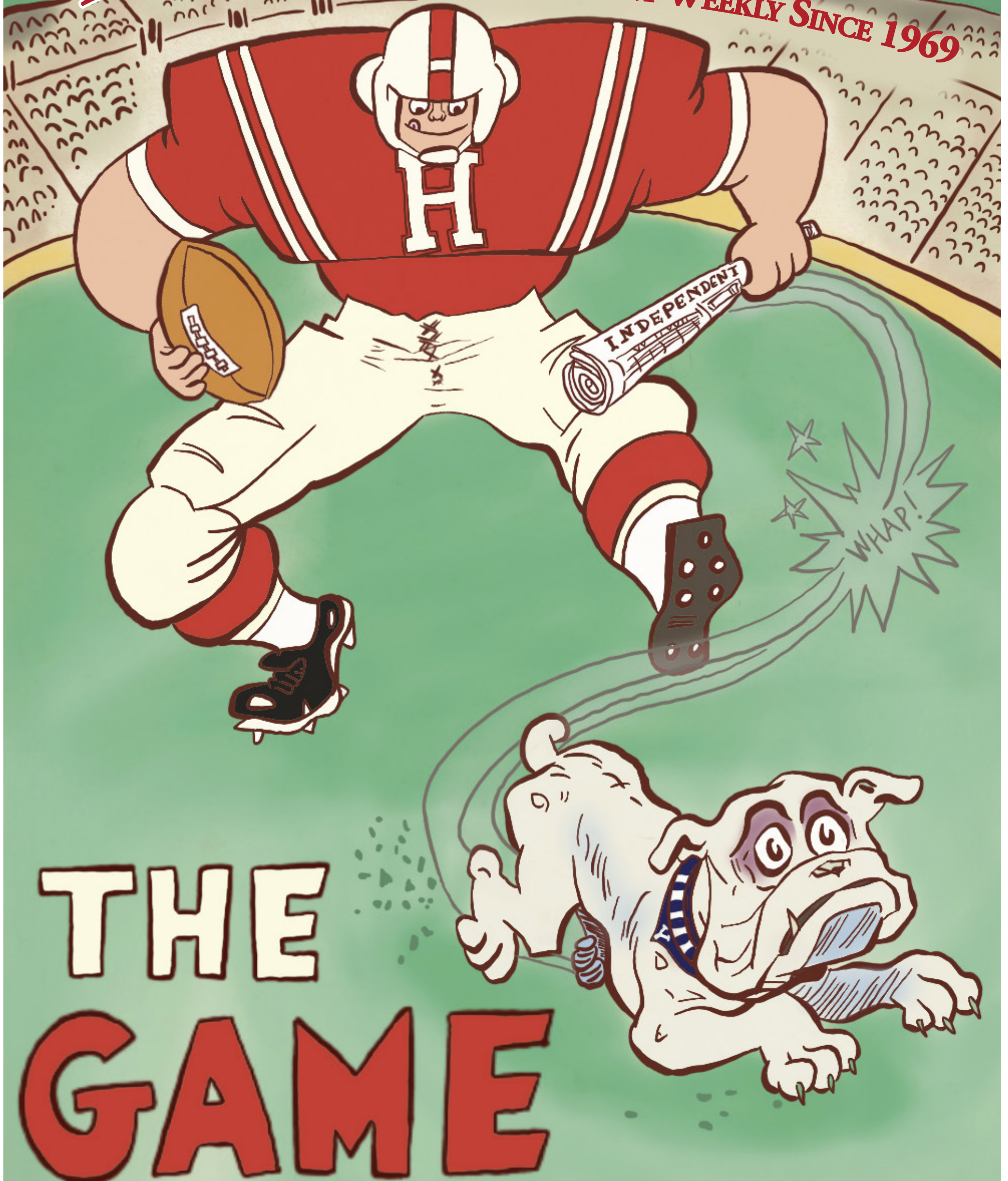


NOVEMBER 21, 2024

VOL LVI ISSUE 13

# HARVARD INDEPENDENT

THE STUDENT WEEKLY SINCE 1969



# THE GAME

# CONTENTS

3. **When Luck Decides**  
by Wessal Bakry '28
4. **Meet the New IOP Executive Board**  
by Kayla Reifel '26 and  
Abril Rodriguez Diaz '26
5. **This Week at the JFK Jr. Forum**  
by Layla Chaaoui '26
7. **Dear Administration: You're Wrong About the Tailgates**  
by Jonah Karafiol '26
8. **Discovering Boston During The Game**  
by Roberto Quesada '27
9. **Sharing the Stage**  
by Meena Behringer '27
10. **Grief, Laughter, and Speed Bumps**  
by Lucas Cohen-d'Arbeloff '27
11. **A Feast for the Senses**  
by Gauri Sood '26
12. **Harvard Ballet Company's New Dawn**  
by Sophie Dauer '27
13. **Glam, Glitter, and Grit**  
by Frida López '27
14. **The Game: A Storied Legacy**  
by Rania Jones '27
15. **The Game Beyond the Gridiron**  
by Vincent Honrubia '27
16. **Sports Spotlight: Leo Li**  
by Sara Kumar '27
17. **Sports Spotlight: Aku Koskenvuo**  
by Jordan Wasserberger '27
18. **Indy Sportsbook: Betting Against the Bulldogs**  
by Luke Wagner '26
19. **Crossword: Timeout**  
by Han Nguyen '27

## 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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# When Luck Decides

Yale students face off over raffle tickets.

BY WESSAL BAKRY '28

The legendary Harvard-Yale football match, known as “The Game,” is one of the most highly anticipated events of the year for both schools, drawing thousands of alumni to celebrate a rivalry dating back to 1875. Set to take place on Nov. 23 at noon in Harvard Stadium, the event promises to be a spirited gathering of school pride and tradition. Thousands of Harvard undergraduates come together in celebration, each receiving a free ticket to the game, ensuring accessibility for all students to partake in the festivities.

For many, attending Harvard-Yale is not just about the football. It’s a rite of passage—a way to celebrate the camaraderie and rivalry that define the college experience. It is a cultural milestone that creates a strengthened undergraduate community—particularly for freshmen who have never experienced such an atmosphere before. Yet, many Yale students have been left ticketless and disappointed, now excluded from one of the most important events of their college years.

While Harvard Stadium seats just over 30,000 people, the Yale Bowl can accommodate more than 60,000. This discrepancy means that Yale students face significantly greater obstacles to attending the game when it is hosted at Harvard. The smaller venue, combined with Harvard reserving the majority of tickets for its own students and alumni, has sparked frustration among many Yale students who feel overlooked.

“I know a lot of people who are coming from different schools, all over, just to come watch,” said a Yale student who chose not to be identified in an interview with the *Independent*. “And they’re paying a ton of money, which not everybody wants to do. I just think it sucks that not everybody is going to be able to be there, especially since it’s so hyped up.”

This year, instead of making tickets available through a first-come, first-serve link, Yale opted to distribute tickets via raffle. This switch was prompted by backlash experienced

in 2020 and 2022 when many felt excluded from the process due to scheduling conflicts that prevented them from purchasing tickets when they went on sale.

According to Yale student Yoobin Oh '28, “Seniors get four entries in the lottery, juniors get three, sophomores get two, and freshmen get one. But you can increase your number of entries by attending any of the four designated games that range from soccer to volleyball throughout October,” she said.

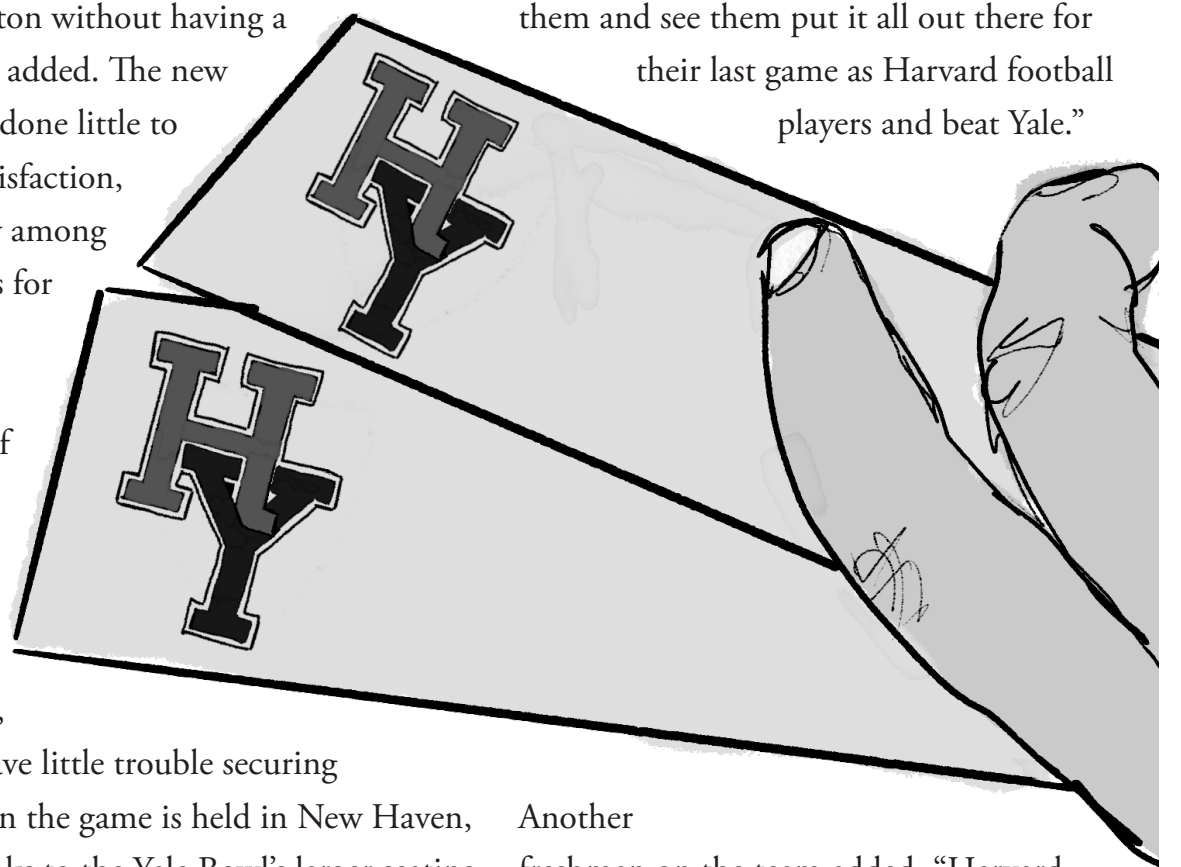
“It’s unfair to students who don’t have a lot of time on their hands to increase their chances and it can be frustrating to go all the way to Boston without having a ticket,” Oh added. The new system has done little to quell dissatisfaction, particularly among Yale seniors for whom this is the last rendition of the game. Harvard students, on the other hand, typically have little trouble securing tickets when the game is held in New Haven, Conn. thanks to the Yale Bowl’s larger seating capacity.

In an interview with the *Independent*, Ariana Barillas '28, shared her excitement for this Saturday: “It’s such a communal event—it’s easy to feel like a tiny fish at this school, but I feel like Harvard-Yale will make me feel like a part of everything here,” she said. “Tradition can be so great, and there’s a reason that it’s become the massive event that it is—the people love it. It also just comes at a time where people are burnt out. It’s definitely the perfect time to have some fun.”

Talia Rehill, another Harvard freshman, echoed this sentiment. “It’s just a good break, to be honest. Almost like a distraction,” she added. “It’d be amazing if we won, but I think it’s more just about everyone being there together and enjoying

the moment. Plus, so many alumni come out for this—it’s fun to see how into it they are. I’d much rather have this to worry about than midterms and final projects. I also don’t usually go to games, but this is the one where it’s like—you *have* to go.”

Chris Gorman '28, a defensive lineman on the Harvard football team, shared his thoughts on the significance of it being the final game of the season. “Throughout the season, it’s apparent how much hard work and dedication the seniors put into this game. Harvard-Yale is the culmination of that for them,” he shared. “I’m excited to suit up with them and see them put it all out there for their last game as Harvard football players and beat Yale.”



Another freshman on the team added, “Harvard-Yale is the one day where the team feels the most supported by the student body.”

While it is unfortunate that not every Yale undergraduate will be able to attend Saturday’s game, the Harvard-Yale rivalry remains a cherished tradition that brings the two schools together in a spirited celebration of community. This iconic matchup serves as a reminder of the long-standing bond between these institutions, fueled by competition, pride, and shared history.

**WESSAL BAKRY '28 (WESSALBAKRY@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES NEWS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY CHRISTIE BECKLEY '27**

# Meet the New IOP Executive Board

The Harvard Institute of Politics' newly elected executive board reflects on their vision for the future of the organization and their commitment to maintaining the organization's nonpartisanship.

BY KAYLA REIFEL '26 AND ABRIL RODRIGUEZ DIAZ '26



On Monday morning, the Harvard Institute of Politics (IOP) announced its newly elected executive board. Tenzin Gund-Morrow '26 and Summer Tan '26 were elected as President and Vice President, respectively, and will lead the IOP through 2025, alongside Kevin Bokoum '26, Treasurer, and Lorenzo Ruiz '27, Communications Director.

Looking ahead, Gund-Morrow and Tan are eager to expand the organization's programs, forge partnerships, and make the IOP more accessible. Their platform focused on increasing career development resources and expanding opportunities for students to engage with politics beyond Harvard.

For Gund-Morrow, the IOP is "a place where you [can] not only think about and learn about politics but also start your public service journey by being part of the civic world around us. That sort of hands-on learning is definitely what I was looking for," he said. "As I got older, I saw the things that at the IOP really need improvement and investment, and the ways that the community should be expanded to more people at Harvard."

"To really love an institution is to be willing to challenge it and to change it when necessary," Tan added.

Through their efforts to broaden the IOP's impact, Gund-Morrow and Tan are committed to maintaining the organization's nonpartisanship and fostering meaningful dialogue. "The very unique place that the IOP has at Harvard is being a bridge for people that disagree on important issues," Gund-Morrow explained. "For me, it's about expanding who feels comfortable so that they want to come and learn from people that have different experiences and beliefs than them through the programming we have to offer," he added.

Reflecting on her experience growing up in Oregon's only swing district, Tan expressed, "I learned that true nonpartisanship is about being able to debate and disagree productively." She continued, "You can't just hide your head in the sand and pretend like it isn't happening because these conversations are happening with or without you."

In light of a controversial editorial by current IOP president Pratyush Mallick '25 in *The Harvard Crimson*, which suggested that the IOP abandon its nonpartisan stance after Donald Trump's re-election, Gund-Morrow and Tan reaffirmed their commitment to preserving the IOP as a space for diverse perspectives and open dialogue.

"First and foremost, our priority is making sure that people of all different ideologies, political beliefs, and party affiliations feel comfortable," Gund-Morrow expressed. "I think we fail as an organization if we're not in touch with politics beyond the Johnston Gate and Harvard Yard," he added, noting the contrast between Harvard's predominantly liberal environment and the broader political landscape in the United States.

Gund-Morrow, who currently serves as co-chair of the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum, emphasized the importance of including diverse perspectives at the forum, and more broadly at the IOP as a whole.

"This week, we're having Kellyanne Conway come to the forum, which I know is someone that kind of represents the Trump field of politics, which is oftentimes excluded from the IOP," he stated. "Exclusion only...pushes everyone further into their own echo

chamber. So I don't think there's any benefit from doing that sort of exclusionary platforming at the IOP," Gund-Morrow added.

While the new IOP board will prioritize the inclusion of diverse perspectives, Gund-Morrow stressed the importance of upholding respect and institutional boundaries. "If you're a civic leader, you can have controversial opinions," Gund-Morrow stated. "That's a huge difference from someone that just wants to bash others and tear other people down. And that's what we don't have a tolerance for at the IOP."

Looking ahead, Gund-Morrow and Tan are focused on broadening the IOP's reach by engaging students from underrepresented backgrounds. Specifically, they aim to create more opportunities for international students, veterans, and athletes. They also hope to increase diversity at the IOP by making the organization more financially accessible.

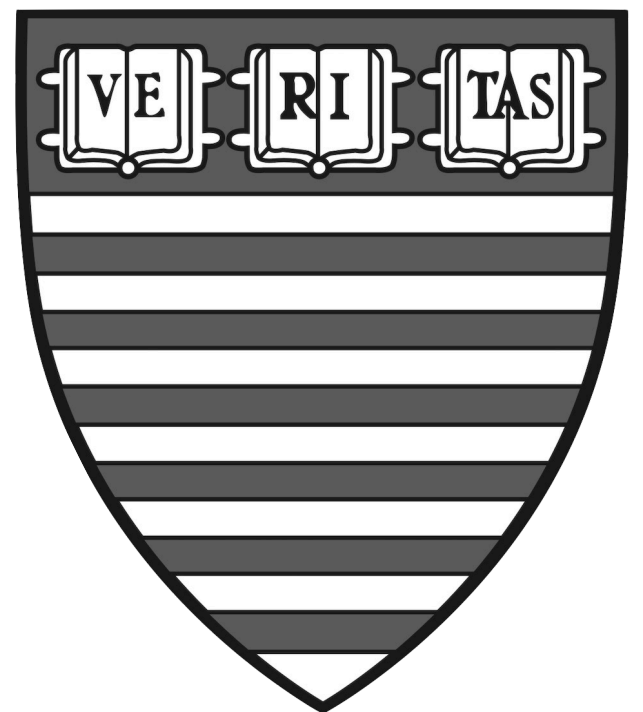
With the support of the rest of the board, Gund-Morrow and Tan plan to build partnerships within and beyond Harvard, such as with other Institutes of Politics throughout the nation and with international groups. Kevin Bokoum '26, the new Treasurer of the IOP, aims to work alongside Gund-Morrow and Tan to expand opportunities for international students. Specifically, he hopes to fund a global affairs program and increase funding for global internships.

Bokoum expressed his confidence in the incoming executive board and excitement about his plans for his tenure. He is eager to expand fundraising initiatives, such as by strengthening existing donor partnerships and building new ones. Bokoum also hopes to expand revenue by exploring merchandise sales and more collaborations with companies, such as the new GovLab program, a partnership with venture capital firm XFund.

The IOP was a major factor in Bokoum's decision to attend Harvard, and he got involved as soon as he first set foot on campus. "The IOP has changed from not just a club for me, but [to] a home and where I've met some of my closest friends," he said. Having served in roles such as the IOP's Director of Internal Affairs, he is eager to continue supporting the organization as Treasurer.

Bokoum echoed Gund-Morrow and Tan's sentiment about keeping the IOP a hub for diverse dialogue. "Everyone on our current executive team, I know for a fact, are...committed to the values of nonpartisanship," Bokoum said. "That's what the IOP was founded on" he added, "we're going to continue to remain nonpartisan, and we're going to continue to have a wide breadth of speakers from every single ideology."

Bokoum also expressed that more broadly, the coming spring will be a good opportunity to "take a step back from all the pomp and circumstance that's happened with fall 2024 and going into 2025, reassess the membership of IOP, and see what we can do to support programs and mentorship retention." The IOP's newly elected Communications Director Lorenzo Ruiz '27 echoed the optimism of the rest of the new executive board. "I love the IOP so much," he emphasized. "It's a place that's given me not only a sense of purpose but a family at Harvard." Ruiz explained that he "came to the realization pretty early on that contributing in a comms capacity was going to be the most effective way that [he] could contribute to the IOP."



Ruiz elaborated further on how special a place he thinks the IOP is, discussing how "there are few places like the IOP that give us a space to come face to face with one another, to talk about tough issues... and to really facilitate a rigorous and curious dialogue." Ruiz expressed that this is especially important because "we're constantly undergoing changes in the political wind as a country, and it's amazing and invaluable to have a place like the IOP where we're able to come together and understand political phenomena together."

Ruiz emphasized the IOP's commitment to the Harvard community, and he also felt confident about the new executive board. "The IOP has an amazing responsibility to the Harvard community to be responsible stewards of political education and discourse, and that's always going to come first and foremost," he said. He added, "I think this is going to be a tenure of extremely responsible and mindful stewardship."

On maintaining nonpartisanship, Ruiz highlighted the IOP's dedication to fostering a wide range of viewpoints. "We're going to continue to be a place that is able to host diverse perspectives, and able to do so in a responsible and wide-ranging manner," he explained.

Ruiz also outlined plans to revitalize IOP communications, focusing on more engaging strategies such as "smaller and more engaging emails," an "online merch shop that ships directly to student mailboxes," and "more student spotlights and features for programs." Looking ahead, Ruiz is "excited to get down to work and make very tangible improvements for the lives of [IOP] members."

"We aren't just an organization that's built around like-minded people working on how to achieve their vision," Gund-Morrow emphasized. "We're also about having dissenting opinions and discourse on tough conversations, so we really do welcome people that have any background, ideology, opinion, and party affiliation."


**KAYLA REIFEL '26 (KAYLAREIFEL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) AND ABRIL RODRIGUEZ DIAZ '26 (ABRILRODRIGUEZDIAZ@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITE NEWS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY ANNEISE FISHER '26**

# This Week at the JFK Jr. Forum

The Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics hosts a star-studded post-election lineup.

BY LAYLA CHAARAOU '26

 In the weeks following the 2024 presidential election, the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum at Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics hosted a group of high-profile speakers. While the country grapples with the upcoming change in party leadership, the Harvard community had the opportunity to hear from experts across the political spectrum—journalists, politicians, and academics alike. Here is a rundown of just a few of the speakers that hit the forum stage on the week of Nov. 12.

## Pete Buttigieg

On Nov. 12, Pete Buttigieg '04, United States Secretary of Transportation and former mayor of South Bend, Indiana started off the week with a discussion on policy and his role in the White House. Buttigieg told the audience about his thoughts on the country's economy, new regulatory and economic initiatives that have been implemented during his time in the Department of Transportation (DOT), and how politics impacts his personal life.

The conversation was moderated by Setti Warren, the Director of the Institute of Politics and former mayor of Newton, Mass. Warren asked Buttigieg for updates on the aviation industry, noting the surge in consumer complaints about cancellations, pricing, and delays, which have intensified due to economic disruptions and industry challenges in recent years. "We have set about the biggest expansion of passenger protections since the Department was created in this modern form, and I'm really proud of that," Buttigieg said.

He explained how the DOT has pushed airline companies to be more transparent by requiring them to publicly share their customer service policies online. Additionally, the department has implemented automatic refunds for canceled flights and introduced new measures to improve the passenger experience, particularly for those with disabilities, such as better wheelchair handling.

Buttigieg also discussed the topic of transportation safety. He emphasized that if we've reached a point where air travel has zero fatalities in a typical year, we can achieve the same safety standard for our roadways. "That's exactly what we set out to do."

Buttigieg and Warren then delved into a compelling discussion on trust in America, drawing upon Buttigieg's 2020 book "Trust:

America's Best Chance."

"Anytime there's a policy failure, it erodes trust, and what's really perverse about that is when social and political trusts are eroded, it becomes harder to do things, which means more policy failures," Buttigieg suggested. "I want to make sure that we strip away some of the cosmic themes and the extraneous themes that have been introduced into our public and political life."

His time as mayor directly impacted how he approaches life in local neighborhoods and communities. Buttigieg referenced his own family, as he came out as gay in 2015, married his husband in 2018, and adopted twins in 2021.

"I literally had the experience of having a wonderful pleasant meal with a member of Congress who gave me a gift for my children, and that same day went into the United States Capitol and voted against marriage equality. That takes some real compartmentalization," Buttigieg shared.

His role in public life has taught him that, even when he disagrees with those around him, his responsibility is to focus on what is in front of him and ensure progress is made.

"The whole point of public service is that it's not about you, and so while you as a person might be pissed off about how another person is standing in your way in a political objective, your function is not to impose your personal preferences on the world—your function is to serve others."

## Katie Couric

On Nov. 14, journalist and news presenter Katie Couric spoke with Nancy Gibbs, the Edward R. Murrow Professor of Practice and Director of the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. They discussed the media's role in today's political landscape and the future of democracy.

Couric described the fragmented nature of today's media landscape, where separate ecosystems deliver algorithmic content that often reinforces our viewpoints instead of challenging them. She shared her personal news consumption habits, which include both traditional outlets like *The New York Times* and Politico, as well as more nontraditional platforms such as Instagram and podcasts.

Couric and Gibbs noted that while interactive content and narrative interviews are appealing, they have become rare in today's news cycles. Instead, the media has shifted its focus

away from these popular formats and towards topics that resonate less with audiences. "We've lost the room. We've lost touch with the average person," Couric reflected.

Couric discussed how the ways we receive our media and which outlets we gravitate to are changing. The number of Americans consuming traditional newspapers and television media is shrinking, while viewership of right-wing media or on nontraditional platforms has steadily increased.

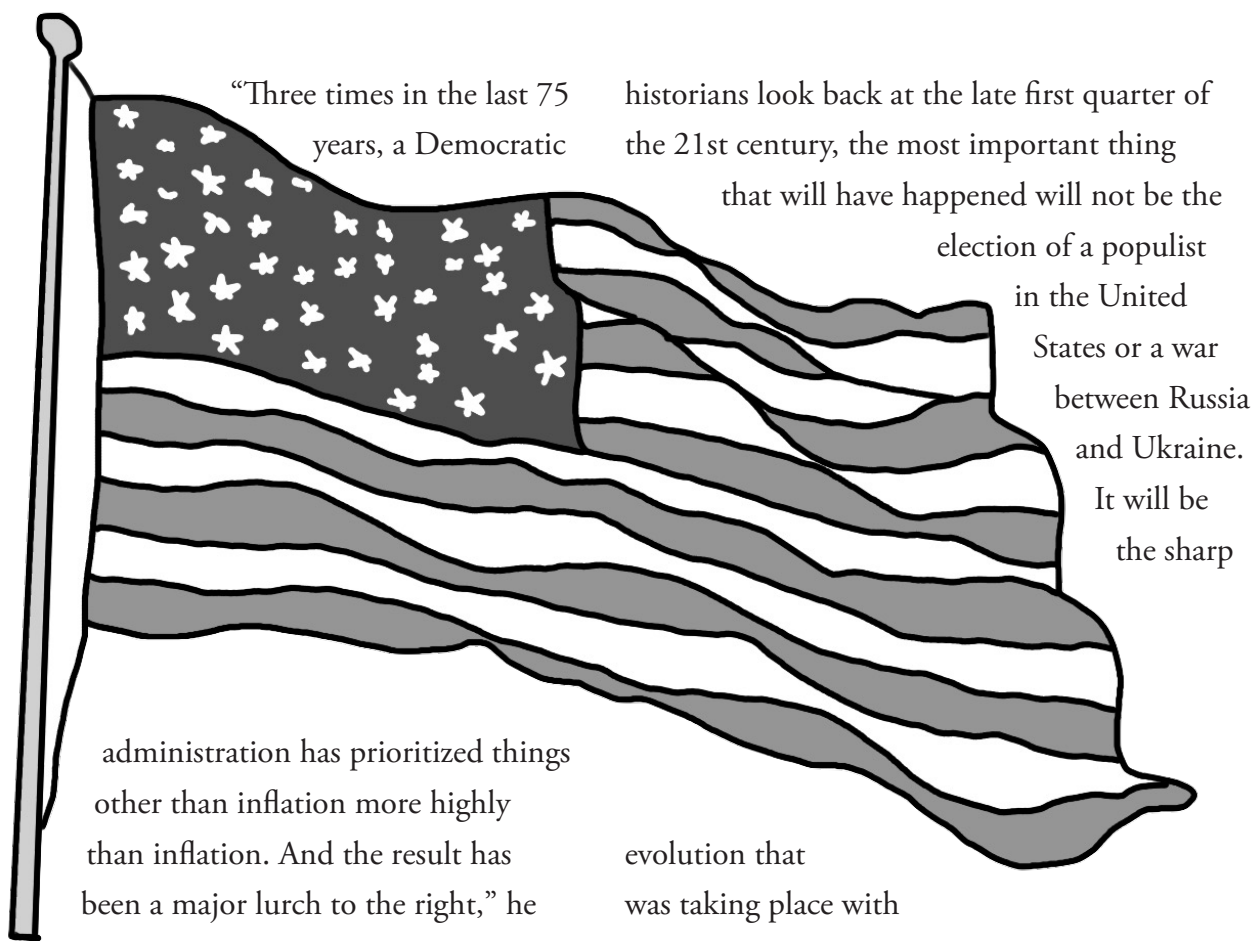
"This right-wing media industrial complex—if you will—is so powerful and really influential," Couric said. "There are people in this country, and that is all they hear, that's all they read—that's all they listen to, and they're getting a very specific narrative and point of view." Yet, Couric warned that this type of selective media intake can be what polarizes and spreads misinformation throughout our country.

Couric highlighted that the shift in media began early in her career, as the internet gained popularity and media started to go digital. She pointed to the 1994 viral clip, "What is the Internet?" from her time as co-host of *Today*, marking a key moment in the evolution of media. Couric's media career has moved with the tides: after *Today*, Couric moved to CBS Evening News, becoming the first solo female news anchor of a major network. "I think it was shocking enough [for the public] to see someone do the evening news that had lipstick," Couric joked.

Couric founded her own company, "Katie Couric Media," in 2015. "I'm passionate about storytelling. I'm passionate about synthesizing and distilling complicated concepts to make them understandable for people. I am insatiably curious," she emphasized.

## Larry Summers

Former Harvard President and economics professor Larry Summers took the stage 30 minutes after Couric's event. Summers analyzed the future of economic policy through the lens of history, offering a projection of how the economy may shift following the election. He was joined by John Ellis, journalist and co-host of the political podcast "Night Owls." Summers and Ellis discussed rising inflation and its impact on the Democratic Party, with Summers noting during the forum that the party has taken much of the blame for the surge in prices in recent years.



“Three times in the last 75 years, a Democratic

historians look back at the late first quarter of the 21st century, the most important thing that will have happened will not be the election of a populist in the United States or a war between Russia and Ukraine. It will be the sharp

administration has prioritized things other than inflation more highly than inflation. And the result has been a major lurch to the right,” he stated. “That’s what happened with

evolution that was taking place with artificial intelligence,” he stated.

“Artificial intelligence will be to the internet as the computer was to the calculator. And if that’s right, that’s a very large thing.”

### Abby Phillip

The CNN NewsNight host joined Axios Live host and Fall 2024 IOP Resident Fellow Eugene Scott and Harvard Political Review president Liana McGhee ’25 on Nov. 18 in the forum. Abby Phillip ’10 shared her insights on the evolving role of the media in covering politics, highlighting the challenges faced by journalists in today’s polarized climate.

The trio began with a discussion about nontraditional media, which Phillip described as a “trend” of this year’s election cycle. Both candidates used a variety of mediums—podcasts, TikTok, and X—to reach voters, rather than relying solely on traditional platforms like television or print. But the right has a lock on this tactic: Phillip said that when you check the top ten political podcasts or YouTubers, the majority of them are right-leaning.

“There are huge megaphones on the right they can tap into, and they did, smartly, at this critical moment when there is this massive decline in engagement with traditional media, and the way you can amplify your message is by going to other places,” Phillips said.

She also remarked that Trump’s approach to engaging with the media was strategic, as he ventured into highly unconventional and risky spaces. In contrast, Harris, as Phillip noted, did not take the same risks; while she also reached different audiences, her appearances were in places where she was likely to be well-received. “The people who get their news from alternative sources, they give extra points for seeing you in the places where they don’t expect you. Politicians will have to take note of that and figure out how they can get comfortable doing that, because that’s the future.”

She provided specific insights into her journalism career, explaining how her experience as a reporter and writer has equipped her to engage with people and better understand their concerns. Before joining CNN, Phillip covered politics for Politico, *The Washington Post*, and served as an ABC News Fellow.

“I think that when you go out into the world and you talk to people, you realize that regular people tend to have the ability to hold complex thoughts in their minds better than pundits do,” Phillip explained. “If you were to only listen to pundits, you’d only see the world in this one way, whereas most regular people are living in those nuances in their everyday lives. They believe nontraditional things—contradictory things. I have a great appreciation for that as a journalist.”

Due to this understanding, Phillip felt that the election outcome seemed likely. She noted that after the assassination attempt on Trump, his approval ratings surged, indicating that voters were still inclined to support him despite the surrounding controversies. “You can see the sense in the electorate, that people were just not that interested in the controversial parts in Trump. They just didn’t think it was that important to them. It didn’t matter to them.”

The conversation then shifted to the topic of declining trust in the media. While Phillip acknowledged the concern, she argued that the real issue lies in the lack of skepticism toward what people encounter on the internet. “I worry when people just take that stuff and they don’t look at it critically and say, ‘Is this true?’ And that happens every day,” she expressed. “If people dig a little bit deeper, they are more likely to come up with better information than if they take things hook, line, and sinker.”

“We can do as much as we can to always put factual information in the forefront, but we are not going to save us from the deluge of disinformation. I think we all have to play a role in that.”

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The forum stage also saw appearances from former senior counselor to President Trump and political pollster Kellyanne Conway and former CEO of Google Eric Schmidt. Throughout the week, these forum events highlighted the continued political discourse surrounding media and culture, as the nation reflects on the election results and anticipates what may lie ahead.

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GRAPHIC BY SOPHIA RASCOFF ’27**

Richard Nixon’s election in 1968. That’s what happened after Lyndon Johnson and the Vietnam War. That’s what happened after Jimmy Carter, with Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980.”

He explained that while inflation may not be as severe as it’s often made out to be, it still feels real to many people, regardless of the actual numbers. “There’s a psychological aspect where people overstate how bad inflation is, and there’s a distributional aspect that if you have extra unemployment, it’s 2% of people who don’t have jobs. And if you have extra inflation, it’s 100% of people who see higher prices.”

“Inflation is deeply toxic for the progressive project, and progressives need to understand that. And they did so insufficiently. And that’s one of the important factors in this election.” Summers argues that this has become a significant issue for the Democratic Party and may have been one of the key factors that swung the presidential election in favor of the Republican Party.

But Trump’s plan would not make the country better, Summers explained, with multiple economic plans like tariffs on all imports and mass deportation that could lead to a labor shortage that would all raise inflation more than we’ve seen thus far. “If President Trump does what he said he would do during his campaign, the inflation shock administered to the economy would be substantially larger than anything that happened at the beginning of the last administration,” he warned.

The conversation also touched on a variety of pressing issues, including defense spending, national priorities, and government decision-making. Yet, one moment stood out when Summers shared his bold perspective on the future of artificial intelligence—a topic to which he is closely connected, given he joined the board of OpenAI in 2023.

## Dear Administration: You're Wrong About the Tailgates

Why a free-market approach is the proper response to student tailgates.

BY JONAH KARAFIOL '26

During the fall of my sophomore year, I took what was the most transformative course in my college career, Lib Ec. Formally known as Econ 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy, Lib Ec is a semester-long, empirically driven introduction to modern libertarianism taught by Professor Jeffrey Miron. The course lays out the libertarian perspective on a variety of policy issues ranging from insider trading to illegal drug markets—Miron's area of interest.

The libertarian perspective on illegal drugs is relatively simple: the demand for drugs is inelastic, making prohibition costly and ineffective. When the supply of drugs is restricted, drug users turn to underground markets that are inherently more costly and dangerous.

Libertarians support a regulated and open supply to make inevitable drug consumption safer for users.

The market for student tailgates functions similarly. The demand for tailgates is also inelastic, with students willing to go to great lengths to pre-game The Game. When the supply of the tailgates is restricted—when everyone from alumni to final clubs cannot pitch their tents and put out their booze—party-seekers turn to underground markets that are inherently less inclusive. It is naive to think that banning another MAC Lawn tailgate will stop students from getting belligerently drunk before marching down to the Colosseum. Instead, the parties will relocate from a public setting to private courtyards. Students lucky enough to get a friend's plus-one will end up drunk anyway, and students without one will sardine themselves into sweaty dorms and slam vodka crans until they can neither see nor stand. And yet, in an interview with *The Harvard Crimson*, Dean of Students Thomas Dunne said "he hopes to avoid unsanctioned student tailgates" and that "the idea of tailgates popping up in different places is something that we don't want to replicate."

When I was a first-year, I woke up the morning of Harvard-Yale with nothing but a pounding headache and a hankering for a party. I was a freshman with little knowledge of the final club system and few friends who belonged

to it. Still, when I went to the Mac Lawn with hundreds of other Harvard students, I felt none of the "exclusivity" Associate Dean of Student Engagement Jason Meier cited in a different *Crimson* interview. Instead, I was greeted with a warm drink and the first real excitement I had seen for a Harvard football game. As the morning turned to early afternoon and the tailgates were drunk dry, I got a sip of the school spirit I had only experienced vicariously through College GameDay. To this day, that tailgate remains one of the best memories of my time at Harvard.

Meier's concerns are not unfounded. Our student body seldom rallies around our athletes—even last year's Beanpot saw a lackluster Crimson student section. So, when presented with the opportunity to support our athletes and revel in Harvard pride, it's understandable that students often overindulge. The relative rarity of such events, combined with the pressures of Harvard's demanding environment and the impending reading week and final exam period, makes The Game a release valve for pent-up energy.

However, the blanket ban on unofficial tailgates does not eliminate excessive drinking—it merely relocates it to less visible, and thus, less manageable settings. Partygoers will turn to underground markets instead, making harm reduction nearly impossible. It is much easier to manage a few dozen tents with a few hundred students than a few hundred dorm parties with a few dozen students each.

If Meier really wants to keep our students safe, he should embrace the pride we take in the storied Harvard-Yale rivalry and allow us our tailgates. He should accept that students will drink and engage the undergraduate population in harm-

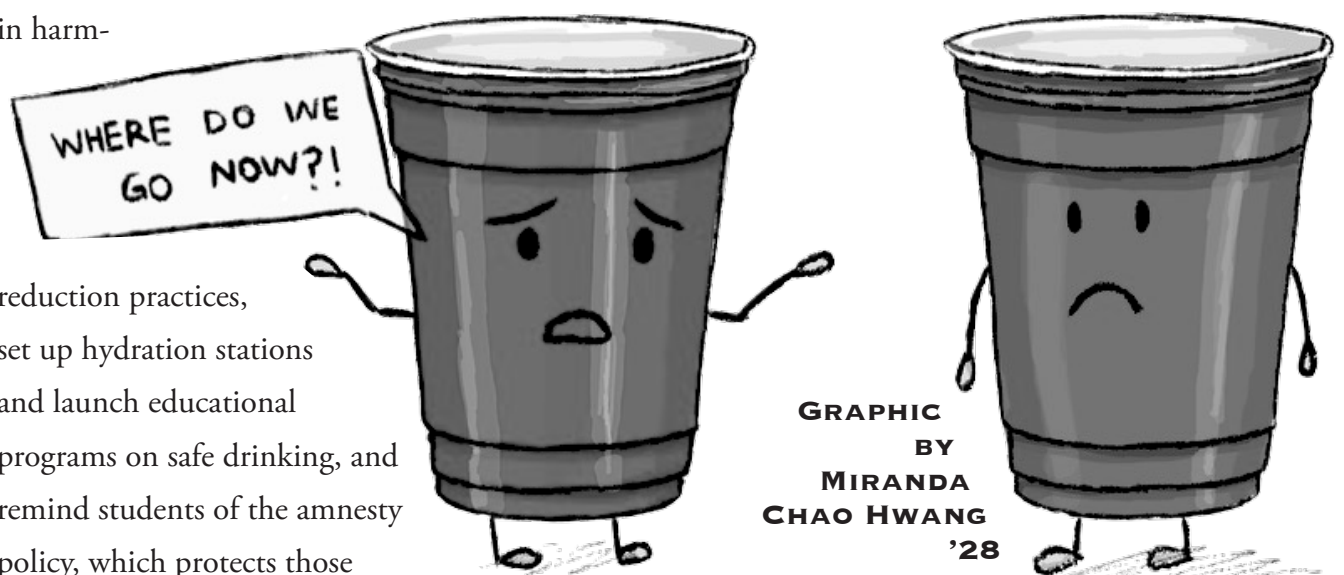
reduction practices, set up hydration stations and launch educational programs on safe drinking, and remind students of the amnesty policy, which protects those who seek medical assistance for

their inebriated friends from disciplinary action. But he should absolutely not drive the tailgates underground.

This principle of embracing harm reduction is not unique to tailgates—it has been successfully applied to drug policies, too. In 2010, Portugal decriminalized all drug use, including marijuana, cocaine and heroin. They shifted to a harm-reduction strategy that promoted access to treatment and recovery services for those struggling with addiction. Consequently, the number of fatal drug overdoses in the country has fallen by 80%. When consumption is inevitable, harm reduction is the most effective policy. Rather than wasting resources on futile attempts to suppress behavior, harm reduction acknowledges reality and focuses on minimizing its associated risks.

Meier's ban does not eliminate behavior; it only pushes it out of sight where it becomes harder to monitor and control. A free-market approach, with proper oversight and support, is not only the more pragmatic solution—it is both safer and more inclusive. By fostering a sense of community rather than driving students into fragmented, clandestine gatherings, the administration could create an environment where school spirit thrives and student safety is prioritized. If Meier wants to take our fun away, so be it—but if he cares about the student body's well-being and enjoyment of The Game, there is no better option than to embrace the student tailgate and make it as safe as possible.

**JONAH KARAFIOL '26  
(JONAHKARAFIOL@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WANTS YOU TO PRE-GAME THE GAME WITH THE INDY.**



# Discovering Boston During The Game

Boston has many attractions in November and December for you to visit before and after The Game.

BY ROBERTO QUESADA '27

It's that time of the year. Final exams are looming, the sun is setting at four in the afternoon, and the temperature is dropping by the day. But even though Thanksgiving hasn't even happened, Boston is transforming for the holidays. If you can carve out a few hours between your p-sets and essays, you will be in for a blast. I've explored Boston many times during the holiday season, so stick around for some of my best recommendations for places to visit to escape the college grind for a few hours.

Let's start with Faneuil Hall, an iconic and historic site. Faneuil Hall is one of the most popular stops on the Freedom Trail, and its location near Boston City Hall and Government Center places it at the heart of Boston. During the spring and summer, it's a bustling marketplace with street performers, souvenir shops, and food stalls that showcase Boston's historic charm. Come winter, the entire area turns into a scene out of a Christmas card. The columns of Quincy Market are wrapped in twinkling lights and the plaza in front is home to Boston's giant Christmas tree. Walking through this historic, decorated space feels like moving through a snow globe and experiencing a different side of Boston compared to Cambridge. It is enough to make the Grinch smile.

Contrary to Faneuil Hall's storied traditions is a contemporary

take on winter decoration: the Seaport District. Historically filled with warehouses and parking lots, the Seaport and Boston waterfronts have completely transformed into one of Boston's most contemporary neighborhoods. The modern buildings sparkle in winter, when dazzling white lights are installed across the community, reflecting off the harbor's dark waters. And of course, you can't miss the famous Holiday Market at Seaport, which features over one hundred different vendors, live music, and Instagram-worthy installations. I'd recommend arriving earlier rather than later, as lines for the market can get very long during December.

To the west of Faneuil Hall and the Seaport District is Boston Common. During the rest of the year, it is an enjoyable park, with statues and nice green spaces. However, the park really comes to life in winter, when the Frog Pond is turned into an ice skating rink. While I've fallen a few times trying to ice skate, it is definitely a great place to practice due to the large size. It is also so much nicer than the enclosed, artificial feel of the ice skating rinks we are often used to in cities. Ice skating here provides nice views of the surrounding Boston skyline and the festive lights among Boston Common's trees.

Next to Boston Common is Beacon Hill, with its European-like charm. The brick buildings, cobblestone streets, and

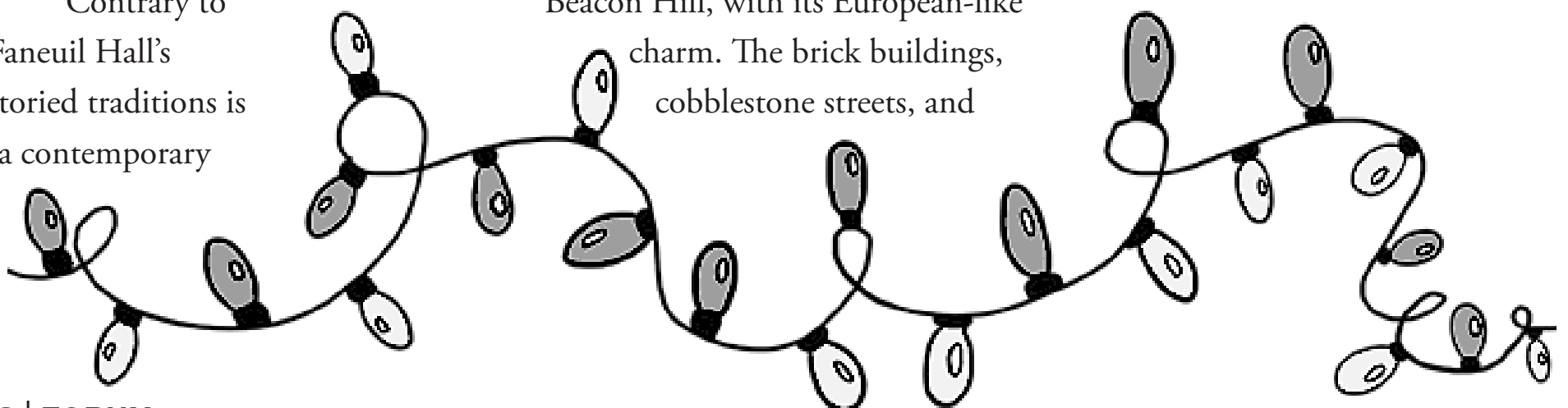
townhouses are picturesque all year but are even more enchanting in December. I love walking through narrow streets like Acorn Street, which showcase a welcome difference from the car-dependent wide roads we often find in the United States. It's easy to get lost with a hot chocolate in hand, feeling one with the environment.

Outside of Boston, walk through the streets of Somerville to explore some well-decorated homes. You can often find extravagant decor that includes stunning lights and animatronic characters. The Somerville Arts Council supports this effort with their Illuminations Tour, which allows you to follow self-guided tours through the neighborhood's best-decorated houses.

The great thing about many of these sites is that they are easily accessible by transportation from Harvard. Take the Red Line to Charles/MGH to experience Beacon Hill, or stay one stop further to Park Street for Boston Common. So if you're feeling stuck this school year with all of your work piling on, take a break and explore the city around you. Boston is more than ready to help you do just that.

**ROBERTO C. QUESADA '27  
(ROBERTOQUESADA@COLLEGE.  
HARVARD.EDU) HAS BEEN ALL  
AROUND BOSTON.**

**GRAPHIC BY ANNELISE FISHER '26**





# ARTS

## Sharing the Stage

A rundown of the joint Harvard-Yale arts performances.

BY MEENA BEHRINGER '27

The Game isn't the only event under the spotlight this weekend—off the football field, Harvard and Yale groups will take the stage with their respective counterparts for numerous music and art shows to celebrate creativity and rivalry alike. This weekend promises performances steeped in rich tradition alongside new artistic collaborations that highlight the camaraderie and school spirit The Game brings to both schools.

The Harvard-Yale Football Concert, a joint glee concert between the Harvard Glee Club, the Yale Glee Club, and the Radcliffe Choral Society, is a tradition that dates back to 1901, when the first joint concert made front page news on each campus. This year, the 123rd annual show will take place on Friday, Nov. 22 at 8 p.m. in Sanders Theatre. Each ensemble will showcase their own work, featuring a variety of songs and styles. The performance will end with the classic fight songs to bring an energizing spirit right ahead of the game.

The groups additionally play into the Harvard-Yale rivalry by light-heartedly pranking each other each year. “We try to keep it fresh, but we tend to hand out transfer applications to the audience members while the other [school] is singing their football medleys,” Yale senior Anya Aitshalia, President of the Yale Glee Club, revealed. They even used to throw items from the balcony, such as balloons.

Despite this rivalry, Aitshalia underscored how the concert emphasizes community between and within the schools. “It’s really fun to go to other campuses and just feel both united in our group, more because we’re in this together in a new space, but also to feel connections across the groups because that’s something that’s so nice about these joint concerts.” Many alums come back and are even invited up on stage, adding to the historic camaraderie. “It just feels like a real community and school pride event for both Harvard and Yale,” Aitshalia added.

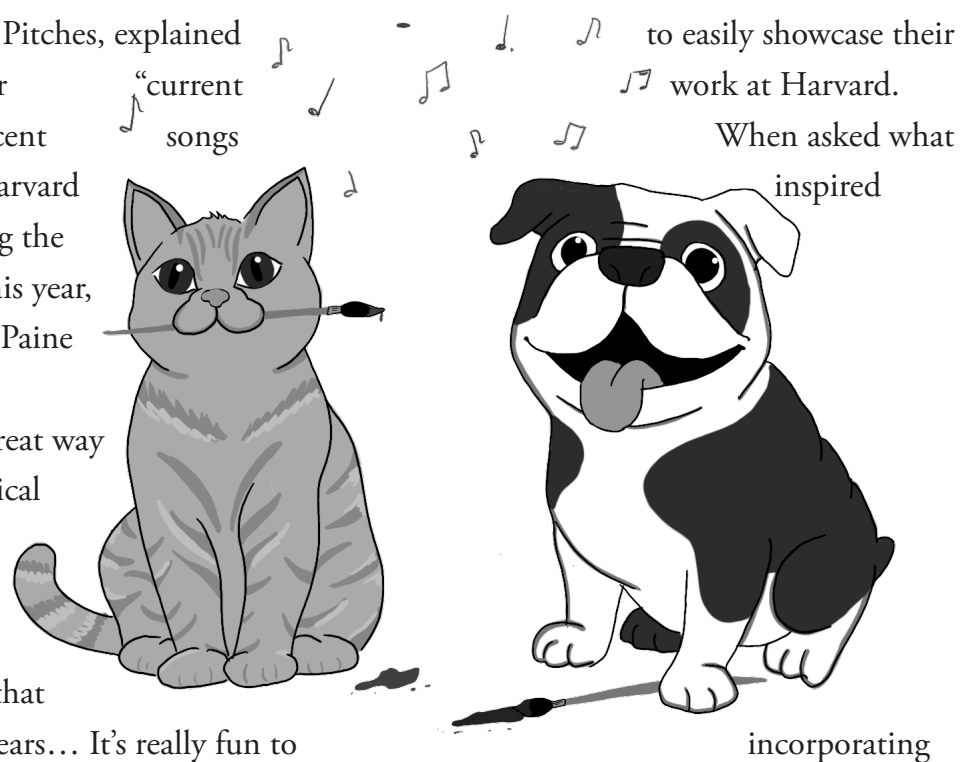
The Harvard-Yale Jam, a joint acapella group concert, is another tradition that echoes this sentiment of unity. Also taking place the evening of Nov. 22, the performance will bring together the Radcliffe Pitches, the Harvard Krokodiloes, the Yale Whiffenpoofs, and the Yale Whim N’ Rhythm. Grace Bida ’26,

President of the Radcliffe Pitches, explained that the groups share their takes on more popular recent as well as the historical Harvard and Yale music,” including the traditional fight songs. This year, the concert will return to Paine Hall.

“This has been a great way for these two really historical groups at each of the universities to come together [and] sing generally the same songs that they’ve been singing for years... It’s really fun to continue to come back year after year and see how the community has grown and changed,” Bida stated. Like the Harvard-Yale Glee Concert, alums often come back to perform on stage with the groups. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with a lot of familiar faces, both within our own acapella groups and other acapella groups,” she expressed.

New collaborations have also emerged alongside these historic traditions to further showcase the artistic talent of both schools. One such newer tradition is *Body and Soul*, the biennial Harvard vs. Yale Talent Show, which showcases Black talent and creativity from both schools. Hosted by The Kuumba Singers of Harvard College, the show will take place after the game on Saturday, Nov. 23, from 8 to 10 p.m. in Lowell Lecture Hall. The night promises a variety of acts, including music, spoken word, and dance, while simultaneously creating a shared space and community.

This weekend also anticipates the first-ever Harvard-Yale Art Gallery show, taking place on Nov. 22 from 6 to 10 p.m. in Winthrop House Library. Spearheaded by Katherrin Billordo ’26, the gallery seeks to bring together a variety of art from Yale and Harvard students alike through submissions of all mediums. In addition to art, the event will include food and music performances from Midnight Curfew, STRYK9, Friction and Flowers, and Sanjna. “The main, core goal of the show...is to bring people together and celebrate creativity, authenticity, and storytelling,” Billordo stated. Having experience organizing shows in the past, Billordo was inspired to create an inclusive space for artists



to easily showcase their work at Harvard. When asked what inspired

incorporating the Harvard-Yale game into the concept, Billordo stated that “collaboration and building relationships is just a part of why I do these shows,” which is exactly what the game provides. She added that doing the show during Harvard-Yale was also a natural logistical choice due to the “thousands of alumni [and] thousands of professors” present and Billordo’s own social connections to Yale. She hopes to make this an annual event, hopefully taking place at Yale next year. Dozens of diverse submissions from both schools will be featured in the gallery.

These performances capture the energetic spirit and camaraderie of the Harvard-Yale weekend while also showcasing the incredible artistic talent of each school.

**The Harvard-Yale Art Show:** Nov. 22 from 6 to 10 p.m. in Winthrop House Library

**The Harvard-Yale Football Concert:** Nov. 22 from 8 to 10 p.m. in Sanders Theatre

**The Harvard-Yale Jam:** Nov. 22, at 6 p.m. in Paine Hall

**Body and Soul:** Nov. 23 from 8 to 10 p.m. in Lowell Lecture Hall

**MEENA BEHRINGER '27**  
(MEENABEHRINGER@COLLEGE.  
HARVARD.EDU) WRITES ARTS FOR THE  
**INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27**

# Grief, Laughter, and Speed Bumps

An original play that explores loss and friendship with heart and unexpected humor.

BY LUCAS COHEN-D'ARBELOFF '27

*Speed Bumps, And Other Things Jesus Wouldn't Have Wanted*, is a raw, funny, and deeply human exploration of complex themes including grief, love, and friendship. Written by Matthew Cole '24 and directed by Ava Pallotta '25, the one-act play portrays the process of coping with loss with a real sense of empathy and authenticity. The show was performed on Nov. 17 at the Hasty Pudding Institute.

Featuring two casts in alternating performances, *Speed Bumps* centers on former high school friends Ethan (Will Jevon '27/Robbie Owen '25) and Tori (Anna Fitzsimmons '25/Tia KwanBock '25), reconnecting after spending years apart in college and grappling with the loss of their mutual friend Richard (nicknamed "Brick"). Ethan is taking a break from school after a serious injury, the result of a spectacularly reckless mishap involving speed bumps that led to a car crash. Tori is dealing with her own emotional baggage while home from Columbia, with aspirations of going to law school. Their conversation uncovers long-hidden secrets and honest confessions that challenge their perceptions of each other and their past.

Cole's script strikes a careful and effective balance between levity and pain. It's incredibly conversational and true to life, with a stream-of-consciousness realism that allows the show to find moments of humor in the darkest of places. The contrast between the two characters is clear, but they both struggle to allow themselves to be vulnerable in the face of tragedy. Ethan, in his aggressively sexual, self-deprecating banter, confronts his hurt with crude humor and boldness. Meanwhile, Tori tries to maintain a facade of academic ambition and control while grappling with her own inner turmoil.

*Speed Bumps* served as Cole's senior English thesis, and Pallotta became involved with the play after attending its initial reading. She connected deeply to the material, having lost her blockmate Luke Balstad '25 to suicide two years ago, which made the play's portrayal of grief particularly resonant for her.

"I felt that it was a very honest, raw, and accurate depiction of what it's like to grieve as a young person, and I really wanted to share that with as many people on campus as possible," Pallotta said.

Pallotta's choice to double-cast the production is insightful in appreciating that while grief is universal, each person's experience of it is entirely their own. She rehearsed with each pair of actors separately, and her direction and blocking for the two versions diverged slightly over the course of rehearsals. Pallotta further that vision during the process. She envisioned one cast as more comedic and as more ultimately, that the differences between the two were more complex and nuanced.

"I landed on finding it much more authentic to just have two different portrayals that were just true to the actors, their interpretations of the characters, and the time we spent reading through lines in rehearsals, as opposed to really stringent boundaries about what was funny or what was not funny," Pallotta said.

*Speed Bumps* starts with a lighter, more conversational tone, but as it progresses, it takes a more introspective and emotionally charged turn. Past betrayals are revealed, lies are unraveled, and the dialogue becomes increasingly combative. The humor is messier and more unpredictable—the kind of humor we recognize from our own lives. Assumptions that Ethan and Tori took for granted about each other and Brick start to crumble, and you can feel the tension build as it becomes unclear whether their relationship can be repaired.

Jevon noted that as he prepared to play Ethan, he spent time exploring these tougher moments and realized the

character's emotional journey was more complicated than he initially expected. "Playing the character for the first time, in a lot of the emotional scenes, you come in as an actor, and you think, 'Okay, I've got to cry and I've got to get tears out,'" Jevon said. Over time, though, he realized that Ethan's pain manifested in more subtle ways.

Staging the show at the Hasty Pudding gave it a personal feel, which reflected the confined, intimate space where the story takes place. Pallotta noted that "there was a very homey vibe to that space that was conducive to making audiences feel immersed in the conversation," adding, "There is something so special about just making art in places that feel so natural."

Beyond its exploration of personal grief, *Speed Bumps* gives audiences the space to engage in broader conversations about mental health in a compassionate and relatable way. Pallotta emphasized how she hoped the story would serve as a lens through which people could understand their own emotional journeys.

"I hope that by having people sit with these experiences of these two people grieving for an hour and 15 minutes, it would encourage them to not only humanize the conversation around grief, but it would allow for people to have conversations about mental health that didn't require people to be vulnerable as individuals," Pallotta said. "So you don't have to talk about your own experience with grief, but you can talk about how Tori and Ethan went through it."


**LUCAS COHEN-D'ARBELOFF '27 (LCOHENDARBELOFF@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES ARTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27**

# A Feast for the Senses

A review of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra in partnership with the Radcliffe Choral Society.


BY GAURI SOOD '26

 In the afternoon of Nov. 17, I entered the historic Symphony Hall in Boston and immediately reveled in my rich visual surroundings. Symphony Hall is adorned with the inscription of Beethoven's name high above the stage, three separate floors of seating, and sculptures of gods and goddesses that line the oval walls. Opened on Oct. 15, 1990, it has a rich history, with Harvard physics professor Wallace Clement Sabine even serving as an "acoustical consultant" to determine the precise measurements for the perfect sound—all before the hall even began construction. This performance was particularly special, as the Radcliffe Choral Society joined the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra.

At first sight, the packed hall's expansiveness and allure were enough to stir my excitement. World-renowned conductor and founder of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra Benjamin Zander acknowledged the hall's noteworthiness, exclaiming, "Thank goodness for this space. It's incredible, and what a privilege it is to play here." This remark was part of a pre-concert speech that Zander provided his audience with; an open-seated, free, and quite intimate conversation, in which he vividly prefaced each of the three pieces we would soon hear.

Zander's storytelling foreshadowed the next two hours of auditory perfection. His conversation with us, which took place for roughly 45 minutes, was deeply personal; he shared anecdotes, tidbits of musical wisdom, and even riffed melodies on the piano he stood at. When detailing each piece and its relevant movements, he provided carefully chosen descriptions of the composition's style and history alongside factoids about its composers and its political relevance. Such a speech was highly effective in harnessing the attention of the audience—the buy-in was palpable, with heavy, heartfelt laughter after all his jokes and respectful silences held for his personal quips.

The first two performances were Chacony in G. Minor by Henry Purcell, arranged by Benjamin Britten—a seven-minute, strings-only, gentle introduction into the Hall's orchestral sound—and Concerto in E Minor for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 85, by Edward Elgar, featuring internationally recognized cello soloist Alexander Baillie. The third performance was English composer Gustav Holst's infamous, seven-part work titled *The Planets*.

 *The Planets* was personal to Zander: not only did he conduct Holst's piece, but he also studied under Imogen Holst, Gustav Holst's talented daughter. Beyond this legendary mentorship, Zander's own impact in the field of classical music is innumerable. Beginning his career as a cellist and composer, he came to Boston

in 1965, founded the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra in 1978, and then founded the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra in 2012.

Gregory Vitale, the Philharmonic Orchestra's concertmaster, has had "the experience of sitting in the hot seat," working as close to Zander as physically possible through the integral role of concertmaster, he recalled in an interview with the *Independent*. Vitale outlined his responsibility as concertmaster, describing it as "a position that's steeped in heavy tradition...the right-hand person, next to the conductor." The concertmaster's job, put simply, is to interpret what the conductor directs for the rest of the orchestra.

But Vitale's experience working firsthand with Zander began much earlier than his position as the orchestral lead. He has had the unique perspective of knowing Zander from over four decades ago. "I've known Ben for most of my life because I played in his youth orchestra," said Vitale, who was a student musician at the time. He mentioned that the Youth Philharmonic Orchestra "was called different names over time, and affiliated [then] with the New England Conservatory."

Vitale, a member of several other prestigious orchestras, said that playing in the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, specifically under the direction of Zander, is an extraordinary experience. Zander's curation of the orchestra includes three groups of musicians: professional unionized players, talented conservatory or college students, and enthusiastic volunteers. Such a composition of musicians, beyond solely professionals, is unheard of in orchestras of this caliber; yet, it bodes for a strong orchestral loyalty, mentorship between more and less experienced players, and a "hybrid of musical abilities," said Vitale.

Most unique of all, Zander's leadership style is the cherry on top of his tight-knit orchestra. "We're there because we want to make music with Ben. He's incredibly inspirational, very sensitive, and he wants to govern through consensus," described Vitale. Zander follows an interesting method of feedback collection, and from Vitale's experience across orchestral groups, one unlike any other renowned conductor. "At every rehearsal, we have these blank sheets of paper—the 'white sheets'—which are for anybody to write constructive comments or criticism," he said. "He tries to open the music-making process to everyone's ideas...he will reply or respond to everything."

Zander's incomparable expertise shone through in all three works of the afternoon, transporting eager listeners to another universe. He explained Holst's interest in the planets as heavenly bodies, not so much as scientific phenomena. "He wasn't interested in outer space. He was interested in inner space, with astrology," described Zander. "He taught himself astrology and learned to love it." Though Zander explained that parts of *The Planets* have been used to visually accompany various space-related cinematography, Holst was inspired by the archetypes of the planets, and Zander then categorized each one.

Mars was the first movement of the seven. Zander recounted a comical story when describing its dissonant, barbaric sound. When Holst first composed

this movement, his landlady heard him playing the piece on his piano and told him it was horribly ugly. "Holst said, 'War is also ugly. Ugly, and also grand,'" said Zander, describing that Holst then declared, "That is the way I hear it, and that is the way I must write it."

Venus is harmony and artisticness; Mercury, the winged messenger; and then, the most prominent and celebrated movement, Jupiter. The swell of Jupiter's central and infamous melody, when all the strings transition from a variety of twinklings and harmonies to one sudden, singular sound, was unifying for both the extraordinary players and the now restless audience. Two thousand breaths suddenly became one, syncing with the renowned, coalescent progression of Jupiter's main refrain, swelling into finality.

"It represents nobility," said Zander, regarding Jupiter. "The best that we expect from our leaders and politics, commanding a vast empire." The loud finality that Jupiter ends with is ultimately illusory; it is immediately followed by the regretful, wisdom-filled Saturn, in all its adagio glory, inching its way forward.

Neptune, the ultimate movement, held a special place in the hearts of any Harvard affiliates in the crowd, as it was accompanied by the haunting, siren-like voices of the Radcliffe Choral Society. The Radcliffe Choral Society (RCS) is the soprano and alto chorus of the three Harvard Choruses, alongside the Harvard Glee Club, a tenor and bass chorus, and the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, a mixed voices chorus.

Linda Ye '28, a member and acappella conductor for the RCS, spoke highly of the partnership between the RCS and the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. "We're always so excited for the performance opportunities," said Ye. "The opportunity to be backstage at Boston Symphony Hall was such an incredible experience."

Under new leadership this year, the RCS has had a full season of performances. In fact, it's a choral group on campus that seems to have something for everyone involved—course credit, nonprofit organizational status, and student leadership through learning to manage an arts organization in collaboration with the boards of the other Harvard Choruses. Ye excitedly described her enjoyable experience as part of the organization thus far and its most salient qualities of community and inclusivity across a variety of vocal levels.

The Harvard Chorus brought us to Neptune, the final segment, where they unite with the orchestra in a powerful collaboration. Behind the closed doors of the third-floor balcony, they sang from an invisible nowhere, beckoning the audience to look beyond the visible universe. We craned our necks to hear their "exercise in pianissimo," as Zander described it, and when we heard it, chills went down our spines.

*The Planets* was incontestably the highlight, or rather, the star, of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and Radcliffe Choral Society show.

**GAURI SOOD '26 (GAURISOOD@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) CAN'T STOP LISTENING TO THE PLANETS WHILE STUDYING. SHE URGES YOU TO ATTEND AN ORCHESTRAL EVENT IN BOSTON—THE BOSTON BALLET ORCHESTRA AT THE NUTCRACKER IS AN UPCOMING HOLIDAY FAVORITE.**

GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26

# Harvard Ballet Company's New Dawn

Harvard Ballet Company puts its fall production on the Loeb Mainstage.

BY SOPHIE DAUER '27

Exhibiting a dazzling combination of classical technique, graceful movements, and modern flair, the Harvard Ballet Company's (HBC) fall production left the entire audience in complete awe. On Nov. 16 and 17, HBC ran two of their four performances of *Dawn* at the Loeb Drama Center, where the ballet dancers displayed the hard work and talent poured into the student-run show. The final two performances are on Nov. 21 and 22.

According to the HBC, *Dawn* is "defined as 'the beginning of a phenomenon or period of time, especially one considered favorable.'" With this underlying thread, the performance highlighted the growth and renewal of HBC. According to co-director Paytom Thompson '25, last spring's HBC production was smaller than what the board and dancers had hoped for, but this semester, the company was able to obtain a larger theater space and revamp many of the ways its team is run. According to Thompson, this show represented "the rebirth of Harvard Ballet Company," with the theme of dawn being "representative of the trajectory of the company."

Preparation for the event began in June, when Thompson and her co-director Sedina Ackuayi '25 brainstormed ideas on the use of professional choreographers, themes, tech, and publicity. Once the semester started, Thompson and Ackuayi met with the student choreographers, who employed their own creative visions to create the pieces brought to light at the show. Student choreographer Maya Shiloni '26 reflected on her time working on the project: "This is the first time I have choreographed at Harvard, and it has been such a great experience. All the dancers are so talented and hardworking, making it easy to make a great piece with very little work."

The resulting production consisted of thirteen pieces, displaying a mixture of contemporary elements and classical works. The opening piece, "Variations de Joie," choreographed by American School of Ballet Teacher Charles McDaniel, employed a classical technique, intended to serve as "a celebration of the beauty of classical music and movement," the program read. Next came "Poised," a piece choreographed by Talia

DeLeo '25 that involved themes of girlhood, womanhood, strength, and frustration. One bit that I most enjoyed was "A Red Dawn," choreographed by Maya Shiloni '26. A duet, this part of the show was more intimate and intense, displaying a story of "coming together, even in the darkest of times."

A major highlight of the production, both from the perspective of the audience and the production team, was the final piece: an excerpt from "Stars and Stripes," initially created by renowned Russian choreographer George Balanchine. Known as the founder of American ballet, Balanchine choreographed the piece in 1958 as a commemoration of American values and community. Although Balanchine passed away in 1983, his iconic works continue to be performed regularly.

Incorporating this work into *Dawn* was no small feat: all Balanchine ballets are owned by the George Balanchine Trust company and require licensing to perform. HBC collaborated with the trust and worked with a professional instructor who taught the piece to all dancers involved in the number. Renting costumes from Ballet West, Harvard Ballet executed the piece as Balanchine intended.

According to Thompson, working with the Balanchine Trust was one of the most rewarding parts of serving as director. "This ballet is a really unique experience and not something that's...I think ever been done by a student group at Harvard," Thompson commented.

As someone with limited experience watching ballet, I found the show to be incredibly beautiful. One aspect that most struck me was the diversity of emotion and style displayed in each piece. While some works were slower and softer, others were more dark and fierce. The costume design and lighting choices also added to my viewing experience, with different performances presenting distinct looks. Dancers were dressed in outfits ranging from butter yellow leotards and navy blue mesh ensembles to all-black catsuits, with a mixture of simple backdrops and blaring strobe lights behind them.

Thompson reflected on her role as both a dancer and director: "Prior to college, I had never held an administrative role in any of my ballet schools or companies...and it can

get a little stressful, for sure, because not only am I worrying about myself and my own dancing, but I'm also worrying about everyone else in the production."

Although the position was quite demanding, it was also extremely satisfying and exciting to

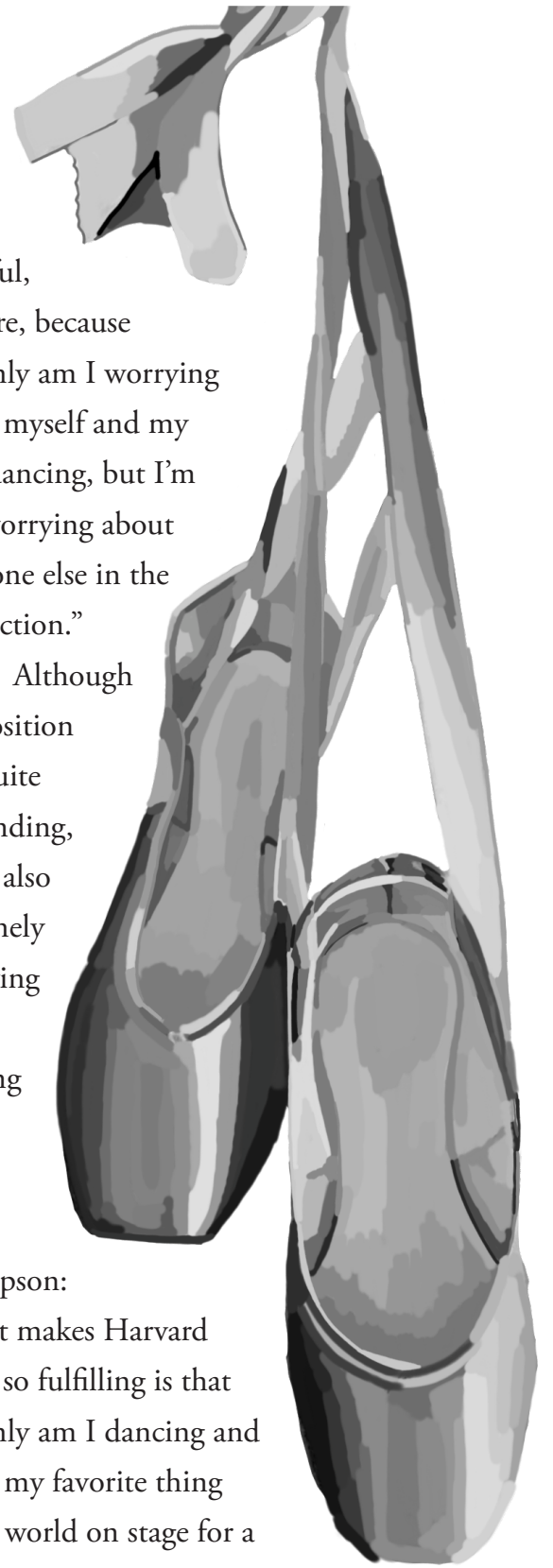
Thompson:

"What makes Harvard Ballet so fulfilling is that not only am I dancing and doing my favorite thing in the world on stage for a huge audience, but I also know that I had such an integral part in making the production happen and that I'm contributing to something that's much bigger than just myself...and I think that's a really special thing that you don't usually get to experience in your life as a pre-professional ballet dancer," she stated.

The 16 executive board members and 51 company dancers composing this season's HBC did an inspiring job at bringing the vision of *Dawn* to life. The creativity, dedication, and hard work of all individuals involved culminated in a production emulating elegance, vitality, and passion, and I eagerly look forward to HBC's future performances.

**SOPHIE DAUER '27 (SOPHIEDAUER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES ARTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT.**

**GRAPHIC BY EL RICHARDS '26**



# Glam, Glitter, and Grit

Inside of Adams House's 2024 Drag Night.

BY FRIDA LÓPEZ '27

Full glam, colorful dresses, fake beards, and a unique sense of liberty: this is Adams Drag Night, the signature annual event of Adams House. Every year, Adams House transforms into a place where creativity flows everywhere, gender limits dissolve, and everyone expresses themselves freely without fear of judgment.

On Nov. 15, the tradition returned. Student performers, professional drag queens, and a packed crowd in the Adams Oaktel united to deliver the most magical night of the year. The atmosphere at the event was vibrant, and the vibe was a unique feeling of freedom, showcasing drag performances where nearly everyone, even the spectators, was dressed in drag.

In the 1980s, before housing assignments became randomized, Adams House was home to many students of color and queer students on campus. A crucial moment in the history of Adams House occurred when a gay student, an Adams House resident, was attacked by another student on campus. Enraged, the Adams House community felt the drive to fight back against hate and came together to throw a drag ball, supporting their queer peers and

protesting the hatred.

"The drag night has a particular meaning to many of us: the rights of the queer community that have been fought for and won by drag queens and trans people throughout their history," said a drag version of John and Abigail Adams to the audience at the beginning of the event while explaining the importance of this event for the queer community at Harvard. Then they introduced the presenters for the night: Gigi Glam and Kori King, professional drag queens who delivered energetic and stunning performances throughout the event.

The night was filled with exciting acts from both students and professional drag queens. Amazed and delighted by each unique display, the audience brought incredible energy. One performance saw a drag Wonder Woman as the protagonist, appearing from the back of the room and dancing her way to the stage to the sound of "Man! I Feel Like a Woman" by Shania Twain. The crowd cheered and went crazy at every move. Then, a duo dressed as the Fairly Oddparents appeared on the stage with colorful makeup, high heels, and well-produced outfits to sensually dance to the rhythm of "Promiscuous" by Nelly Furtado and Timbaland. The dance was provocative and fun, and the crowd cheered and gasped at the performance.

Another performance of the night was delivered by two seniors, Victor Arruda '25 and Camilo Vasconcelos '25, who both dressed as Charli XCX with full drag makeup. They started dancing to the rhythm of "Girl So Confusing" followed by a music shift mid-performance to add what they called "some Brazilian flavor," and "Movimento da

Sinfonia" by Anitta started playing.

"It's a really fun and great opportunity for people to express themselves and just have fun among friends," said Arruda. "I'm really glad that I got to be part of this before the end of my senior year. If I could, I'd do it again."

Arruda also emphasized the inclusive spirit of the event. "Drag is for everybody. Regardless of your sexuality, regardless of your gender identity, come express yourself—it's fun!" For Vasconcelos, Drag Night offered a feeling of liberation.

"It's great to be in spaces where you can be celebrated and do whatever you like. Express yourself; it's always worth it."

For many, drag is more than just a performance—it's an art form and a source of pure happiness. As Kori King expressed, "Drag is an art form, and whatever you want to portray. It's a great way to express that."

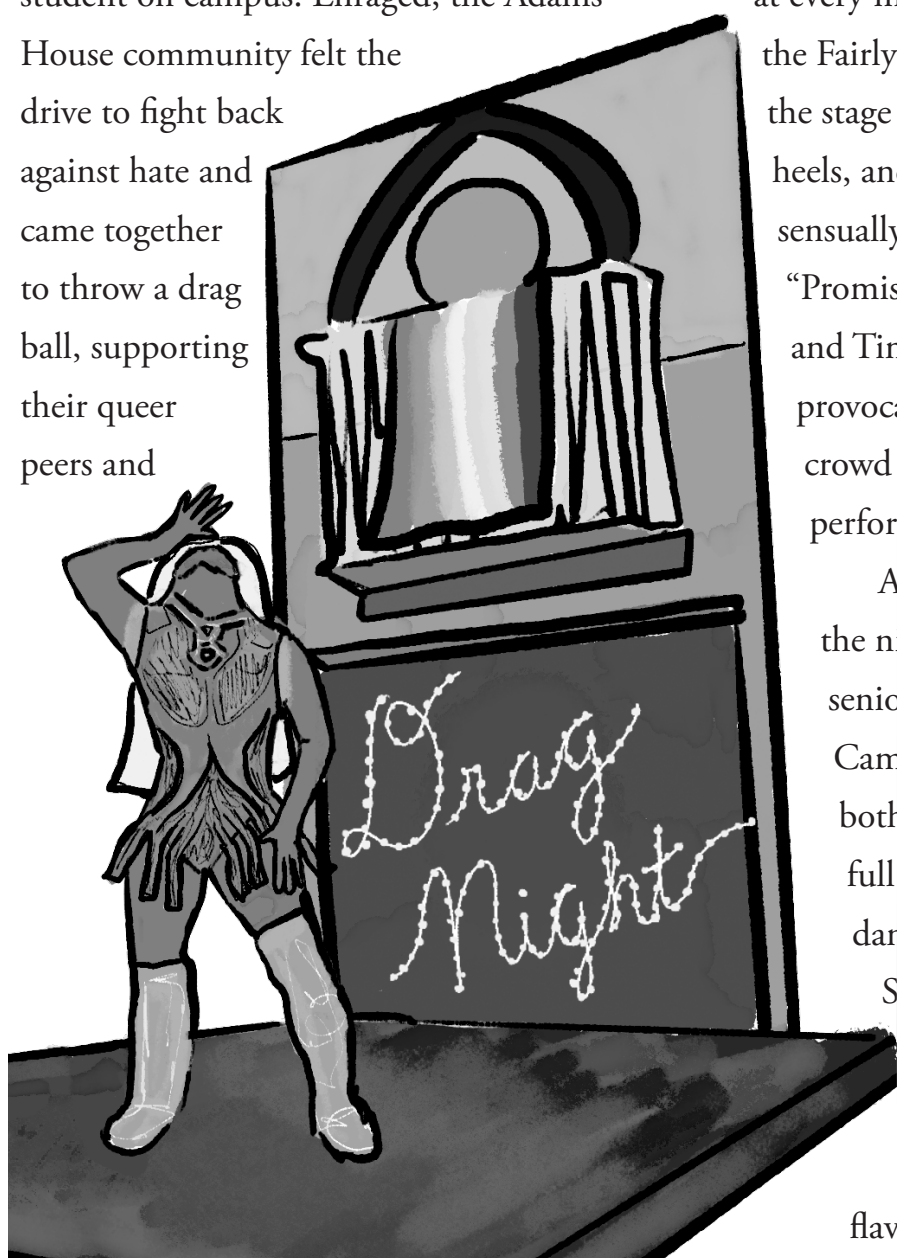
Gigi Glam, her partner in crime, sees drag as transformative. "When you get in drag, there's this feeling of pure happiness that I don't think you can feel in any other thing that you can do."

Gigi's message to everyone? "Perform and have fun, life is about having fun."

Adams Drag Night this year continued to be not just a space for resistance, but also a vibrant celebration of creativity and freedom. From its origins in protest to its evolution into a joyful expression of individuality, the event remains a cherished tradition where participants can fully embrace their true selves.

**FRIDA LÓPEZ '27  
(FRIDALOPEZBRAVO@COLLEGE.  
HARVARD.EDU) IS TRYING TO  
CONVINCE HER FRIENDS TO  
PERFORM WITH HER AT THE  
ADAMS DRAG NIGHT NEXT YEAR.**

**GRAPHIC BY CHRISTIE BECKLEY  
'27**



# SPORTS

## The Game: A Storied Legacy

Steeped in history, the Harvard-Yale game is one of the oldest collegiate athletic events.

BY RANIA JONES '27

/// It's *The Game*, Rory," Paris says to Rory in anguish, across a Yale dining hall table.

Rory Gilmore, a Yale student who is unfamiliar with the Harvard-Yale game, attends The Game with the Gilmore family in "Ted Koppel's Big Night Out"—Season 4, Episode 9 of the series *Gilmore Girls*.

Richard and Emily Gilmore, Rory's grandparents, have attended The Game every year for more than thirty years. The Gilmores participate in a handful of pre-game rituals and traditions, including delivering a toast in front of Yale's mascot, the bulldog Handsome Dan, tailgating with alumni, and singing the Yale Fight Song, "Bulldog."

While no winner is revealed in the fictional depiction of The Game, the episode aired at roughly the same time as the actual game was played at Yale in 2003. Yale lost the 2003 game 37-19. Perhaps Rory should have taken Yale's loss as a sign—sometimes, even the most deep-seated traditions can't outweigh the wrong choice. If Rory had picked Harvard, she'd at least have been cheering for a winner.

While Harvard and Yale students generally tend to duke it out in the academic arena, once a year we take the rivalry to the football field. The Harvard-Yale football rivalry, known as "The Game," is the second-oldest college football rivalry in the United States. The matchup is considered the most important and anticipated game of the year for both teams.

The Game is played each year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving day, with the host site rotating each year between the Yale Bowl and Harvard Stadium. This year, the 140th playing of The Game will be hosted on Nov. 23 at Harvard Stadium. When Harvard and Yale played in 2023, it marked The Game's 139th all-time meeting, where Yale defeated Harvard 23-18. As of the current record, Yale leads the series 70-61-8.

This football rivalry is among the most admired rivalries on the American athletic scene: many dream of attending as a spectator, let alone as a student. As a rivalry nearly a century-and-a-half old, it's no surprise that The Game maintains such a storied legacy.

Notable past attendees of The Game include U.S. Presidents Teddy Roosevelt and William Howard Taft (1914), baseball legend and Crimson fan Babe Ruth (1932), U.S. President and assistant coach for Yale Gerald Ford (1935), and U.S. President John F. Kennedy Jr. who watched his brother Ted Kennedy score for the Crimson on the field (1955).

### 1875: The First Game

The first Harvard-Yale football game was held in New Haven, Connecticut in 1875. In contrast to what American football looks like today, the style of the game then resembled more of a mixture of rugby and soccer, with 15 athletes on each team. Roughly 2,500 fans observed the first match-up, and tickets were roughly 50 cents, starkly contrasting to The Game's modern ticket price. Harvard won this inaugural meeting 4-0.

After the game, Harvard students were arrested in New Haven under the charges of "hooting and hollering in the streets." Each student was fined \$5.29, 14 | SPORTS equivalent to roughly \$114 today.

### 1894: The Blood Bath

This game was known for the violence that broke out between the two schools with nine Harvard and Yale football players being removed from the game, either due to injury or to fighting with the opposing team. Expectedly, both schools blamed each other for the violence and didn't play each other again until 1897. In late 1905, representatives from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton were summoned to the White House by Theodore Roosevelt to discuss reforms to mitigate unnecessarily violent, unsportsmanlike play and minimize resultant fatalities and injuries in football.

### 1898: The Dubbing

In 1898, the term "The Game" was coined to describe the annual matchup. The former Harvard football captain A.F Holden wrote in a letter that the match-up makes "the Yale-Harvard game the game of the season."

### 1934: Bye, Bye Handsome Dan

On the eve of The Game's 53rd playing, Handsome Dan II, Yale's mascot, was dognapped by a group of Harvard students. Morning newspapers captured a photo of Handsome Dan at the feet of John Harvard's statue. In a 1950 article published by *The Harvard Crimson*, Handsome Dan is seen licking the statue's feet after being lured with hamburger grease. The mascot had been the victim of the same crime earlier that year. *The New York Times* even ran an article on March 16, 1934, detailing the first kidnapping. The Bulldogs that year began a three-year winning streak, after defeating Harvard 14-0.

### 1968: Harvard's Remarkable Comeback

The 85th playing of The Game resulted in a 29-29 tie after a Crimson miracle. In 1968, Yale entered The Game leading with a 16-game win streak. After leading for most of the game, the Bulldogs were up 29-13 with two minutes remaining. However, in the final 42 seconds, Harvard scored two touchdowns and made two two-point conversions, leaving the game tied. The following morning, *The Harvard Crimson* published the now-infamous headline "Harvard Beats Yale 29-29." William M. "Bill" Kutik '70, a *Crimson* editor in 1968, told the newspaper that even if the headline wasn't necessarily accurate, it "captured the emotional sense of the game."

### 2004: "We Suck"

A historic component of the Harvard-Yale rivalry is pranks. In 2004, Yale students Michael Kai and David Aulicino posed with other students as the Harvard Pep Squad, running up and down the stadium to pass out red and white construction paper to Harvard fans who graciously thought they were going to help spell "Go Harvard" when raised in the air. However, Kai and Aulicino's papers actually spelled out "We Suck" in the Harvard crowd. The prank proceeded to garner national attention from Jimmy Kimmel Live, MSNBC, and

more. Nonetheless, Harvard, led by quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick, crushed Yale 35-3.

### 2005: Triple Over-Time

In 2005, The Game saw the first triple-overtime game in Ivy League history for the historic rivalry. While Yale led 21-3 through the third quarter, Harvard rallied, forcing the game into overtime. The teams went scoreless before running back Clifton Dawson ran in for the game-winning touchdown for Harvard. The game lasted almost an astounding four hours.

### 2018: Fenway Park

For the first time since 1894, The Game was held at a neutral site, Fenway Park in Boston. The Game, at the home of the Boston Red Sox, saw the highest combined scoring output in its history, with Harvard winning 45-27.

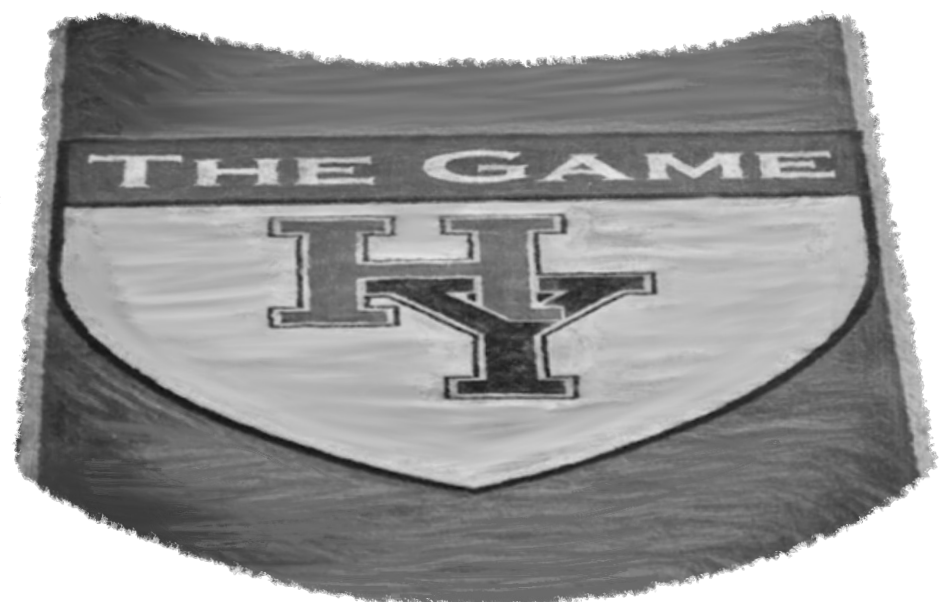
### 2019: "Nobody Wins" Protest

As The Game's halftime show ended, 150 people flocked onto the field at the Yale Bowl, demanding that Harvard and Yale divest from fossil fuels, private prisons, and Puerto Rican debt. The banners they held read "Nobody Wins: Yale and Harvard are Complicit in Climate Injustice," "President Bacow and Salovey: Our Future Demands Action Now" and "This is an Emergency." The Yale and New Haven police departments urged the protesters to leave the field, with most exiting after half an hour. A small number, though, were arrested. The then-Harvard football captain Wesley Ogsbury '19 supported the protest in a video statement posted afterward. U.S. Democratic presidential candidates Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Julian Castro congratulated the protestors via Twitter. The Game went into overtime, culminating in a victory for the Bulldogs.

The Game transcends mere athletic competition. Instead, it's an all-encompassing tapestry woven with a rich history of tradition and moments that define the essence of our beloved collegiate rivalry. From its modest beginnings in 1875 to its modern-day spectacle, The Game captures the spirit of Harvard and Yale, not just on the football field but in their shared history and rivalry.

**RANIA JONES '27 (RJONES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WOULD LOVE TO STEAL HANDSOME DAN FOR THE DAY.**

**GRAPHIC BY ANNELISE FISHER '26**



# The Game Beyond the Gridiron

A recap of the previous Harvard-Yale matchups across other sports.

BY VINCENT HONRUBIA '27

The Game is finally upon us, or at least the American football version. While many will consider this the most important and anticipated game of the year for both schools, this is just one installment of the many matchups between the two rivals thus far. From the track to the ice and beyond, our Harvard Crimson teams have been battling it out with the Bulldogs from New Haven all semester long. From recent victories to upcoming matchups, here's a quick roundup of the latest updates in the Harvard-Yale rivalry as we anticipate this Saturday's epic clash.

## Soccer

If the European version of football is anything to go by, this weekend will be one to celebrate, as both our men's and women's teams dominated the Dogs in New Haven and Cambridge, respectively.

Women's soccer had a season to be proud of, including ties against ranked teams No. 20 Pepperdine and No. 10 Santa Clara. Their 3-1 home victory against Yale was one of the season's standout moments, as they sent the Bulldogs back to New Haven with their tails between their legs. Coming back from 1-0 down early in the match, goals from Lauren Muniz '28, Josefine Hasbo '25, and Aslaug Gunnlaugsdóttir '25 secured a massive win in the final regular season game of the year, clinching the final spot in the Ivy League Tournament.

As for the men's side, our Norwegian number nine Nicholas Nyquist '26, was the sole scorer in a hard-fought 1-0 victory at Yale. A fixture that saw goalkeeper Lucian Wood '26 get his first clean sheet of the season as a brave defensive effort topped by Nyquist's second career goal was enough to send the Crimson back to Cambridge with three points towards the Ivy League table.

## Field Hockey

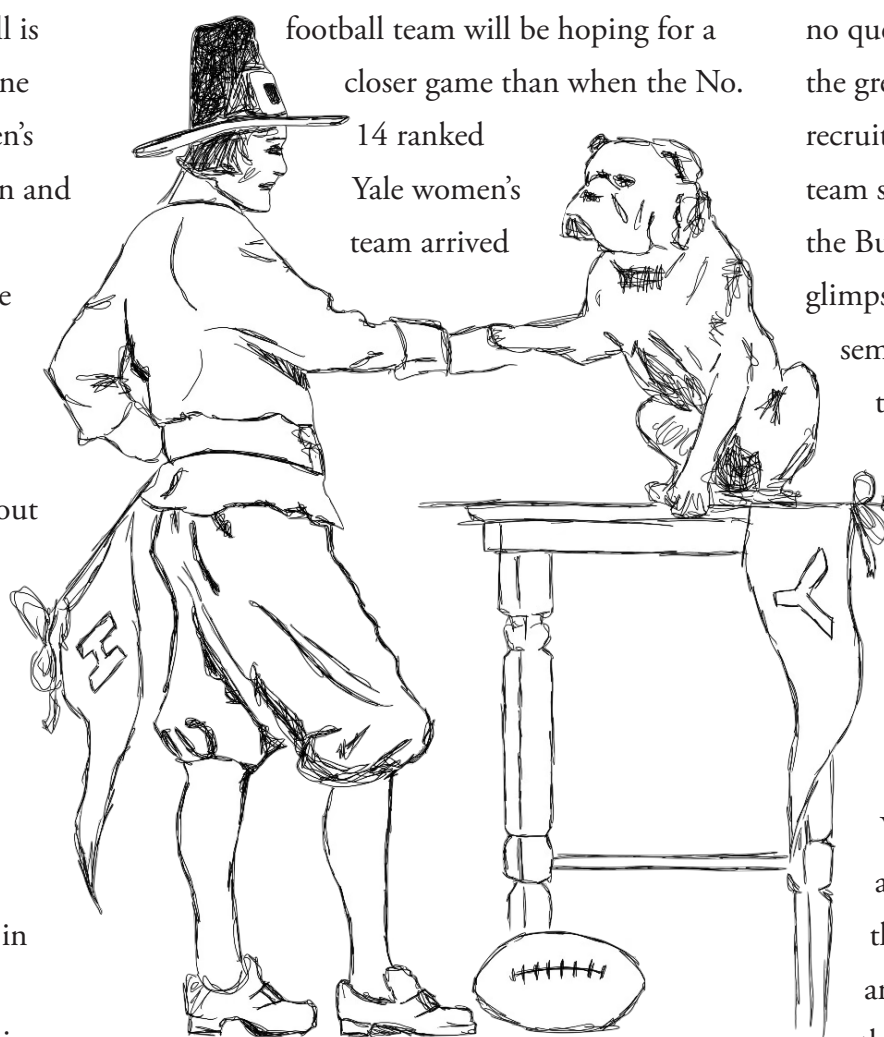
Ivy League champions and the currently ranked No. 10 team in the nation, women's field hockey put Ivy League conference contenders Yale in their place with a dominating 3-1 victory back in early October. A comfortable first half led by Associate Sports Editor Kate Oliver '26 was followed by a flurry of second-half scores

by Lara Beekhuis '27 and Lucy Leel '25. The Bulldogs scraped one back in garbage time, but it was simply not enough to take down the best field hockey team in the Ivy League. Interestingly, every scorer of the day ended up receiving All-Ivy League status at the end of the season. Our big game players showed up when we needed it, and because of them, the team was able to reach the elite eight of the NCAA tournament and were just one win away from matching the program's single-season win record.

## Ice Hockey

Clearly, being all the way south down in Connecticut isn't helping Yale on the ice. Their

football team will be hoping for a closer game than when the No. 14 ranked Yale women's team arrived



in Cambridge and were rolled 5-1 in quite a dramatic fashion. Five goals from five different Harvard skaters during the game will hopefully bolster a solid second half of the season for our Crimson team. With lots still to play for, including the Beanpot in mid-January, the destruction of Yale will help ease the growing pains of the slightly rocky start to the season.

On the men's side, it looks like more of the same will likely ensue. The team had a strong start to their season, getting positive results against their two ranked opponents thus far, beating No. 15 Quinnipiac and impressively tying no. 3 BU. The men are currently ranked No. 20 in the country, while the Yale team is absent. After what was undoubtedly a

disappointing season last year, there now appears to be a genuine sense of belief within the team. Breakthrough recruits in the Class of 2028 and tactical changes to the already star-studded roster have drastically transformed the team for the better. We'll be looking forward to another 5-1 routing of Yale at Bright-Landry come Jan. 11.

## Golf

The Yale men's golf team has had the unfortunate honor of losing every single course against the Crimson this year. With our men's team placing above the Bulldogs in 3/3 tournaments so far, punctuated by a first-place finish in the recent Glen Arbor Invite, there is no question about who has the upper hand on the green. First-year William Ma '28, a blue-chip recruit from San Diego, has largely propelled the team since his arrival and is one of the reasons the Bulldogs have only been able to catch a glimpse of the backside of the Crimson this semester. Ma has consistently been among the top 3 Harvard scorers, with his best performance claiming second place in the field with three under par at Glen Arbor. It's been more of the same for the women's team. Harvard claimed second place at the Nittany Lion Invitational, narrowly losing out to Princeton overall. Yale pathetically finished 5th. We can only assume the Bulldogs were terrified after this loss and have refused to participate in any other courses against the Crimson since then.

We have dominated the dogs on all surfaces, and this weekend should be no different. While the game is always a fantastic display of Crimson pride, to truly compete at the next level as an athletic university, every Harvard-Yale matchup in every sport should be a sold-out spectacle as our teams need our support to succeed. If you take anything away from this article, just remember that this year, like every year, is a great time to not live in New Haven. We've already beaten Yale so many times and in so many ways. What's one more game?

VINCENT HONRUBIA '27  
(VINCENTHONRUBIA@COLLEGE.  
HARVARD.EDU) WRITES SPORTS FOR  
THE INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY REEVE SYKES '26  
SPORTS | 15

# Sports Spotlight: Leo Li

A glimpse into the life of Harvard football's newest walk-on.

BY SARA KUMAR '27

Collegiate sports are a true testament to athletic ability and lifelong dedication to a singular sport. Summer training camps, recruiting events, and highlight reels are an arduous reality for many American teenagers set on actualizing their dreams of receiving a D1 offer. However, raised in Beijing, immersed in a completely different environment than that of field goals and touchdowns, Leo Li '27 experienced a unique journey to becoming one of Harvard football's tight ends.

Growing up playing basketball, frisbee, and the occasional game of flag football, Li had a natural proclivity for sports. Once arriving at Harvard, he knew he wanted to continue his engagement with athletics and joined the club basketball

team. However, while Li found this a "great experience," he became increasingly attracted to varsity athletics after growing close with his first-year neighbor and now-teammate Jack Crowley '27.

From the on-campus season excitement to the national appreciation for Sunday Night Football, Li realized that, instead of furthering his club career in basketball, he wanted to try to walk on to the Harvard football team. Reflecting, he stated, "Playing a collegiate sport at a very high level is something that I always really wanted. And football is one of the sports that, not only do I love, it's also something that I aspire to do."

In addition to his passion for football, Li's choice to transition out of basketball was also based on pragmatism. "The basketball team is extremely small. So all their recruits are... super central to the team," he commented. "They have a very small roster. Whereas in football, they have a very large roster... I could probably walk on as a backup player."

Li reached out to the head coach through Crowley to learn more about how to initiate the walk-on process. While the coach was incredibly receptive, time constraints

and busy schedules pushed Li's evaluation to the weeks following his first-year summer. "I had to work really hard over the summer," he said.

While acquainting himself with such a technical sport in just a few months was a daunting task, Li got a trainer, started lifting multiple times a week, and engrossed himself in the fundamentals of the game. By August, Head



Coach Andrew Aurich recognized the tremendous growth he made in such a short period of time and welcomed him to the team with a "clean slate" and voiced that both he and the team "expect[ed] [Li] to commit to football."

Since joining Harvard's football team, Li's lifestyle has drastically changed. "Football is such a huge and insane time commitment," he noted.

Weekly practice starts on Tuesdays during the season, where Li has to be at the athletic center by 6 a.m. for lift. Later in the afternoon, he returns for a playbook strategy meeting and then practice to follow. Wednesdays and Thursdays follow a similar schedule, just without lift. Structured around their games, Friday and Saturday are typically entire days of practice and playing time. After Sunday lift, the football team finally has a break on Monday. While the off-season is not nearly as strenuous, according to Li, there are still lift programs football athletes must adhere to four times a week and break training camps that ensure every player is staying in shape.

In comparison to his flexible schedule and free time during freshman year, Li must now plan everything in advance. When thinking about how he manages everything from deadlines

to his social calendar, Li stated, "You have to be really rigorous and have a really good system in place." Regardless, the rigorous practice schedule has been conducive to Li's growth as a player and person.

Even off the field, the time commitment remains persistent. Li mentioned that, "Football is a very physically demanding sport. I personally think the logistics and strategy of football is harder than any class I've ever taken." Between memorizing plays to understanding the more technical aspects of the game, there is a tremendous amount of work that continues beyond the turf. Li often jokes with his friends that, "Football is harder than multivariable calculus."

Nonetheless, to Li, there is power in the group effort behind every mandatory practice, morning lift, training camp, and team dinner. Li believes that "hanging out with these people will make me better too" when thinking about the discipline football has taught him.

Community has remained a huge value of Li's, even in the face of these drastic social and scheduling changes. Within football, Li has found a micro-community among his fellow tight-ends. And apart from the field, Li still prioritizes making time for his other friends. "I don't want to use football as an excuse," he said.

Though only part of the team for a few months, Li explained that "the most rewarding part is just to see yourself make progress." Something as seemingly subtle as being able to call out the plays when the quarterback signals them resonates with Li as someone who just a year ago knew little about what playing for a collegiate football team meant.

Looking ahead, Li hopes to continue to improve his skill set. "Football is definitely a challenge," he confessed. However, he is excited to improve his mental tenacity, continue to lift more and more, and eventually climb up the tight-end roster.

**SARA KUMAR '27 (SJKUMAR@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) RECENTLY LEARNED THAT A TOUCHDOWN IS ONLY WORTH SIX, NOT SEVEN, POINTS.**

**PHOTO COURTESY OF HARVARD ATHLETICS**



# Sports Spotlight: Aku Koskenvuo

Harvard's Finnish goaltender takes center stage in the 2024-2025 season.

BY JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27

I've watched every Harvard Hockey game since I got to Harvard. I've heard the call "Save by Koskenvuo!" a thousand times, and I might hear it a thousand more before we even get to Thanksgiving. The 6'4" junior has played like a possessed man to start the season, boasting a .916 save percentage in five games, including a shutout against #19 Quinnipiac, after which he was named MAC Goaltending ECAC Goaltender of the Week, and an impressive .923 against #6 Cornell.

Hailing from Espoo, Finland, Aku Koskenvuo '26 has been playing hockey since he was four years old. Before coming to Cambridge, Koskenvuo played for multiple levels of the Finnish National Team, starting at U-16 and working his way up to U-20. He represented his country at the IIHF U-18 Men's World Junior Championship and played for Finland during his first year at Harvard for the U-20 Championship. For Koskenvuo, the Finnish pride runs deep. "All my idols from the NHL were Finnish goalies... Kiprusoff, Rask, and Rinne, those were my three biggest."

When he came to Harvard for the 2022-2023 season, it was an adjustment both on and off the ice. "Derek here last year and Mitchell Gibson my freshman year—both incredible goalies—definitely helped me a lot getting my game better and helping me outside of the rink grow as a person." Koskenvuo explained that there are more than a few differences in goaltending in Cambridge versus Espoo. "The game here is a lot quicker than back home—it's almost a different kind of hockey...

The NCAA has such a high level of great, great talent, so refining those small things—focusing on the small details—has been a big part in taking my game to a new level."

"A new level" could be used to describe the entire Harvard men's hockey team. Last year was a rebuild, but now the team is looking to make a name for themselves with a new identity and new core players. "It was a rebuilding year for sure...but the boys understood pretty well what it takes to win," Koskenvuo said. Looking at this year, Koskenvuo was emphatically optimistic. "Everyone has that underdog mentality for this season. We really want to bounce back to what our team was before last year and prove to everyone what we're capable of. That will prove everyone wrong is fueling the team right now."

Having played professional and competitive international hockey for several years, Koskenvuo is no stranger to the trials and tribulations of high-level hockey, and is using his knowledge to help shape the team mentality off the ice. "I think the one thing you learn from those international tournaments, playing against the best kids of your age group, is understanding what it really takes if you want to achieve something." For Koskenvuo, it's all about the details. "Like I mentioned before, it's the small things,

right? You have to execute in the tournament, but understanding that the work for winning games and winning championships starts a lot before the game itself."

Koskenvuo's experience playing for Finland has prepared him well for his new role on the team, now Harvard's starting goalie for the first time in his college career. "As of right now, I'm really honored to have played the first games, but I think that's only the beginning. I want to see where we can take this team, so right now I'm just focused on doing whatever I can to help me play as well as I can and see where it takes us." So far, this mindset has worked well. The team is off to a much better start than last year, and even in their losses, it's clear that they've taken a big step up. Harvard finished last season ranked #50, and after just one week they have rocketed up to #20.

**JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27 (JWASSERBERGER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) COULD MAYBE SCORE ON KOSKENVUO IF GIVEN 100+ SHOTS, AND HE INVITES ANYONE WHO THINKS THEY CAN DO BETTER TO TRY (AND LET HIM KNOW HOW THEY DO).**

**PHOTO COURTESY OF HARVARD ATHLETICS**



# Indy Sportsbook: Betting Against the Bulldogs

A collection of bets for the upcoming Harvard-Yale matchup.

BY LUKE WAGNER '26

It's that time of year again: The Game. A clash with so much history that even people who couldn't name a single Ivy League quarterback will nod knowingly when it's mentioned. Looking back at the 2023 Harvard-Yale showdown, it's clear that some bets hit their mark while others fell short—just like Harvard's offense that day. Yale pulled off a 23-18 victory, which meant heartbreak for bettors who backed Harvard on the money line (-130) or the spread (-1.5). The Crimson simply couldn't capitalize on key moments, allowing Yale to dominate in a game that was closer on paper than on the field.

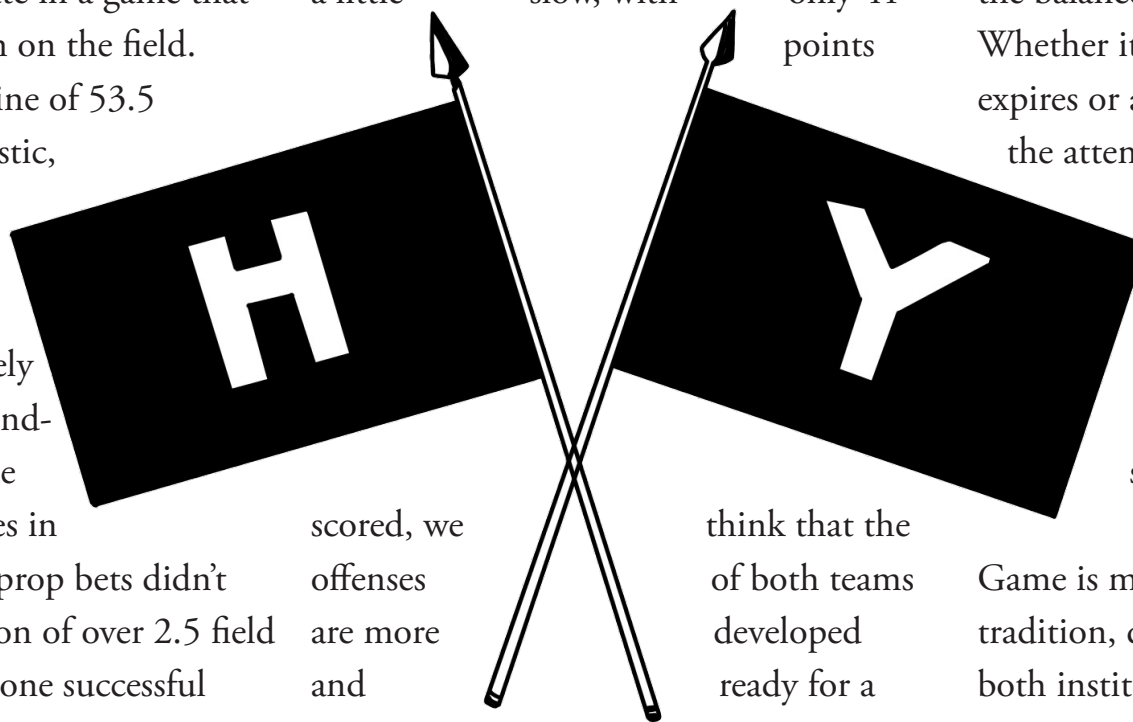
The total points line of 53.5 proved to be too optimistic, as the game ended with a combined score of 41 points. Those who bet the under cashed in, likely helped by the overall grind-it-out nature of the game and missed opportunities in the red zone. However, prop bets didn't fare as well: the prediction of over 2.5 field goals fell flat, with only one successful kick—a 33-yarder by Yale's Jack Bosman. While the game did include interceptions, there were no fumbles reported, leaving the over 2.5 turnovers bet up in the air.

But 2024 is a new year, and we at the Indy Sportsbook are looking to capitalize on this matchup on Saturday. This Saturday, all eyes will be on the Crimson and the Bulldogs as they face off in Cambridge. While the outcome is anything but certain, the betting lines and prop bets tell their own story. Let's dive into some fictional bets about the upcoming clash of titans.

**Harvard PK (-110):** We here at the Indy Sportsbook think the oddsmakers would set the betting line dead even—pick 'em. No spread, no cushion, just straight-up Harvard or Yale. Last year the Bulldogs were 3.5-point favorites, despite having a worse record going into the matchup. We attribute that to the fact that they were playing at home. However, in 18 | SPORTS 2024, Harvard is the pick.

The Crimson has momentum, a sharper offense, and a new coach who is hungry to win this historic matchup. Playing at home in front of thousands of fans will propel the Crimson to their first win since 2021. Harvard wins, but don't expect it to be easy.

**Over 53.5 (+140):** If last year's over/under line of 53.5 taught us anything, it's that The Game has fully embraced the modern era of Ivy League football: big plays, quick scores, and a defense that seems to take the second half off. Although the matchup last year was a little slow, with only 41 points



scored, we think that the offenses of both teams are more developed and ready for a big day. Harvard's offense has been cooking all season, and while Yale's defense has had its moments, they cannot be called lockdown. On the other side, the Bulldogs can put up points in a hurry. The weather is forecasted to be a pretty normal Saturday in Cambridge, and we don't think it will be much of a factor here. We are hammering the over on the hypothetical 53.5 points.

**First Team to Score: Yale (-110):** Scoring first in a game like this can set the tone, and we're putting money on Yale to strike early. With Yale running back Josh Pitsenberger coming off a performance with 168 scrimmage yards and three touchdowns, we expect him to take over in the first quarter and punch the ball in for Yale early on. While the Crimson's quick-strike ability can't be ignored, Yale's recent trend of strong starts gives them the edge here. They have scored the first touchdown in six of their last seven matches, and we see this trend continue.

## Game-Winning Field Goal

**Attempt: No (-110):** In a rivalry as close as Harvard-Yale, the possibility of a game-winning field goal attempt feels almost inevitable, and this year's odds reflect just how evenly matched the two teams are. At -110 for both "yes" and "no," the line is daring you to pick a side, but the momentum of The Game suggests that this one could come down to a kicker's nerves in the final seconds. Harvard and Yale each have solid special teams units, and with the betting line dead even, it's easy to imagine the game hanging in the balance late in the fourth quarter. Whether it's a clutch 40-yarder as time expires or a long shot just falling short, the attempt itself would be enough to

define the day. And let's be honest, nothing cranks up the drama like a high-stakes field goal in front of thousands of fans on both sides of this historic rivalry.

At the end of the day, The Game is more than just football—it's tradition, drama, and a chance for kids at both institutions to drink with (almost) no repercussions. Whether it's Harvard reclaiming glory at home or a last-second kicker stepping into the spotlight, this year's matchup promises all the chaos and excitement that make betting on The Game so irresistible.

The bets might be fictional, but the stakes couldn't feel more real. *Will Harvard finally break the streak? Will Yale's first-quarter dominance hold up?* And, most importantly, will we hit that over? This Saturday, the Crimson and Bulldogs are ready to settle it all on the field—and we're here to see how it plays out. So grab your friends, a handle or two, maybe a little extra cash, and your favorite outfit—this is The Game, and anything can happen.

**LUKE WAGNER '26 (LUKEWAGNER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) ALWAYS GIVES AWAY HIS TICKET MINUTES BEFORE THE GAME.**

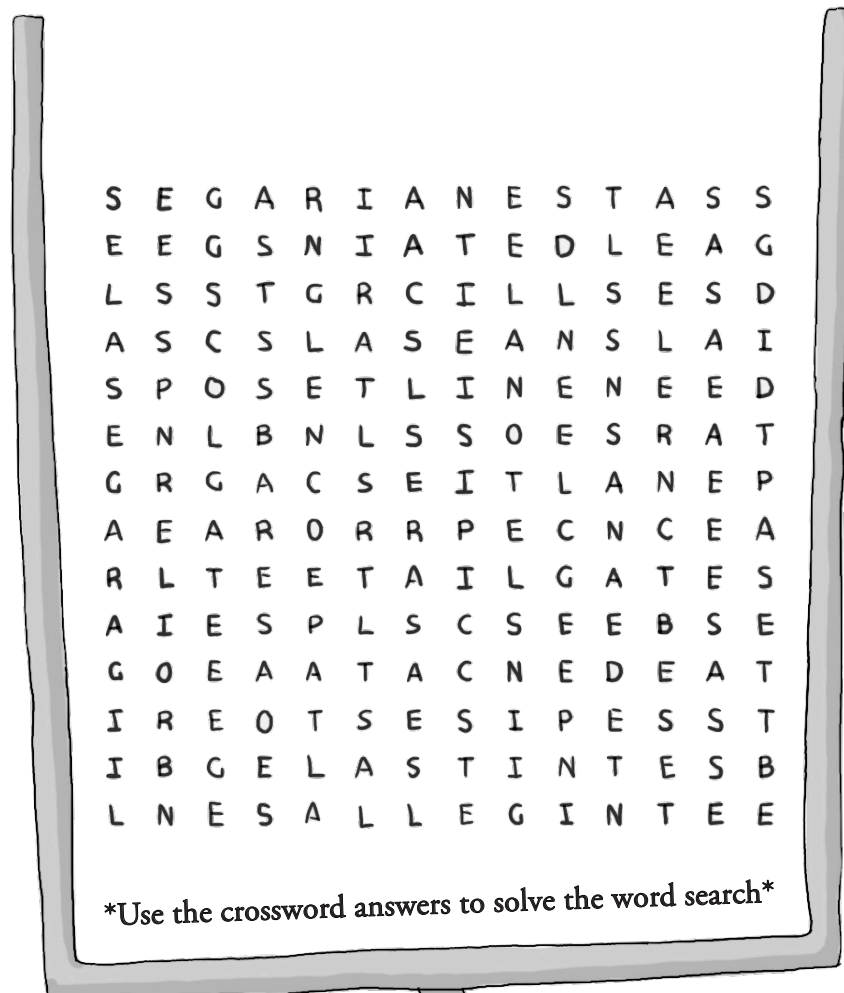
GRAPHIC BY REEVE SYKES '26

# Timeout

BY HAN NGUYEN '27  
GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE '27

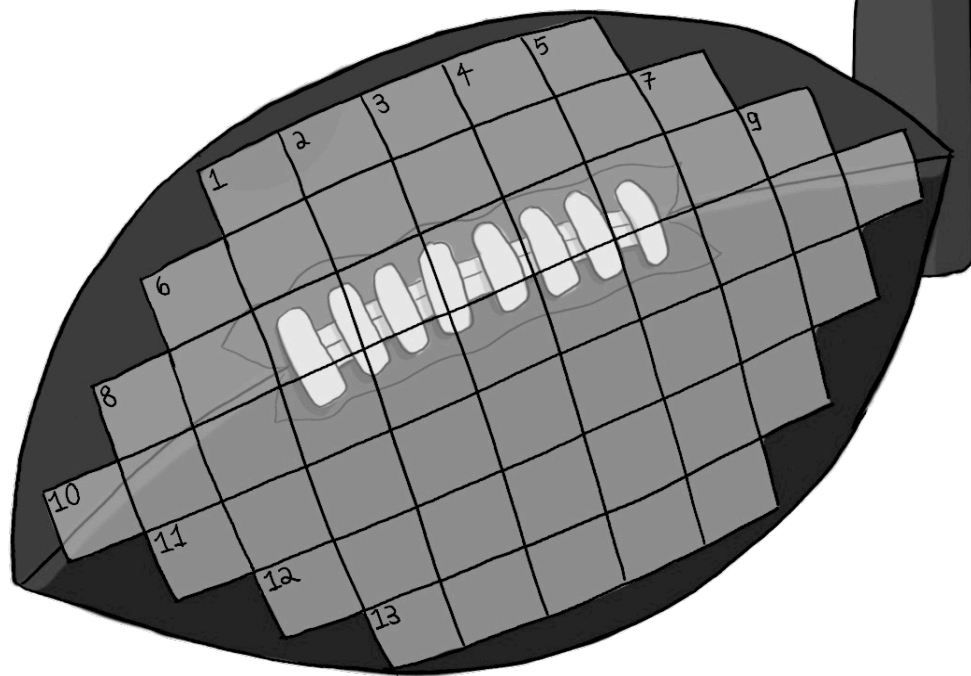
## ACROSS

1. Broken out, in a way
6. Oven option
8. Pregame parties
10. Yard bargains
11. Football coach's nightmare
12. Fisherman's gear
13. NFL players Lee and Taylor, e.g.



## DOWN

1. Some satellite launchers
2. School in Patriot League
3. British celebrity chef Lawson
4. Pliable protein
5. Holds up
6. Denudes
7. U.S. Grant's adversary
8. Faucet
9. Her, to Henriette



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