survey, with a gender breakdown of 4,789 students identifying as women, 3,287 students identifying as men, and 363 students identifying as gender-diverse. 3,241 respondents were white, followed by 2,432 Asian respondents, 1,037 Hispanic or Hispanic multi-racial respondents, 650 Black respondents, and 1,026 other or multi-racial. 5,907 respondents identified as heterosexual or straight, and 2,171 identified as gay, lesbian, or other or multiple.

The survey revealed some promising trends, showing an overall decline in sexual misconduct at Harvard since 2019. “Penetration and/or sexual touching by force, inability to consent, coercion, and/or without voluntary agreement” dropped from 12.4% to 9.0%. “Penetration and/or sexual touching by force and/or inability to consent or stop what was happening” dropped from 8.7% to 6.5%. And “penetration by force and/or inability to consent or stop what was happening,” the HESMA definition of rape, dropped from 3.5% to 2.8%.

But as the 2024 results demonstrated, “even one incident of sexual assault is too many,” said Kathleen McGinn, principal investigator for Harvard's HESMA survey and Baker Foundation Professor at Harvard Business School, in an interview with *The Harvard Gazette*.

Undergraduate respondents with gender-diverse identities reported the highest rates of nonconsensual sexual contact, with 26.1% experiencing penetration and/or sexual touching through force, inability to consent, coercion, or without voluntary agreement. Additionally, 13.5% reported penetration and/or sexual touching by force and/or inability to consent or stop what was happening, while 9.4% indicated penetration by force and/or inability to consent or stop. Among undergraduate women, the rates for these three types of nonconsensual sexual contact were 22.1%, 17.5%, and 7.8%, and for undergraduate men, they were 8.7%, 6.7%, and 2.9%. 80% of the perpetrators in these reported incidents were fellow students.

The most frequent leadup locations were

on-campus housing (30% penetration, 40% other sexual contact) or a final club or other on-campus social event (24% penetration, 22% other sexual contact). The large majority of the incidents occurred at on-campus housing (65% penetration, 55% other sexual contact). In 79% of the penetration incidents and 81% of the other sexual contact incidents, alcohol was involved for undergraduates. This compares to 17% of penetration incidents and 10% of other sexual contact incidents involving drugs.

“We hope sharing and talking about the survey results communicates that every single incident of sexual assault experienced by students at Harvard is serious and unacceptable,” said McGinn. “As a community, we need to speak more frequently and openly about sexual assault and harassment to change long-standing cultural factors that normalize unacceptable, damaging behavior.”

The large majority of students did not access any support services after their reported incidents: 63.5% of students did not for penetration, and 81.4% of students did not for other sexual contact. Yet, 84.8% of undergraduates of gender-diverse identities, 81.3% of undergraduate men, and 78.8% of undergraduate women reported that they were “somewhat knowledgeable,” “very knowledgeable,” or “extremely knowledgeable” about where to get help at Harvard if they experienced sexual misconduct.

The students' reasoning for not seeking support services following these incidents of sexual misconduct varied: The majority of respondents said they would “handle it themselves,” or the incident was “not serious enough.” These students also said that they chose not to seek help because they were not injured in the act, and the fact that “events like this seem common.”

Most students were aware of services such as Harvard Counseling and Mental Health Services (84.5%) and Harvard University Police Department (77.65%). Some of these services students were less aware of, like the Undergraduate Peer Counseling Group (26.3%) and the Harvard College Office for BGLTQ Student Life (20.9%).

56.2% of students reported a familiarity with the Title IX Team, Office for Gender Equity. Only 45.0% of undergraduate men, 25.8% of undergraduate women, and 13.6% of undergraduates of gender-diverse identities said that it would be extremely or very likely that “Harvard officials would conduct a fair investigation of reported sexual misconduct.”

McGinn emphasized in *The Gazette* interview that Harvard must improve its

support for students who experience sexual assault. Following the release of the survey results, Harvard will implement several initiatives to engage the community.

In the coming weeks, 750 posters will be displayed in residence halls, bathrooms, and other communal areas across campus. Garber added that a required eLearning training course for faculty and staff will be updated. The University will also organize additional forums for community members to discuss the findings. Furthermore, individuals will have the chance to request a “Community Conversation” to share insights and ideas regarding the results.

For questions about harassing behavior and sexual harassment, students were asked if inappropriate comments, sexual jokes, or repeated attempts to go out despite being told “no” were made toward them (harassing behavior), and if these experiences “interfered with their academic or professional performance,” “limited their ability to participate in an academic program,” or “created an intimidating hostile or offensive social, academic or work environment”—the HESMA definition of harassment. The results of these numbers also decreased from 2019: 39.3% of Harvard students experienced harassing behavior compared to 32.8% in 2024, and 17.7% in 2019 experienced harassment compared to 15.7% in 2024.

Among undergraduates, 72.3% of those with gender-diverse identities, 54.7% of women, and 34.9% of men reported experiencing harassing behavior. Specifically regarding harassment, 52.9% of gender-diverse undergraduates, 28.9% of women, and 11.2% of men were affected. Most of these incidents were reported to be committed by fellow students, with 43.9% for harassing behavior and 19.6% for harassment.

The University hopes that this data will allow it to adjust how it supports its students. Students are encouraged to contact the SHARE team, Title IX, or the Office for Gender Equity.

“Each of us has a role to play in ensuring that Harvard is a welcoming and safe community for all. The results of the HESMA survey show us where we can improve,” Garber said. “I hope that we will seize the opportunity to engage in the important and necessary work ahead.”

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INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY REEVE SYKES '26
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Cambridge's Spooky Secrets

The ghostly figures lurking right outside your dorm.

BY ANTONIA MELINA SALAME '28

Cambridge may seem like it's just a residential town with students. Coffee shops, merchandise stores, and restaurants decorate every corner. However, Cambridge's history extends far beyond its current bustling tourism and vibrant street life. If you're looking for a haunted Halloween this year, look no further than the city bounds. Founded in 1630, Cambridge has a long history chock full of ghost stories and ghoulish encounters. Here are some of the most haunted spots located just a quick stroll away.

The Haunted Hooper-Lee-Nichols House.

159 Brattle Street, West Cambridge, is home to the second oldest house in Cambridge—the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House. Only a mere 21-minute walk from the Smith Center, this house's haunted history spans centuries. It was built for Richard Hooper who died in 1691, leaving behind his wife Elizabeth Hooper. Upon his death, Elizabeth had to take boarders into the house to make extra money. In 1701, boarders ransacked Elizabeth's house and murdered her. Her body was found wrapped up in a sheet. Some accounts claim Elizabeth still lurks in the house, gliding across the floor.

The house's haunted lore doesn't stop with Elizabeth's ghost.

Reportedly in the 1780s, five Hessian soldiers were encamped at the house while fighting in the Revolutionary War. Some say that the soldiers' bodies were buried during the war in the Hooper house's very own yard. Apparently, the soldiers can still be spotted to this day in the house's Chandler room, playing a ghostly game of cards. No one can say for certain if these sightings are fact or fiction, but one thing is clear: the Hooper-Lee-Nichols house has a dark and varied history.

If this sounds like your dream destination this Halloween, you're in luck. They do group tours! Individual tours! They even do weddings—what a romantic spot!

Cambridge Rindge & Latin School

At first glance, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School may *appear* like a normal public high school. This school, located at 59 Broadway Ct., has over 2,000 students across four grades. However, its halls are not only occupied by teenagers:

in this school lies a hallway

memorializing WWII. Allegedly, the ghost of an old man roams one of the school's hallways, pushing a cart of books. There's no consensus on where this ghoul originated from, and thankfully he hasn't done anything nefarious (yet). Perhaps he is just a nice, old, aspiring librarian (go relive your high school years to find out?)

Cambridgeport Baptist Church

This haunted site involves a witch and a curse. According to New England Folklore, a woman named Ann Hopkins once lived on the Charles River during the 17th century (I wonder if she also posted pictures of the foliage on her Instagram story). As legend goes, Hopkins was being pursued simultaneously by two suitors. Hopkins chose her favorite and bestowed upon him a ribbon. The two men then went on to fight alongside each other in the French and Indian War. The scorned suitor turned on the chosen one and shot him during battle.

The rumors say that Hopkins found out and went crazy. Over the years, the people of Cambridge began to suspect that Hopkins was a witch; she never got sick and a "cow that had strayed onto her property began to give bloody milk." She was accused of witchcraft and burned at the stake,—in the exact location where Cambridgeport Baptist Church would later be constructed. As she died, she allegedly cursed the ground she was burned upon, yelling "the curse of fire shall be upon this spot forever!" Since then, the church has been burned down by two separate fires. Perhaps there's something much more devious at play.

The Cambridge YMCA

When I think of the YMCA, I think of elementary school swim classes and a weight room. However, the same may not be true for the Cambridge YMCA. Apparently, if you venture into the depths of the Cambridge YMCA's basement, you'll make

ghoulish friends. Ghost Quest reports that YMCA members have described "witnessing the apparition of a man in the basement who appears to be glowing bright green." Others have allegedly sensed the presence of this entity while working out (I too sometimes feel a ghostly presence whilst attempting to brave the Hemenway Stairmaster). If you're the athletic type and are looking to simultaneously build muscle and solve a mystery, perhaps you can be the one to uncover whether this green glower is real or not.

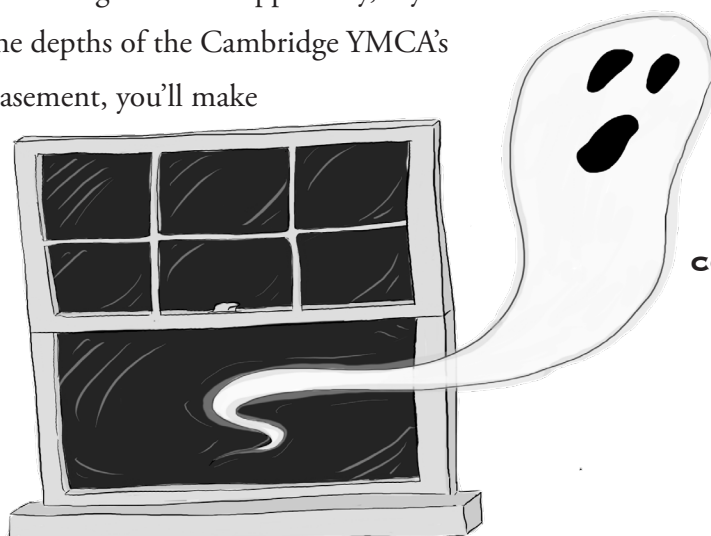
Cafe Luna

It's good to know that the Cambridge ghosts share the typical student's desire for an iced latte. Cafe Luna came to Cambridge in 2017 and opens daily at 9 a.m. They offer breakfast wraps, a killer coffee, and allegedly, a haunted presence or two. According to Ghost Quest, Cafe Luna-goers have "reported witnessing shadow figures and other unidentified apparitions, as well as feeling the presence of an unseen entity." However, haunted reports were rolling in about 2344 Massachusetts Avenue long before Luna set up shop there. Luna was previously Verna's Coffee and Donut Shop. Supposedly, some employees of Verna's refused to venture into the basement alone for fear of paranormal encounters. Luna's ghostly reports are somewhat less concrete compared to other Cambridge locations on this list. However, if you're in search of an eerie feeling and a fresh-cut fruit bowl, Cafe Luna may just be the perfect spot.

The list goes on and on. The Cambridge area offers a plethora of attractions for those who crave an authentically spooky October 31st. If you're in the mood to feel unsettled, you can also go on the Harvard Square Ghost Tour (which conveniently meets right outside the COOP). For those of you who would prefer this Halloween to *not* be your last, there are still many fun Halloween-related things to do in Boston that won't have you awakening age-old spirits or accidentally betting your life in a game of cards with Hessian soldiers.

ANTONIA SALAME '28 (AMSALAME@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) IS NOW SCARED TO WALK BACK TO HER DORM ALONE.

GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27



Bring Back the Trick

Revisiting a childhood tradition at the start of adulthood.

BY CAROLINE STOHRER '28

*Trick or treat, smell my feet,
give me something good to eat!*

Some readers may read this little jingle with a bit of confusion or even disgust, but for me, this jingle takes me back to elementary school, to the gummy smiles of chocolate-stained faces and the crinkle of cheap polyester costumes.

Trick *or* treat. These two words are meant to encapsulate our consumerized notion of Halloween. Yet most people, when they think of Halloween, think exclusively of plastic bowls full of CVS candy or elaborate costumes ready for a night out. In other words, we think only of the “treat” component.

Whatever happened to the trick? Personally, I’ve never encountered it before. In the 19th century, Halloween began to evolve from the Celtic tradition of All Hallows’ Eve, a day when the boundary between the living and the dead became thin.

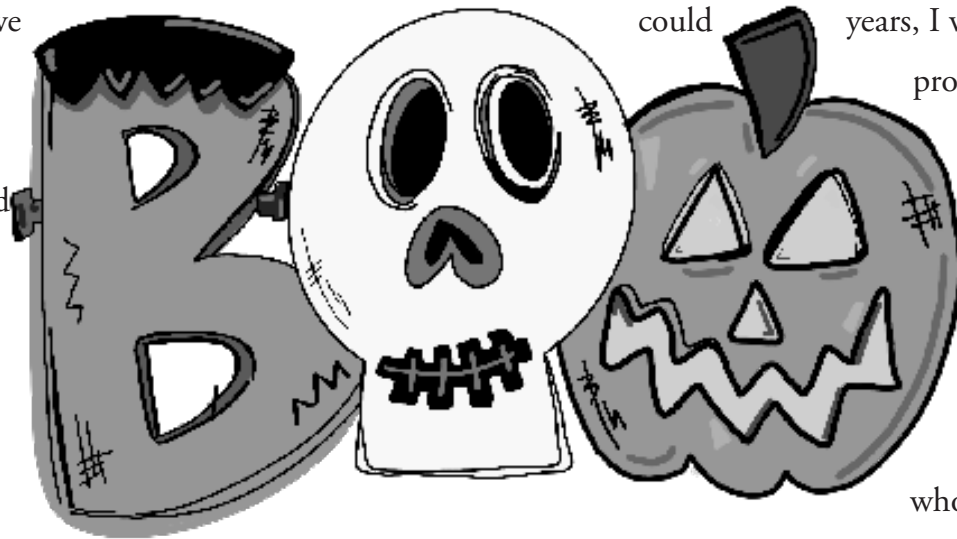
Pranksters, sometimes known as “belsnicklers,” would rattle windows or frighten small children as they roamed from house to house. As a result, homeowners might offer candy or treats at their doors to dissuade the belsnicklers. In the 1950s, the suburbanization of America made it easier for children to roam from door to door. The rise of merchandising and the Halloween industry fueled mass-produced costumes, and the rest is history. “Trick-ing” fell out of favor, likely because most five-year-olds don’t have the capacity to frighten a regular household as an alternative to not getting a Reese’s.

To bring the spirit of belsnickeling and mischief onto campus, I considered pranking a few classmates. I was ready to go around and see how easy it was to prank Harvard students. Some ideas I had included standing outside Cabot library with a creepy mask in the dark to catch people by surprise, putting fake snakes in the bathroom, or even TP-ing the John Harvard statue in the dead of night (if Securitas

didn’t see me).

After pitching these ideas to a few people, however, they reminded me that I could get in trouble for vandalism (a good point) and that I had friends going through midterms (also valid). Sitting in the sterile light of Cabot’s basement, staring at Canvas, it felt like the holiday I thought would take me away from my cares launched me straight back into the grind. It seemed all I could do regarding Halloween was brainstorm my costumes and obsess over the “express shipping” button for Amazon.

If I couldn’t



trick, I thought maybe I

could

go trick-or-treating with friends and revisit that hallmark of childhood. I can’t remember the last time I went trick-or-treating—it must have been prior to the pandemic and before I became a teenager. In a 2016 poll by Slate, almost 50% of readers agreed with this choice: that 13 years old is the maximum age to stop trick-or-treating. According to USA Today, some municipalities even have laws prohibiting teenagers over 15 or 16 from trick-or-treating or wearing masks. While these laws align with how most of the American youth redefine Halloween over time, they place a tombstone marker on childhood.

I still enjoy Halloween—going out with my friends to dance the night away in various getups is always a blast. Yet even nights that are supposed to be fun pulse with anxious thoughts like: What will I wear? Do I have enough photos to post on Instagram? What is everyone else doing? Beyond self-consciousness, we students always go out with a touch of awareness that when these few nights of revelry

are over, we have essays to write, jobs to apply to, and networking to do. Everything we seem to do nowadays has some real consequences for our futures, and everything is so *serious*. I envy my 10-year-old self, who had nothing more on her mind on Halloween than how many Sour Patch Kids I could accumulate versus my brother.

Transitioning into college has been such a blast. I’ve met so many amazing friends and loved taking my classes and joining clubs, but it has also made me acutely aware of the looming reality that is adulthood. In just over three years, I will either have some ideas of my job prospects post-graduation or be looking at graduate school. Is it so wrong to still want some of that childhood whimsy in my life?

From final club anxiety on Sidechat to rampant overcommitment stress, it’s clear I’m not the only one who feels this way. *We need* to take a collective deep breath and let loose. I don’t mean necessarily going on a three-day bender to distract you from the onslaught of midterm grades coming out—but more whimsy, more human connection, more time doing dumb things like belsnickeling without a little voice in the back of our minds telling us whether this is productive or not.

Maybe this comes off a little flat from a freshman who has only been here a month. Maybe I’m just venting off my own stress from my first semester. But maybe we can start to bring a little more “trick” back into our lives.

CAROLINE STOHRER '28 (CAROLINESTOHRER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU)

PLANS ON BEING TRICKY FROM SUBWAY SURFERS, RAQUELLE FROM BARBIE, AND A PIERROT CLOWN FOR HALLOWEEN.

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26

Turning Death Into Art and Joy

Celebrating Día de Muertos with art, humor, and Calaveritas.

BY FRIDA LÓPEZ '27

Quien quiera gozar de veras
y divertirse un ratón,
venga con las calaveras
a gozar en el panteón.”
- José Guadalupe Posada

“Whoever wants to truly enjoy
and have a bit of fun,
come with the skeletons
to delight in the graveyard.”
- José Guadalupe Posada



Imagine a poem that jokes about your death, turning the inevitable into a source of laughter and light. Imagine a

celebration where death is not feared

but embraced with humor, art, and creativity.

Welcome to Día de Muertos. In this celebration, death is a guest of honor, and the line between life and death blurs as families honor their dead with humor and creativity. I bring the same spirit to Harvard in this article, through poems about death, consulting, and clubs.

Día de Muertos is a Mexican tradition celebrated on Nov. 2, dedicated to honor and remember loved ones who passed. This year will mark the second Día de Muertos I celebrate away from Mexico.

One of the things I miss the most is the art that blooms around this festivity. During this celebration, everyone puts their creativity at the service of the celebration of death. Streets come alive with beautiful parades, impressive paintings, creative make-up, and stunning ofrendas. Ofrendas are artful altars with food, drinks, flowers, and candies that families set up in Dia de Muertos for their dead. They do this to honor their memory and to express their love and appreciation for them. The celebration of death takes many forms and each expression is unique, but they are all similarly characterized by irreverence towards

death.



Here, I'd like to share one of those irreverent traditions: Calaveritas Literarias.

Literally translated as “Literary Skulls,”

Calaveritas Literarias are traditional Mexican literary compositions in verse written in an ironic tone about death. They were originally born as satirical epitaphs, capturing the spirit of Día de Muertos by sardonically confronting mortality. They are playful texts that portray people as if they were already dead or about to die, allowing readers to laugh at the inevitable but also to celebrate it.

You might say, “Doesn't this all sound a bit twisted?” But that's the beauty: they're comedic, light-hearted, and meant to express emotions that would normally be hard to express.

In the Calaveritas, Death is not a source of fear but a familiar presence, adopting various names and forms, often referred to as the feminine “Catrina” or “la flaca”—always close and a part of life.

Consulting to death

At Harvard they rush, so sharp and so keen,
all chasing consulting, their ultimate dream.

With suits pressed and polished, they practice
their pitch,

for a chance to advise the
rich getting rich.

But La Catrina laughs,
with a smile sly and
wide,

“All of you are scrambling,
no place to hide.

You'll climb and you'll hustle, networking with
flair,

but Big Three or not, I'll see you down there!”

La Catrina gets punched

At Harvard they punch, they wait in long lines,
hoping for clubs with prestige and designs.

The rounds feel intense, with each smile and each
glance,

all for the clubs that might give them a chance.

But La Catrina chuckles, hidden in view,
“Clubs and connections won't save any of you!
You hustle for status, you strive to impress,
but soon you'll see, we're all in the same mess.”

So at the club she planned to enter, all ready to
rake,

the Harvard students she'd planned to take.

But then she got a letter, from a Final Club
grand,

“Join us, dear Catrina, and rule the whole land!”

Intrigued by the offer, she gave it a shot,
through rounds and events, she fought for her
spot.

When the final dinner came, she let out a cheer,
forgetting her duty to bring the end near.

Now dressed in a club tie, she laughs with delight,
leaving Harvard students to live one more night.

FRIDA LÓPEZ '27 (FRIDALOPEZBRAVO@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) IS HOPING TO NETWORK WITH LA CATRINA IN THE NEXT CONSULTING RECRUITING SEASON.

GRAPHIC BY ANNELISE FISHER '26

Take It Off: A Night of EDM, Pashminas, and Vomit

An amateur EDM groupie attends the Fisher concert at Roadrunner.
BY MIA TAVARES '27

I arrived at Roadrunner, a mid-sized music venue in Allston, at 9:30 p.m. for the Friday night Fisher show that advertised a 9 p.m. start time. Two lines snaked around the long blocks in opposite directions from the main entrance. Our foursome was told that one line was for regular GA tickets while the other was for “quick pass,” an invention that allowed anyone with a ticket and an extra \$25 to be in the supposedly shorter line. Morally opposed to waiting in lines, my partner-in-crime for the night and I asked various bouncers



where we could pick up our press passes until we were escorted to a VIP entrance at the back of the building. There, we quickly passed through security and received the tickets that would allow us into the second-floor balcony and “VIP room” that housed an uncrowded bar and allegedly cleaner bathrooms.

After grabbing our refreshments for the night, we quickly set off in search of our friends, with the utter lack of cell service becoming increasingly worrisome. Many of my friends did not make it into the venue until 10:30 p.m. despite arriving before 9 p.m., even after purchasing the quick pass. The mix of overly serious yet lethargic security workers and “fratty kids” serially cutting each other in line did not lend itself to a pleasant or quick line experience.

Inside, with the less organized masses, was not much better. Walking down the stairs from the second floor to the first felt like descending into hell. The congregation on the first floor

skewed younger, considering the venue was 18+, and was extremely ready to lose its mind to Fisher’s classic crowd-pleasing bangers. Inside the mob, it was hot, sticky, and very, very packed. The crowd swayed, hundreds of pashmina-wearing college students shoving each other to the dull sounds of Fisher’s lengthy opening act.

At the previous night’s show, Fisher didn’t take the stage until 10:30 p.m. For our event, he started performing an hour later at 11:30 p.m. By that time, numerous party-goers were clearly tired and extremely inebriated. Attendees were finding it difficult to stand up straight, and those who weren’t bent over in bathroom stalls had apparently opted to vomit directly into the crowd. According to a Harvard sophomore at the show, one of the girls standing at the barricade “looked like her soul had been ripped from her body.”

As a lover of Fisher’s music, I was overjoyed when he finally came on stage, and the crowd responded raucously along with me. I could feel the collective energy emanating from the horde of jumping wannabe ravers eagerly awaiting the first few notes of Fisher’s iconic “Somebody That I Used To Know” remix. The production and lighting weren’t anything to be marveled at compared to his previous shows, but the video Fisher played on the LED screen behind him the entire night did lend itself well to posting an easily recognizable Instagram story.

Each consecutive song he played felt like a torturous tease rather than exciting foreplay—most of the crowd was waiting to frat flick to his iconic numbers like “Take It Off,” “Atmosphere,” “Losing It,” and “World Hold On,” which he did not play until the last few minutes of his 2-hour long set. But the wait was not for nothing. In fact, “Waiting for Tonight” played around halfway through, inciting plenty of screams and quickly reviving the slumping crowd’s energy. To his credit, Fisher played mostly chart-toppers and classics, surely recognizing what his Boston fans were looking for. Connoisseurs of EDM, however, may have been disappointed by the lack of originality and modernity. The set didn’t feel



fresh, but neither was the smell of the Roadrunner pit, so perhaps that was the theme of the night.

It’s uncommon for well-known performers like Fisher to perform at smaller venues like Roadrunner, but despite the crowded space and length of the night, it did seem like the majority of the attendees had a fun time. I, for one, had an entertaining experience the entire time I was there. It felt like all of Boston was in attendance—I ran into friends from Harvard, one or two *Independent* compers, and even a date I’d ghosted who goes to Berklee. Everyone had found their place at the concert to scream, shout, dance, and blow off steam to escape from the stress that constantly creeps into our college lives. Even the previously serious security workers were up for a laugh by the end of the night.

EDM is music that brings people together, and regardless of the irony of an uncontrollable mosh during Fisher’s song “Crowd Control,” the concert has to be classified as a success. People from all over Boston gathered to celebrate the sounds blasting out from high-tech speakers and share their joy as they lost themselves to the beat. Any night that has good music, chaotic vibes, and dancing through a bass-induced dopamine rush is a great night in my book.

**MIA TAVARES '27 (MIATAVARES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) ALMOST LOST HER INDY PURPLE PASHMINA IN THE MOSH PIT.
PHOTOS BY MIA TAVARES '27**

Haunted Houses of Cambridge

A collection of outdoor decorations.

BY SOPHIE DEPAUL '27

As the crisp air settles in and the days grow shorter, the spirit of Halloween awakens, covering the streets with an array of ghosts and goblins. If you want to get in your autumn feels and into the Halloween spirit, stroll down Appleton St., Cambridge, where the leaves are falling and the decorations are out. I did this, and here's a collection of my favorite moments.



The Wicked Witch(es) of the West speeds across the streets of Cambridge.

Halloween is a time to celebrate a black cat sighting. Especially if you are a cat lady.



Is it a skeleton? Is it a devil? Is it both?



A home that looks like Halloween all year round.



Even scarecrows like to sunbathe.



Remember Poltergeist? Me neither, but this decoration is quite the throwback.



A moment of silence for the residents of this Cambridge neighborhood who are no longer with us.



Residents in this neighborhood can also be found taking long walks on the sidewalk.



Ahoy mateys! What's scarier than a pirate?
A dead pirate!

And, of course, the classic porch pumpkins.



SOPHIE DEPAUL '27 (SOPHIE_DEPAUL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) CAN'T WAIT TO OWN A HOME SO SHE CAN DECORATE IT FOR HALLOWEEN.

PHOTOS BY SOPHIE DEPAUL '27

Lighting Up the Stage: “Raunak” Takes the Spotlight

Harvard Bhangra brings tradition, energy, and a celebration of culture to the campus stage.

BY CHRISTINA SHI '27

On Oct. 26, Harvard's Undergraduate Bhangra cast and team buzzed with vibrant energy as “Raunak 2024,” a much-anticipated showcase, drew in spectators and performers to celebrate Punjabi culture through one of its most dynamic dance forms—bhangra. The event welcomed not only Harvard Bhangra's own dancers, but also groups from Boston University, Tufts, and Yale, making it a night to remember.

Bhangra, traditionally performed to celebrate the harvest season, is characterized by energetic movements, colorful attire, and the rhythmic beats. Originating from the fields of Punjab, India, this genre has adapted and thrived in contemporary contexts far from its roots. Over time, it has evolved, blending modern music styles such as hip-hop and electronic. At its core, Bhangra reflects community spirit, making it both a cultural practice and a form of storytelling.

At Harvard, this cultural tradition continues to thrive through such lively performances. Founded in 2004, Harvard Undergraduate Bhangra (HUB) is a popular cultural performance group on campus. Known for its ability to seamlessly mix traditional Bhangra with modern choreography, the team has gained recognition for its innovative performances and dedication to preserving the essence of the dance.

Last year was the first year the team was able to bring their show back to campus, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. “Raunak 2024 is an extremely special milestone for HUB because we were able to bring together a team of 14 dedicated performers to showcase South Asian art to the Harvard community and the greater Boston Area,” co-captain of the Bhangra team Raphael Tourette '26 explained. “Raunak 2023 was HUB's first time bringing back

the show after the devastating financial and membership struggle imposed by COVID.”

The title of their show, “Raunak,” translates to “brightness” or “radiance” in Punjabi—a fitting title for a performance that lit up the stage with its electrifying energy. But what makes Bhangra, and this particular show, resonate with audiences far beyond its South Asian origins? “Raunak” is not just a performance—it's a celebration of the blend between tradition and contemporary expression that defines today's cultural landscape. “Putting on a successful show for the second year means the world to us, as we have been able to bring the local South Asian community together through something that we find so much joy in doing,” Tourette added.

The music and choreography throughout the show crafted by the students themselves included fusion pieces, where the dancers intertwined classic Indian music with contemporary hip-hop. Traditional South Asian songs were combined with music from artists like Frank Ocean, Travis Scott, and Beyonce, further exciting the audience. The evening ended with the Harvard Bhangra team's highly energetic piece, where their synchronized moves complemented by vivid outfits brought the colorful spirit of Punjabi traditions to life.

For many dancers on the team, Bhangra serves as a meaningful connection to their Indian heritage, allowing them to celebrate and share their culture with the campus community. One of the team's dancers, Sneha Shenoy '25 explained that performing holds deep personal significance for her. “I grew up learning two different types of Indian classical dance, called Bharatanatyam and Kathak, and performing those art forms was a

way for me to connect more personally with my own Indian community in Houston, but also to share my Indian heritage with the broader community—my peers from school, people in my neighborhood, and community events.”

As the evening concluded, Raunak 2024 left the audience with a fresh appreciation for the dynamism of Bhangra and the community it fosters. Through energetic performances and original choreography, Harvard Bhangra and visiting teams offered not only entertainment, but also a look into the vibrant traditions that define Punjabi culture.

“Performing Bhangra specifically for the Harvard community is such a special thing, and it's just amazing to be able to share that culture with our community and share that energy and passion for dance with everyone else,” Shenoy expressed. The show's blend of tradition with modern music highlighted Bhangra's growing role in connecting cultures, making Raunak 2024 a celebration of cultural expression and unity where each team brought its unique talent.



CHRISTINA SHI '27 (CHRISTINASHI@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WILL BE FRONT ROW AT THE NEXT BHANGRA SHOW.

GRAPHIC BY CHRISTIE BECKLEY '27

Halloween Haikus

Trick-or-treat yourself to some hilariously hearty Halloween haikus.

BY KALVIN FRANK '28 AND RAINA WANG '28

Cold Fall

The air holds a chill.
A cold dampness hits my face.
The cold fall is here.

Candy

Sweet sugary yum,
I take a bite happily,
Chocolate goodness!

Pumpkin

This is for the porch;
I carve the Jack-O-Lantern,
Light it with candles.

Early Night

Darkness is around,
Stars twinkle the sky above,
Night comes early now.

Trick-Or-Treating

Put on the cat ears,
Grab a cloak, a basket, too,
Let's go Trick-or-Treat!



Home for Halloween

Hometown Halloween;
Children running all around.
I did that back then.

Haunted House

I turn the corner—
Oh no! Something is right there:
A big beast appears.

Scream

A vivid shrieking.
I wonder where it came from,
The fear rocks my core.

Creepy Clowns

Laughter fills the room.
I think I see something close.
A balloon floats by.

Ghosts

Curtains swoosh around.
The floorboards start to creak and...
From the closet: BOO!

Apple Picking

I love red apples.
Plunk—they fall onto the grass.
Please! Take an apple.

New England Fall

Yellow leaves rain down;
A picturesque walk through a
Quintessential town.

Hay Bale Rides

Clunk. Clank. We jostle.
The winding path tours the farm.
The hay pokes my back.

Corn Mazes

We should turn left there.
Wait, I've got this bad feeling,
We've been here before.

Lost

I'm lost in the woods.
I feel eyes piercing at me,
Watch out, they're coming!

KALVIN FRANK '28 (KFRANK@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND RAINA WANG '28 (RAINAWANG@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) BELIEVE THAT HAIKUS AREN'T JUST FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLERS.

GRAPHIC BY ALLYSON XU '28

Casted

A short story about the shadows that follow us.

BY AJAX FU '28

In the city where shadows came to life, we were overjoyed (after the initial shock). That day, it was an immemorable rainy Saturday morning, with that kind of constant downpour that makes you forget how a clear sky looks. But when the clouds parted, the shadows suddenly came to life. It started slow. We noticed that the familiar silhouettes were now animated and danced across the ground. They pranced around like the neighborhood deer.

Then we realized that we would be immune from the sun if we stood on the shadows. It was inexplicable, but they were friendly and helpful.

We soon found that we could catch them by sitting on them right as they formed. If they were small enough, they would follow us. We also learned that we could transfer ownership of these shadows with a simple voiced command.

We paid close attention to the position of the sun and began harvesting the shadows at an incredible efficiency. It wasn't long before personal shadows were being sold in abundance.

We brought them around everywhere for shade. So convenient! We did notice that as individual shadows got older, they became less effective at blocking the sun. But this wasn't really a problem since there were plenty of shadows to go around.

They couldn't talk, so some people tried to understand their gestures and mannerisms. Some

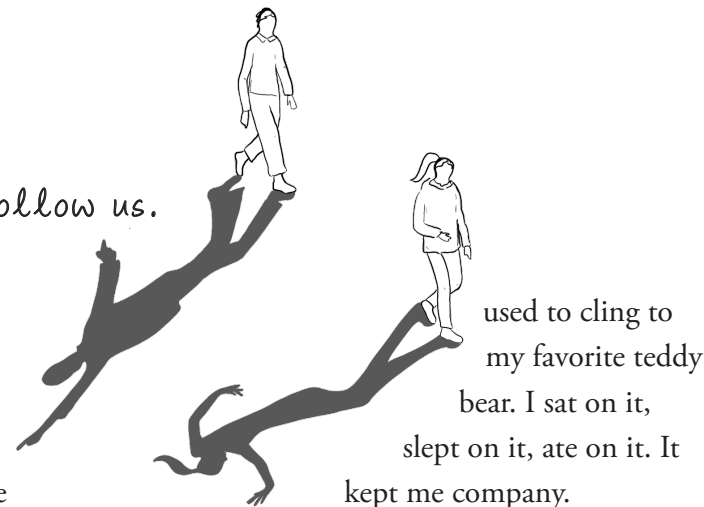
of these linguistic types took it upon themselves to become experts and work with the shadows to develop a pretty sophisticated sign language that let us communicate back and forth. It was far too complicated and too much work for everyone but the extremely dedicated. We learned that the shadows could understand us and always listened anyway.

It was a big deal to get your own shadow. They were pretty expensive in the beginning, so only certain kinds of people had them. But just like so many other things with time, they became cheaper and more widespread.

When I was old enough, my parents gave me my own shadow. "So that you don't need to take in that sun all the time," they explained. "It'll do it for you."

My brother complained. "I was 17 when I got my shadow. Why does he get one when he's 14?"

"Well everyone has one." I silenced him with an irrefutable shrug. I didn't know what I really expected from a shadow, just that I wanted one. It followed me around and listened to whatever I told it to do. It was remarkable—it seemed like its only purpose was to serve me. It was like a pet I didn't have to take care of. I don't remember naming it, but I brought it with me everywhere, like I



used to cling to my favorite teddy bear. I sat on it, slept on it, ate on it. It kept me company.

Then I got sunburned. I didn't tell anyone at first, and I tried to hide it. I didn't want my friend taken away and replaced. But my mom saw my scorched red face—peeling, cracked fissures—and she knew what had happened. She threw away my shadow and gave me a new one. I cried a little bit but my mom stopped me. She reassured me that my new shadow would also be my friend, just like my old one. She taught me that it was just a natural part of life. Things lose their worth and need to be replaced, and not everything can be fixed. But I still didn't want to give up my friend.

When shadows let the fiery beams through, even so much as a crack of light, people demanded replacements. They started replacing the shadows more frequently and for increasingly trivial reasons. Kids were given shadows younger and younger, and eventually, anyone who could understand them at all faded away. We forgot the language altogether.

Then the shadows stopped.

AJAX FU'S '28 (AJAXFU@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) SHADOW IS RUNNING LOOSE SOMEWHERE IN THE YARD.

GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27

SPORTS

Harvard Hockey: No Turning Back

Harvard hockey forms a new identity after a rebuilding 2023 season.

BY JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27

Last year, Harvard men's varsity hockey had seven wins in 32 games played. If I were a betting man, I'd hammer the over on seven wins for the upcoming season. *Why?* Two reasons: First, a win percentage of 22% is really, really bad. The San Jose Sharks, the worst team in the NHL last year and one of the worst hockey teams of all time, had a win percentage of 30.1%. I don't expect a repeat of that poor performance, nor do I believe it represents the talent on Harvard's roster. Still, Harvard fell well outside of the NCAA's top 20 last year and was in the middle of the Ivy League (Cornell was #12, Dartmouth was #29, Harvard was #50, Yale was #51, and Princeton was #53). That said, sports are cyclical, teams rise and fall over time, and rebuilds happen. This brings me to the second reason why I'm optimistic about Harvard hockey this year—this team appears to have built a new identity overnight.

Watching Harvard's incredible 5-4 comeback win over the U18 U.S. National Team last Friday, Bright-Landry had a new energy. Not from the fans, because none of you bothered to show up, but rather from the guys on the ice. Down 3-1 going into the third, Harvard was still playing as if the game had just started five minutes ago. Despite this being a meaningless scrimmage, every skater played every shift like it was his last. No fancy tricks, no tic-tac-toe plays, just good old-fashioned, fast, hard-hitting hockey.

Speed and physicality have clearly become cornerstones of Harvard's game. Last week, Harvard looked faster than I'd ever seen them. Puck movement in the offensive end was snappy and they transitioned through the neutral zone quickly. Everything felt like a game played at 1.5x speed. Sometimes that led to sloppy turnovers or a defensive breakdown, but I have to believe those will be ironed out as the season moves along.

It reminds me a lot of the reigning Stanley

Cup Champion Florida Panthers' style of play, where everyone on the ice is playing offense and defense at all times. There's no waiting for the play to develop and no defenseman staying back just in case. Everyone is involved, and everyone has a responsibility.

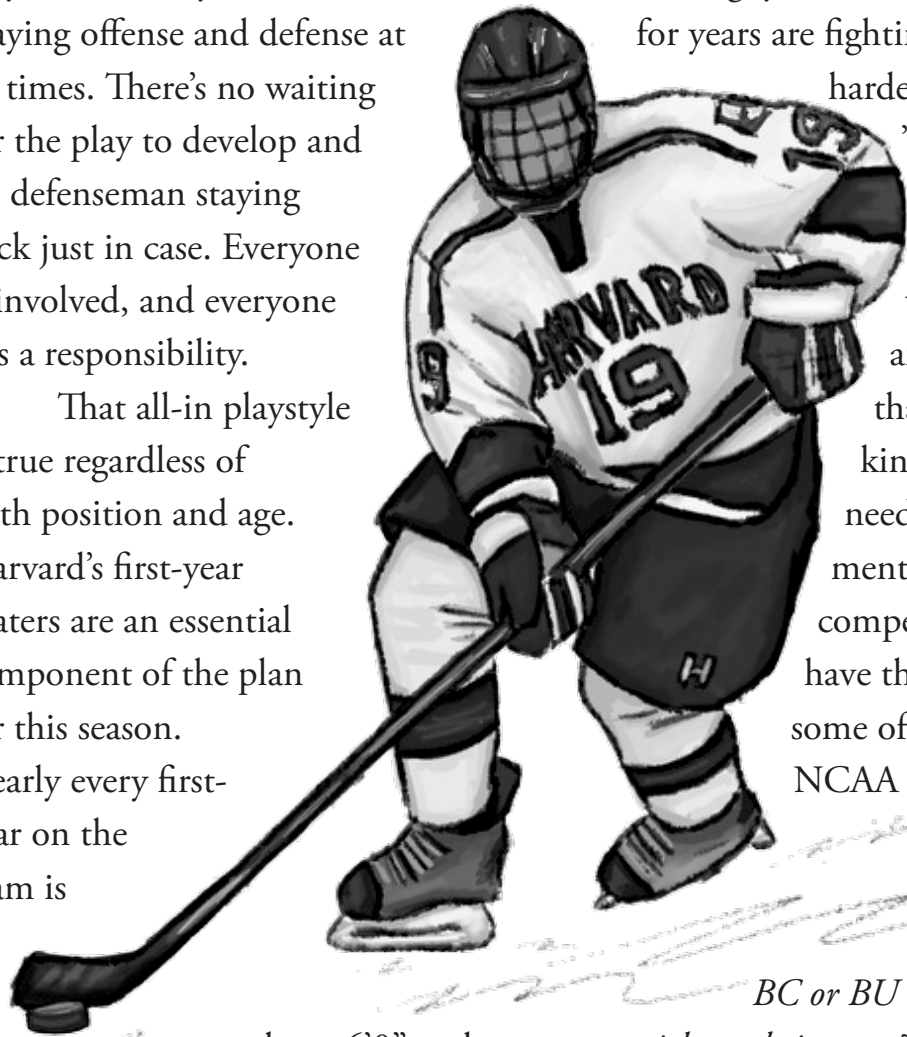
That all-in playstyle is true regardless of both position and age. Harvard's first-year skaters are an essential component of the plan for this season. Nearly every first-year on the team is

above 6'0" and at or above 200 lbs, allowing them to give coverage and protection for the smaller skaters to find room and cut to the net (an issue that plagued Harvard last year). The new kids on the ice aren't just there to be body checkers—they've got serious shooting talent and were essential to Harvard's offensive success last week.

Two of Harvard's five goals against the U.S. U-18 team were scored by the Class of 2028. Mick Thompson's '28 partial breakaway and Justin Solovey's '28 net-front play were fantastic and showed that coach Ted Donato '91 isn't shying away from getting everyone involved in the play, no matter their experience. I also have to give a special nod to Cam Johnson's '27 *screaming* one-timer to tie the game, a massive goal he celebrated in perfect Artemi Panarin leg-kicking style. (The Rangers fan in me lit up when I saw that.)

Seeing the first-years get gritty with their opponents was great. Seeing every other Harvard skater do the exact same thing was even better. It's one thing for a freshman who stepped onto the ice less than two months ago to be battling to

prove himself. It's another thing entirely when guys who have been on the team for years are fighting just as hard, if not harder. Shoutout to Joe Miller '26 for taking a run at fellow Minnesota Native Maceo Phillips, who's a full eight inches and 60 pounds bigger than Miller. That's the kind of attitude this team needs. That's the kind of mentality that makes you competitive, even if you don't have the raw scoring talent of some of the other ECAC and NCAA teams.



Seriously,

can we go one year without BC or BU having the first overall pick on their team?

*Do I think Harvard is a true national championship contender this year? It's too early to tell, honestly. This is a new system and a team that's still pretty young. However, that's also not the metric by which this team should be measured. Last season was decidedly a rebuild; however, for them to look this different this quickly means that something is going right. I don't know how this season is going to go. I don't think anyone does, and that's a good thing. We knew last year that it was going to be rough. *This time around?* At the very least, this time around it's going to be damn fun. From the great *Bull Durham*: "This is a simple game." Skate fast, hit hard, put the puck in the net, and don't let the puck get in yours. This seems to be a Harvard team that understands that. *What more could you ask for?**

**JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27
(JWASSERBERGER@COLLEGE.
HARVARD.EDU) WANTS TO TAKE
MORE PHOTOS OF HARVARD GOAL
CELEBRATIONS.**

GRAPHIC BY MIRANDA CHAO HWANG '28

Crimson Cash

Harvard athletes bank on NIL deals.

BY: GEMMA MALTBY '27

Open up Instagram, and you will likely see a college athlete promoting one product or another, whether it is Livvy Dunne sporting the newest Vuori set or Paige Bueckers using CeraVe face wash in her latest get-ready-with-me video. However, it is not just the most high-profile college athletes making money off of their name, image, and likeness (NIL). Harvard athletes are also embracing the lucrative possibilities of NIL, and experiencing challenges and success as they navigate the changing world of college athletics.

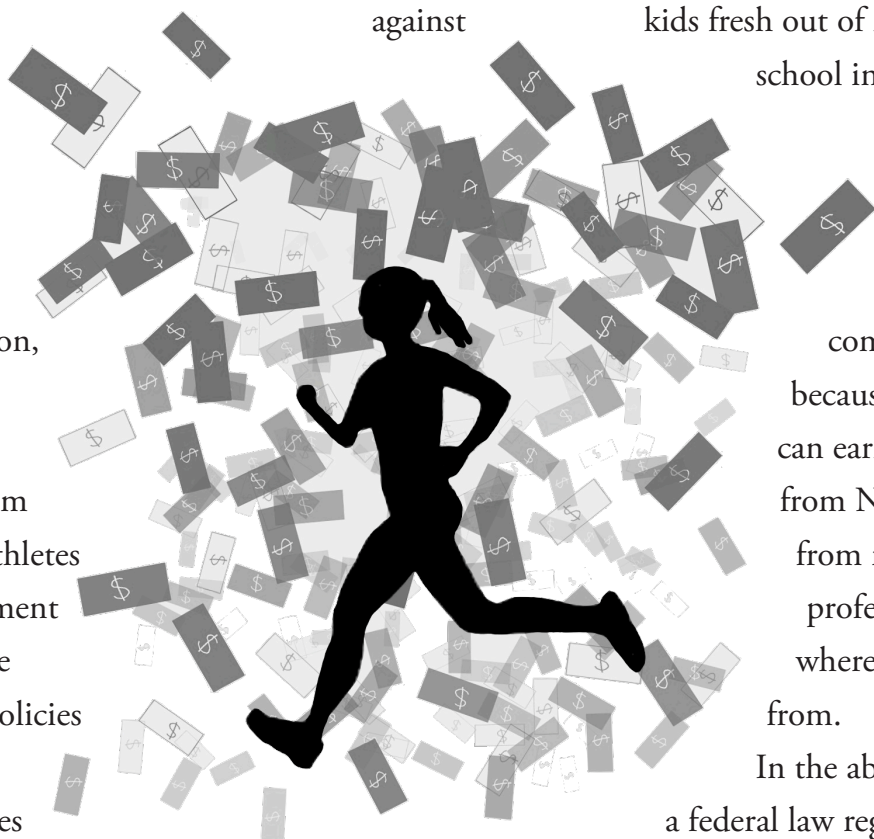
The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which governs college sports in the U.S. and Canada, long defended the principle of amateurism and used it to justify prohibiting college athletes from earning money for anything related to their athletic endeavors. This meant that, for decades, college athletes could not profit from their name, image, and likeness while competing for their schools.

The change to the NCAA's NIL policy was relatively abrupt. After states began passing legislation, like California's 2019 "Fair Pay to Play" Act, to prohibit schools from punishing collegiate athletes for accepting endorsement money, pressure on the NCAA to reform its policies increased. The NCAA began planning changes as early as 2020, but the Board of Directors did not introduce new rules until July 1, 2021, after the Supreme Court ruled against the NCAA in *Alston v. NCAA*. The case made it clear that the organization would face lawsuits and other legal challenges if they continued to restrict athletes' ability to capitalize on their name, image, and likeness.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, when the NCAA suddenly conceded athletes the right to earn money from their NIL, its new rules were woefully inadequate. They stated that athletes were permitted to receive compensation for the use of their NIL as long as deals were not

performance-based, ie. pay-for-play, or used as recruitment devices. However, the NCAA offered very little guidance on how to regulate these new activities and shifted responsibility to states and schools to establish their own NIL policies.

Collectives, which assemble large and small donors to give money to a school's athletes through NIL deals, have formed at universities and taken advantage of the NCAA's loose rules by stretching them to their limits. Although athletes purportedly perform services, like signing autographs and appearing at events, in return for the collectives' payments, the activity has slipped suspiciously toward performance rewards and attractive tools to recruit high school prospects and lure transfers from other college programs. Indeed, college athletes are transferring at an unprecedented rate in search of greater NIL opportunities. Additionally, some older international athletes are now competing



against kids fresh out of high school in college competitions because they can earn more from NIL than from running professionally where they are from. In the absence of a federal law regulating NIL, around 30 states have enacted their own distinct laws. For example, some states, like Florida, require athletes to disclose proposed NIL contracts to their schools before finalizing them; others, like California, do not. Some states prevent students from endorsing certain products, like alcohol or gambling, while other states allow schools to require athletes to pool and share their NIL earnings among themselves. This highly variable patchwork of laws has led to an unequal playing field for college athletes seeking to profit from NIL around the country.

Many have celebrated the reformed

NIL policy, which has given student-athletes the opportunity to receive compensation for their historically undervalued services, which have generated billions of dollars of revenue for their institutions. Male and female athletes alike, in both highly visible and less watched sports, are earning money. Many athletes who might have previously left college early to pursue lucrative professional deals are staying put, happy to make money while representing their schools and receiving a valuable degree.

Yet the NIL riches are not being evenly distributed. Out of the \$1.7 billion projected to be spent in NIL transactions this year, the vast majority of it will go to Power 5 conference male football and basketball players. These deals typically fall in the five-figure, or sometimes even six-figure, range. Smaller schools simply cannot compete. Additionally, because collectives can now direct money to individual athletes rather than athletic departments, budgets for non-revenue sports with less visibility and women's programs are falling, even at big universities.

As part of the Ivy League, Harvard faces a somewhat different set of challenges regarding NIL. Already unable to offer athletic scholarships, Ivy League schools may find it even more difficult to attract top recruits when collectives at other schools are offering large NIL deals. Moreover, as Ivy League competition tends to have less national prominence and visibility, athletes may have smaller audiences and therefore less marketing power when negotiating partnerships with brands.

Harvard student-athletes credit the school with making it relatively easy to secure NIL deals, as their sole responsibility is to submit contracts and documents through an app called "Influencer." However, where other universities have staff that helps facilitate NIL deals for individual athletes or entire teams, Harvard does not. Harvard's official NIL policy states, "Harvard coaches, faculty, staff, or other individuals employed by or contracted with Harvard may not be involved in the development, operation, arrangement, direction, or promotion of any non-university NIL Activity."

GRAPHIC BY SOPHIA RASCOFF '27

Harvard athletes only in limited cases endorse entities that compete with Harvard official sponsors, and they may not promote “products or services that are



illegal, or conflict with institutional values of policies,” like gambling, alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana products. They may not use Harvard University’s name, insignia, or other identifiers in their promotions, nor can they use photographs or film of Harvard’s facilities and campus landmarks. Before finalizing any NIL deals, Harvard athletes must disclose the contracts to the Harvard Athletics Compliance Office for review and approval.

Despite these obstacles, several Harvard athletes across a wide range of sports have entered the NIL market, and they have done so in a variety of ways. Off the back of a remarkable fall season his junior year, in which he broke the NCAA record for a men’s 5000-meter race and achieved the Olympic standard, Graham Blanks ’25 of Harvard cross country and track and field signed a major NIL deal with New Balance.

Blanks relied on an agent who reached out to his coach before the season to negotiate the deal. His contract, unlike professional ones, does not include any performance-based stipulations; he is simply required to make a certain number of event appearances, and New Balance may use his name, image, and likeness however they see fit in their advertising campaigns or on social media. In return, Blanks gets paid a substantial sum and receives free gear to train in—but not to compete in—as Harvard requires him to wear the school’s sponsor Nike in official collegiate races.

“It’s good to establish relationships at a brand,” Blanks, who plans to run professionally after college, said. “It’s nice to get your foot in the door... It’s almost like early recruiting for professional running.”

Previously, Blanks would have been unable to work with an agent, as signing with an agency is prohibited under NCAA regulation. However, athletes are allowed to use agents for the purposes of making NIL deals.

14 | SPORTS Through this provision,

Blanks has built a relationship with an agent from the prominent Flynn Sports Management, which he believes will be invaluable as he enters the world of professional running, where agents are critical to securing spots in the biggest competitions.

In addition to his New Balance deal, Blanks also reached out personally to partner with Jittery Joe’s Coffee—a local coffee roastery in his hometown, Athens, Georgia—whose coffee he has brewed for years in his dorm at Harvard. The financial support from New Balance has afforded Blanks the advantage

of not needing to pursue additional NIL deals solely for financial gain. Since he was never particularly active on social media, he was not inclined to endorse numerous products. This has allowed him to concentrate on collaborations such as the one with Jittery Joe’s, where they launched a new coffee can featuring his face. He said, “[The deal] was really cool, just because I really like the company, so it’s just neat to have my own can.”

Other Harvard athletes have established NIL deals through other avenues. Lennox London ’26 on the Harvard women’s rugby team started taking advantage of NIL opportunities through the organization 98Strong, which matches student-athletes with different brands.

London’s first experience promoting a brand was with Olipop; she created a post with a few different pictures and earned between 50 and 100 dollars. Although she had fun, the biggest challenge for her was coming up with creative ways to promote the products. “I would love to do more deals. I just kind of figured out that I’m not very good with content-creating,” she said.

London discussed the difficulties of earning NIL deals when competing in a sport with less visibility. “I think if rugby...was more popular, and people in America cared more about female rugby athletes, I think it would be really cool to capitalize on the NIL stuff,” she said. “I know that’s changing right now, but it’s kind of easier for a track or a soccer athlete to get NIL deals because people care about that more.”

London is neutral on whether attending Harvard has helped or hurt her in the NIL market, but Blanks is convinced that Harvard’s brand has given him an edge. “Being a Harvard student...signals you do have other passions, maybe outside of running, which makes you a little more interesting,” he explained.

However, Blanks also pointed out that

while Harvard has supported his NIL efforts, the school could push boundaries further. “Harvard isn’t really doing anything in terms of the big NIL stuff that Power 5 schools are doing, where you’re giving back to the athletes through different ways, like boosters or merchandise or anything like that,” he said. “It would be interesting to see Harvard maybe try to be a little more progressive [and] adopt this new NIL stuff, because they’re kind of going to have to, if they want to remain athletically competitive.”

Both Harvard athletes agree that the NCAA’s reformed NIL policy has opened up doors for collegiate athletes around the country. “I think it’s great that athletes can capitalize on their NIL,” said London. “It gives you more control over your representation because someone’s making money off of it, so it should be you, because...it’s your name, image, or likeness.”

Nevertheless, change can be uncomfortable. Blanks spoke about the value college sports have had in the U.S. in the past. “I think the NCAA is special just because you combine a college education with getting to represent your college athletically. I think that’s super unique,” he said. “Maybe I would have reservations about trying to over-professionalize it...a little too quick with the NIL stuff.”

Ultimately, the introduction of NIL marks a transformative period in collegiate athletics, presenting both unprecedented opportunities and significant challenges. Harvard athletes like Blanks and London illustrate the ways in which student-athletes are navigating this new landscape—balancing financial gains with academic and athletic commitments. However, the half-baked regulations and the dominance of Power 5 schools highlight the need for more standardized policies that ensure equity and fairness across institutions and sports.

As NIL continues to evolve, the NCAA stands at a pivotal crossroads. The decisions made in the coming years will determine the sustainability of NIL and redefine the student-athlete experience. Ivy League schools like Harvard must find a balance between upholding academic integrity and accepting some degree of the commercialization of athletics. The path forward demands thoughtful solutions that will empower and enrich athletes while preserving the joy of college sports.

GEMMA MALTBY ’27 (GMALTBY@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) PLAYS ON THE HARVARD WOMEN’S SOCCER TEAM AND WOULD LOVE TO MAKE SOME NIL MONEY.

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS ’26

Indy Sportsbook: The Costumes You're Sure to Encounter This Halloween

The hottest current lines tell you the tricksters and treaters you're sure to run into.

BY ANTONIA MELINA SALAME '28

Some might say that Halloween is the single most important and stressful weekend of the academic year. The pressure to pick costumes that are flattering, unique, and inexpensive leaves many students stumped and the Harvard mail rooms overflowing with overnighted Amazon packages. It's not only Amazon: there are countless resources at any student's fingertips when it comes to costume planning (Spirit Halloween, Halloween.com, and their friend's closet to name a few).

However, even though there is no shortage of costume options and suppliers, the same costumes are inevitably seen again and again (and again). Of course, there's no shame in keeping things predictable and opting for a fan favorite (in fact, you may even be compelled to treat this article as a 'last-minute costume ideas' inspiration). However, in the spirit of the game, we've created a few fictitious betting lines to predict the most likely to-be-seen costumes of this year's Halloween.

First, we have the famous Vampire at +280 odds. This one's a fan favorite for several reasons. Importantly, it is highly "throw-togetherable" in a last-minute scramble. Simply pick out your perfect black top and skirt, smear on some fake blood, and you are all set to look the part of an infamous bloodsucker. If you're throwing this together in the true eleventh hour, you can even visit your dining hall and use the ketchup dispenser for your fake blood needs. The Vampire costume allows everyone to wear clothes they already own (and look good in). It also allows for a certain degree of ambiguity... Are you an Edward Cullen or a Damon Salvatore? Who knows.

A firefighter, a policewoman, a UPS worker, and a doctor walk into a bar... what an atypical friend group. Well, coming in at +330 odds, all of these bar-goers are actually college students participating in a group "occupations" costume. This costume provides

unmatched variety while still allowing a group to coordinate under a single theme. It can undoubtedly be posed in the group chat with minimal backlash. Maybe firefighter red is your roommate's color and police officer blue is yours. This group costume allows both parties to not compromise on their chosen hue and still show that they put effort into coordination. If a third friend is not a fan of blues and reds, they can be a UPS worker, a FedEx worker, or a waiter... the possibilities are endless.

You probably can't name all of the Disney princesses, but I'd guarantee a friend group near you can. At #3, we have a costume that is worn by preschool children and college students alike: the group princess costume. There are 13 Disney princesses to choose from—enough that everyone in a friend group can be a different princess. We've seen some impressively flattering renditions of the group princess costumes, often including a corset and knee-high socks. However, we don't think it's this costume's appearance that makes it a fan favorite. As a child, many college-aged girls probably dreamed of living the life of a Disney princess. By now, most of us have given up on our dreams of communicating with woodland creatures and being saved by Prince Charming (and replaced it with something

equally exciting, like Med School).

However, Halloween offers the opportunity to put the tiara back on. The princess costume is an optimal way to return to childhood folly in a way that won't have you receiving side-eye or general concern from your peers. The princess group costume allows college girls to step back into their childhood for one night: it's no surprise that this costume has +800 odds.

The costumes mentioned above are largely tailored towards a female audience.

However,

Halloween is not just a day for the

girls and the ghouls. Though men are more than welcome to explore any of the options above, we don't see "princesses" being the most worn costume of most college-aged boys (unless they lost fantasy football or wanted to do something unique). Up next is a prediction for what will be worn by the men of Cambridge this October.

Hopefully, your Halloween night doesn't involve a run-in with the law, but for many men on the Halloween scene, it may look like they'll be spending time behind bars. Coming in first for the men at +550 odds we have the classic prisoner costume. When we think of a prisoner costume, one thing comes to mind: *versatility*. Do you look best in stripes? An orange jumpsuit? A white tank top? Most importantly, this costume is sure to create the perfect segue for any prison-clad man to talk to a cop-dressed girl. It's not only a good costume, it's a good conversation starter, and thus, you're sure to see inmates on the loose this Halloween.

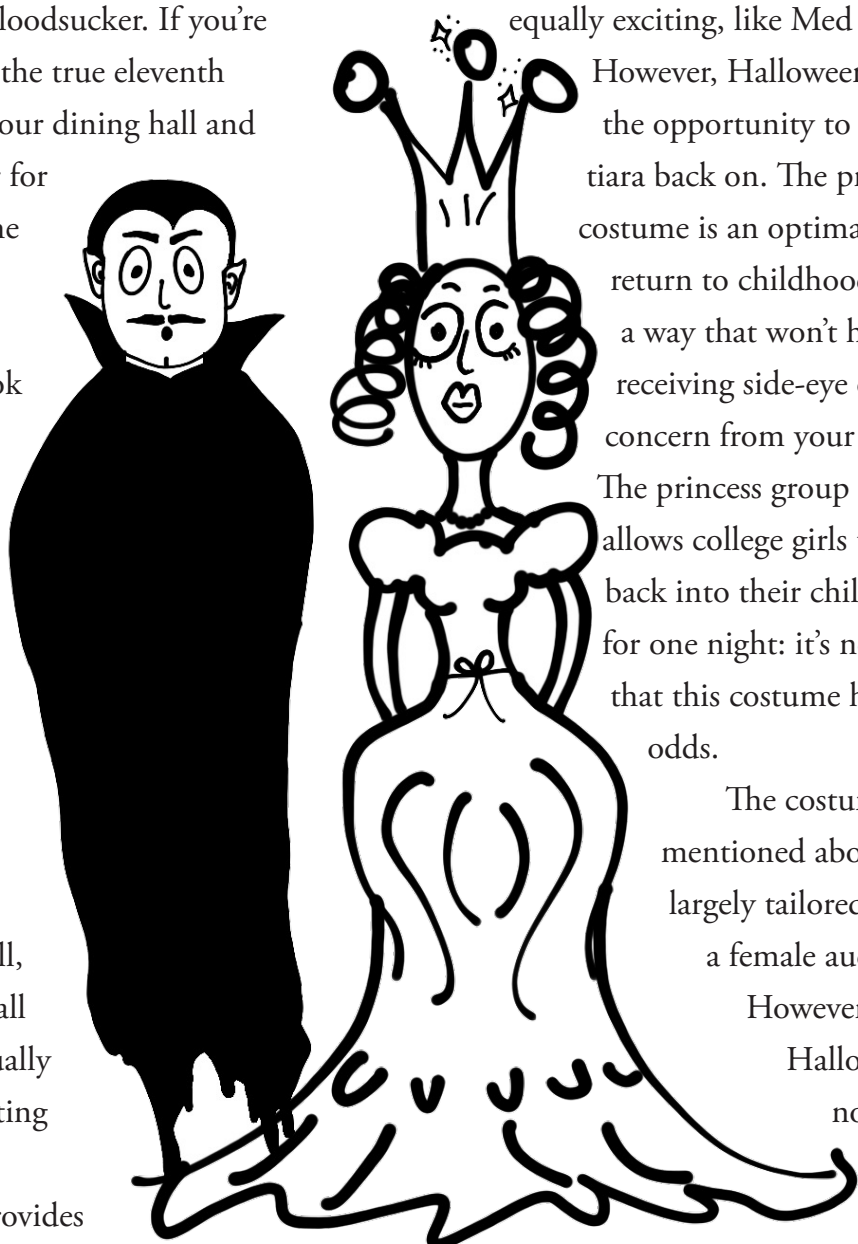
For those members of the Harvard community who are in a relationship this October, the costume-choosing process can look a little different. Hence, the Indy Sportsbook simply cannot fail to predict the most popular couple costume on the scene.

Coming in at +1000 odds and soon to be donned by a couple near you, we have The Joker and Harley Quinn. Since the *Suicide Squad* movie premiered in 2019, this costume has been worn by countless couples. Notably, Nicki Minaj and her husband rocked this costume in 2019. This duo is something that couples can agree upon: it's recognizable, iconic, and likely a flattering costume for both parties. This costume is sure to grace both the streets of Cambridge and your Instagram feed.

If one thing's for sure, it's that regardless of costume, you're in for an eventful night in Cambridge this Halloween. The Indy team is projecting an unusual amount of tricks (as opposed to treats) on October 31st. Of course, these are only predictions for the moment. Rest assured, the Indy staff is working tirelessly to run all of the numbers and bring you the most accurate Halloween data possible.

**ANTONIA MELINA SALAME '28
(AMSALAME@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HOW THESE PREDICTIONS PLAY OUT AT INDYWEEN THIS FRIDAY.**

**GRAPHIC BY REEVE SYKES '26
SPORTS | 15**



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

Boo!

BY HAN NGUYEN '27

GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27



ACROSS

1. Snafu
5. Egyptian boy king
6. Yearbook sect.
8. Cranky codger
9. NYC subway letters
10. ___ in Charlie
12. Nile wader
14. Easy bucket
15. Spore sacs
16. Earth, to Mahler
17. California's says "Eureka"
18. Taj Mahal, e.g.
19. Doing nothing
20. Within sight
22. Île-de-France commuter rail
23. "It's ___-brainer!"
24. Jacob's twin
25. Harbinger

DOWN

1. Sitcom shooting style
2. "___ be my pleasure"
3. G.I. entertainers
4. Got the actor for a role?
5. Grave markers
7. Be peerless
9. Radial alternative
11. Halloween hanging
13. Do nothing
14. Members of a South Asian diaspora
21. Hospital area, for short

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