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HARVARD

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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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Protests in the City of Angels: Mass Mobilization Against ICE and the Federal Government's Response Shake Los Angeles

ICE raids, National Guard deployment, and the fight over immigration justice in Los Angeles.

BY NASHLA TURCIOS '28

On June 7, accounts detailing immigration raids located in Paramount—a predominantly Hispanic community in southern Los Angeles County—emerged, confirming reports of Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrests that first surfaced on NBC Los Angeles the day before. More than 40 immigrants were detained at a Home Depot and a nearby Ambiance Apparel clothing manufacturer. The news quickly drew hundreds of protestors to the area around 11 a.m. Signs read “ICE out of LA” and “We Are a Nation of Immigrants” as locals condemned the agency’s actions.

Among those watching closely were university students, including members of Harvard’s own community, with 16% of the Class of 2028 identifying as Hispanic or Latino. What began as isolated outrage in one neighborhood has since evolved into a citywide uprising—challenging not just immigration enforcement but the broader role of federal power in Los Angeles.

By 4 p.m., the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department had declared the demonstration in Paramount an unlawful assembly, urging participants to clear the scene. Later that day, the FBI released footage capturing individuals hurling rocks at vehicles in Paramount. The footage came amid increasing unrest, as demonstrators continued to flood the streets in protest of ICE’s targeted enforcement actions. ICE confirmed that 118 people had been arrested during immigration raids the previous week. In response to these collective federal actions, protests in downtown Los Angeles continued.

The following day, President Donald Trump deployed the National Guard to Los Angeles with orders to protect federal buildings. This was the first instance since 1965 that a U.S. president deployed the National Guard without a governor’s approval. The last time was during President Lyndon B. Johnson’s tenure when he sent federal troops to Alabama to protect civil rights marchers on their travel from Selma to Montgomery.

Valeria Ruelas, a Los Angeles native and rising sophomore at Columbia University, voiced her concerns about the recent ICE raids in an interview with the *Harvard Independent*. “It’s really frightening. We’ve seen ICE activity in LA before, but never on this scale,” she said. “The deployment of the military also feels like an overreach. It’s unsettling to drive past familiar places and see tanks filled with soldiers.”

In response to deployment, demonstrators blocked part of the 101 Freeway near the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in LA on June 8. Nevertheless, ICE raids and protests continued, and by the following day, the federal government confirmed the deployment of 1,700 National Guardsmen and 700 U.S. Marines to safeguard federal property in the area.

That same day, the State of California filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration, accusing it of illegally federalizing the California National Guard. While peaceful protests continued, reports of looting also surfaced later that night. Several stores across Los Angeles

were ransacked overnight, including an Adidas store, two marijuana dispensaries, a pharmacy, an Apple store, and a jewelry store.

“I never had a doubt that the protests were justified,” Nolan Fitzmorris ’28, a University of California, Los Angeles undergraduate, told the *Independent*. “Growing up in Los Angeles, I’ve seen some of the most hard-working people I know struggle to gain citizenship. The process demands time and money that many people simply don’t have. That’s why it was heartbreaking to hear about the surge in unlawful searches and arrests.”

On Monday night, Trump told reporters it would be “great” if Tom Homan, the acting head of ICE, arrested California Governor Gavin Newsom. In response, Newsom took to social media, denouncing the president’s remarks as “acts of a dictator.” He made the protests a central theme of his public statements, ultimately issuing a call to action against what he described as a threat to democracy posed by the Trump Administration.

Throughout the protests, media coverage has highlighted several instances of peaceful demonstrators being targeted by law enforcement. One notable incident involved an Australian television journalist who was struck in the leg by a rubber bullet while reporting live from downtown Los Angeles. Additionally, a video that has gone viral on social media appears to show a protester being trampled by police officers on horseback.

Throughout the June 6 weekend, ICE agents also conducted coordinated operations targeting farm workers in Oxnard, employees at car washes in Culver City, and staff at clothing warehouses in Downtown Los Angeles—intensifying public outrage and fueling ongoing demonstrations citywide.

“I realized that many people I care about were now in danger,” Fitzmorris continued.

When President Trump deployed approximately 700 active-duty Marines to the Los Angeles area, including Paramount and Compton, it was an unprecedented

military mobilization. Estimated to cost \$134 million, this decision has drawn sharp criticism from California officials, who argue it represents a federal overreach into state affairs.

A Harvard freshman who requested anonymity echoed similar sentiments as Fitzmorris in an interview with the *Independent*. “I don’t think the protests are unjustified since LA is home to many diverse communities, and there’s a strong sense of mutual respect here... The ICE raids have definitely impacted the city,” they stated.

During a press conference last Thursday morning, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem referred to the city as a “war zone,” a statement that drew swift condemnation from Democratic leaders.

Another anonymous Harvard sophomore expressed frustration with the media’s portrayal of Los Angeles, especially since the protests began. “It’s upsetting to see the city being described as a ‘war zone,’” she said. “I have friends who attended the protests, and it definitely wasn’t a ‘war zone’—it was people coming together for their communities.”

Fitzmorris agreed, criticizing the media coverage that he felt painted a one-sided picture.

“In an effort to support the Trump administration’s vilification of Latinos in America, the media highlights the raids over the many peaceful demonstrations,” he said. “But regardless of how forceful the protests are, it’s unjust to ignore the stories of people affected by ICE arrests. Instead of seeking flaws in how people choose to protest, the media should prioritize amplifying the message behind their actions.”

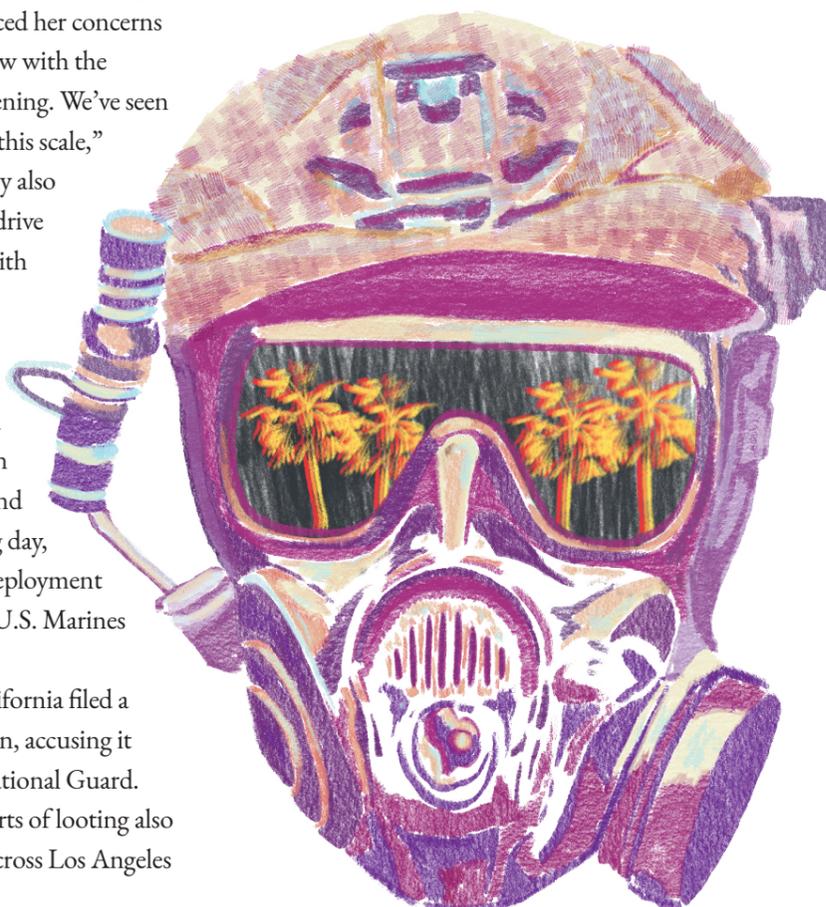
Ruelas, whose family owns a small business in a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood, also expressed concerns about how mass deportations affect the makeup and overall sentiment in her environment. “You can feel the deportations,” she said. “It’s not only noticeable by the clear absence of regulars in our shop, but also by word of mouth—hearing from people you are close with that their family members can’t leave the house. It’s really sad.”

As protests persist across Los Angeles, residents are calling not just for temporary relief, but for systemic change. For students like Fitzmorris, the path to de-escalation begins with confronting the root causes of the unrest.

“As long as ICE continues on its path of mass deportation, the fight will continue. Many of their acts are completely unlawful, and people are no longer willing to accept them,” Fitzmorris said. “A major change needs to occur to de-escalate tensions, whether it’s increased accessibility towards citizenship, decriminalizing unauthorized entry, or restructuring ICE itself.”

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HARVARD.EDU) A STUDENT FROM
LOS ANGELES, WRITES NEWS FOR
THE *HARVARD INDEPENDENT*.

GRAPHIC BY KAYLA LE '28



Paper Trails: Journalists Putting Politics and Pen To Paper

Undergraduate student journalists, past and present, comment on the importance of protecting campus publications amidst uncertain times.

BY MEGAN LEGAULT '28

Months of contention between American universities and the federal government have placed student journalism at the epicenter of political commentary. Student publications across the nation have devoted considerable portions of their content to documenting recent public demonstrations and administrative action taking place on college campuses. However, the latest crackdowns from the presidential administration regarding student activism leave creative production in a precarious position.

A recent article written in The New York Sun recognized how Trump's attacks on higher education are not only generating more coverage but also increasing the readership of various student publications.

"College student reporters are living in the eye of the storms that have embroiled their campuses over the last couple of years. To meet the torrent of headlines erupting from their schools, their newsrooms have scaled up," writes Sun reporter and former *Independent* Editor-in-Chief M.J. Koch '23. "Their readership has skyrocketed. And they're breaking news in real time—often beating professional journalists to the punch."

At Harvard College, publications like the *Independent* and the *Harvard Crimson* have been keeping students as well as external audiences updated with their extensive and prompt coverage of the legal battles between Harvard and the federal government. Coverage by these student papers includes daily breaking news updates and long form investigative developments.

Outside of Harvard's gates, other university publications have proven equally vital in reporting on internal unrest to their campus communities and outsiders. The *Columbia Spectator* has been closely documenting altercations between campus administration, student activists, and the federal government. Similarly, the *Yale Daily* has been publishing articles addressing student protests, Yale's private equity sale, and most publicly, Yale's decision to back Harvard in their legal battle with the federal government.

"When I first started reporting, campus journalism felt like it lived in a more closed world, pivoting around mostly student government, weekly political debates, sports, and student life," said *Daily* reporter Baala Shakya '28 in an interview with the *Harvard Independent*. "It mattered, but it felt self-contained."

dominant in national conversations about free speech, academic freedom, endowment politics, DEI, protests, financial regulation, the war on Gaza. All of those national debates taking place outside of the university are directly shaping what I cover at Yale," Shakya said. "That means that almost every story I write now has two audiences: one is the student body here, who live the consequences of these decisions; the other is the broader public."

"What happens on elite campuses has become so symbolic of larger national tensions and anxieties."

For Shakya, the current political landscape has reshaped her experience as an active student journalist.

"My responsibilities have changed, but maybe more than that, the emotional weight of those responsibilities has changed," she said.

Shakya's dedication to journalism covering important stories for the *Daily News* has not come without sacrifice, often working long days covering stories until midnight, leaving as late as 2 or 3 a.m. to finish coursework. For Shakya and fellow student journalists, keeping up with a demanding schedule is only part of the resilience needed—a sentiment felt deeply this past month, particularly on Columbia's campus.

On May 7,

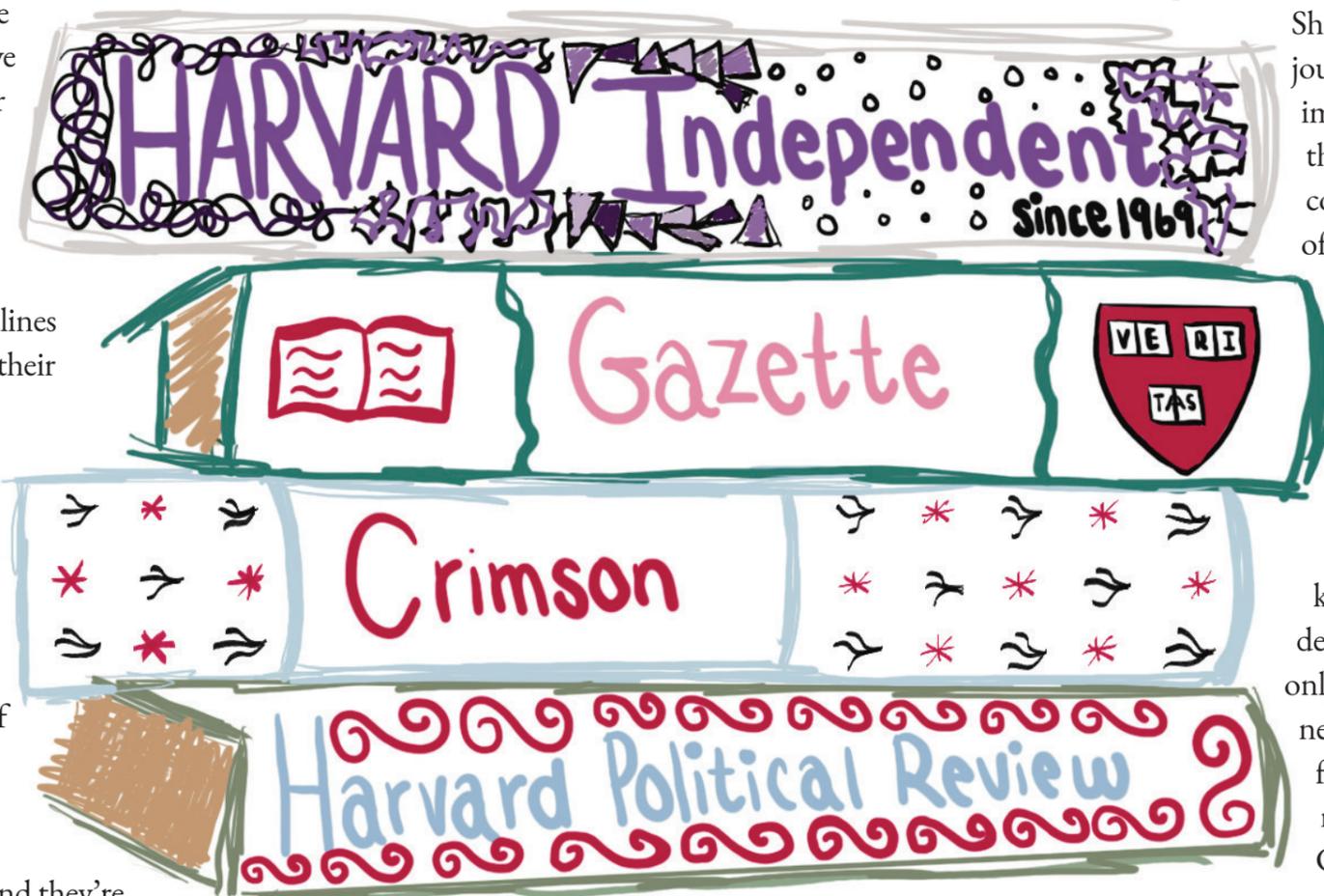
four student journalists from the *Columbia Spectator* and the University's radio station, WKCR 89.9 FM, were suspended for covering a pro-Palestine protest in their campus library.

The protest, publicized as an "Emergency Rally" by Columbia University Apartheid Divest, was a pro-Palestine demonstration demanding that the University divest from the conflict in Gaza. Around 100 protesters, frustrated with the decisions of the Columbia administration, occupied the Lawrence A. Wien Reading Room in the

"Since Trump took office, or even the months leading up to the November election, that wall collapsed," Shakya continued.

Although Yale has not been the focal point of federal disputes like Harvard and other elite universities, the university has felt the impact of national cuts on federal funding. Over the last year, Yale saw a 33.8% decrease in NIH funding and researchers have expressed concerns over declining budgets, which make it difficult to carry out and fund projects.

"My campus, like Harvard, has become



University's largest campus library. They put up banners and renamed it "Basel Al-Araj Popular" after the Palestinian writer and activist who was killed by Israeli forces in 2017. Columbia President Claire Shipman authorized the NYPD to sweep the building, reportedly barring protesters from leaving without presenting identification. 109 protesters were arrested and another 65 students were suspended in the days that followed.

According to an article written days after by the *Spectator's* News Editor, student journalists from Columbia and Barnard College who were reporting at the site of the incident received email notifications of suspension from their respective college administration although they had identified themselves as press to the public safety officials present at the protest. In a statement released by Shipman, the disciplinary actions resulted from student disturbances and their refusal to leave after being asked by public safety officials. "These actions not only represented a violation of University policies, but they also posed a serious risk to our students and campus safety," the announcement read.

Just last year, a reporter for the *Crimson* was also wrongfully sent a leave of absence notice after they covered the University's pro-Palestinian encampment outside of encampment bounds. Although their academic punishments were lifted, these actions, alongside rising tensions between universities and the federal government, raised concerns across the nation as the right to free press was seemingly being infringed upon at a time when student journalism is at the forefront. Among those concerned is Katy Aronoff, Barnard College '04 and former editorial page editor for the *Spectator*.

"It seemed like the disciplinary measures that were being applied were being applied with a very heavy hand, and that in ways that...were different from what we had seen happen as students, and what we sort of understood the standard practices to be," Aronoff said in an interview with the *Independent*.

Aronoff's tenure in undergraduate journalism at Barnard occurred during the tumultuous years that followed 9/11—an experience that she now relates to current political polarization.

"I never once felt like we really had anybody in the administration trying to pressure us to cover or not cover things a certain way... Columbia has always been an incredibly political campus... That's just the way that it is, and that's one thing I love about it," Aronoff said. "I never felt like there was any

danger to me or any of my opinion writers, from printing pieces with controversial viewpoints or viewpoints that the university administration or national politicians wouldn't like."

However, Aronoff's feelings drastically changed following the incident at Butler Library—within three days, she and 17 other *Spectator* alumni signed a letter in which they articulated their concerns and called on their alma mater to respect student journalism and open dialogue. "Ensuring student journalists can perform their duties without fear of reprisal is fundamental to preserving trust and accountability on campus," Aronoff said.

"People were coming from various political viewpoints on this and that...but we just felt like the way that the student journalists are being treated, at the very least, wasn't fair, and that at a time, it's not conducive to good dialogue on campus," she continued.

Aronoff emphasized that what occurred at Butler Library is not an isolated incident of concern for unrestricted student journalism. "Even before any of this...I was really shaken up by what had happened at Tufts... I used to work at Tufts, so I know Tufts very well, and that really shook me to my core," she said.

At Tufts, the footage of graduate student Rümeyşa Öztürk's detainment, international student from Turkey who had previously co-authored an op-ed for the *Tufts Daily* criticizing their response to the ongoing war in Gaza, went viral.

"The ability of student journalists to be on the ground is really unmatched by other outlets and publications. So I think it's important to keep doing this," said Aronoff. "If you're doing really serious student journalism, it is taking up a lot of your time, but I think that the work that all of you who are student journalists are doing right now is really important. It will be part of the historical record. I think it's the best source in some cases that we have on what's going on on campuses."

Columbia, which gained the title as the "activist ivy" has had its fair share of events documented by student journalists at the *Spectator* recently. *Spectator* journalists covered the controversial detainment of international scholars Mohsen Mahdawi and Mahmoud Khalil as well as the protests which transpired in response to their detainment from campus perspectives. Last month, they documented Columbia's 2025 Commencement where Shipman was met with boos as she gave her ceremonial speech. They remain committed to covering historic developments as they unfold, such as Khalil's

release on June 20.

Shakya affirmed that the commitment to being an active student journalist can be demanding both physically and emotionally.

"You're 18 or 19 years old, writing stories that challenge people decades older than you who have the means to retaliate if they want to. Sometimes the fear isn't explicit," she echoed. "It's more subtle: the critical conversations in class you hear about after a tough story runs, the discomfort you feel when you show up to an event, the knowledge that your relationships with sources may shift and change or even become severed depending on what you publish."

"And then there are the emails: some angry, some mocking, some cruel that show up in my inbox after a particularly controversial piece," she continued.

With the nation's attention now on universities and the press, journalists and student activists alike have expressed an increasing concern over their safety and reputations in light of recent events. Last year, 13 Harvard students who had participated in on-campus encampments had their diplomas withheld.

This year, international students expressed feeling intimidated when participating in campus activism, afraid of disciplinary action that could have severe consequences on their academic opportunities. Despite these obstacles, and the overall feeling of uncertainty many feel in lieu of recent attacks on higher education and misplaced disciplinary action, Shakya, like Aronoff, ascertains the importance of unrestricted student journalism.

"As student journalists, we do it knowing that we're still learning, that every story carries risks, that every word matters," she said. "We lose sleep over mistakes we might have made. We agonize between submitting a piece and seeing it published, wondering if we've missed something or accidentally harmed someone. But we carry that weight because we know that if we don't do it, no one else will."

"At its best, student journalism isn't just practice for the future, it's not some pre-professional activity to fill our time with. It's very real and it matters now. We feel that responsibility every single day, even when we're far from campus."

MEGAN LEGAULT '28 (MLEGAULT@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) IS A PROUD STUDENT JOURNALIST FOR THE HARVARD INDEPENDENT.

GRAPHIC BY AMELIE LIMA '27

Harvard International Students Respond to Fall 2025 Enrollment Threats

Students comment on the Trump administration's threats to rescind visas for the upcoming academic year.

BY KALVIN FRANK '28

On April 16, the Trump administration first threatened Harvard University's ability to host international students across its 13 schools. After weeks of contention between University leadership and the federal government, foreign undergraduates have started to join administrative push back and speak out against the government's actions—despite clear federal disdain for international enrollee activism.

"A visa is a gift. It's a voluntary thing. We decide to give you a visa," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in recent remarks to the press.

This conflict surrounding international student enrollment began with a larger debate between the federal government and the University. As the presidential administration instituted what some political analysts have called an "antisemitism crackdown," Harvard stood at the forefront of institutional action. Starting on April 11, the administration sent a letter to the University demanding reforms relating to university governance, transparency, and "discontinuation of DEL," among other topics, by August 2025.

The University responded on April 14 in an email titled, "The Promise of American Higher Education." "The administration's prescription goes beyond the power of the federal government," University President Alan Garber '76 said. "We will not accept their proposed agreement. The University will not surrender its independence or relinquish its constitutional rights."

The next day, the Trump administration froze 2.2 billion dollars in grants to the University.

Two days after Garber's message, on April 16, Homeland Security Secretary Kristin Noem sent a letter to the University threatening its ability to enroll students on visas through the Student and Exchange Visitor Program if Harvard did not comply with a list of seven demands relating to providing information about scholars in the program. This move impacts almost 6,800 international students, or over 27% of the campus.

As back and forth dialogue between the University and the federal government persisted, including a lawsuit issued in response to federal funding cuts, multiple government agencies announced increased cuts from the original 2.2 billion: the federal task force on antisemitism, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Energy, among others. These actions have brought the total cuts and freezes up to 3.2 billion.

On May 22, the DHS announced that "Harvard can no longer enroll foreign students and existing foreign students must transfer or lose their legal status." Noem cited that the University "brazenly refused to provide the required information requested," along with reported cases of antisemitism and crime on campus.

While Harvard and the Trump administration have continued their legal battles, recent actions indicate a potential break in the rising tensions. The State Department ordered embassies to resume processing Harvard student visas following the temporary restraining order on the federal prohibitions issued by U.S. District

Judge Allison Burroughs.

On June 10, Education Secretary Linda McMahon said that Harvard and the administration are "making progress in some of the discussions."

Most recently, on June 20, Trump suggested a more positive outlook on his communications with Harvard. "They have acted extremely appropriately during these negotiations, and appear to be committed to doing what is right. If a Settlement is made on the basis that is currently being discussed, it will be 'mindbogglingly' HISTORIC, and very good for our Country," he said.

Even with the developments indicating calming tensions, there is still no concrete deal in place between the Federal Government and the University. With uncertainty swirling around their attendance at Harvard in the fall, some international students have elected to speak out. "I applied to college in the United States, seeking a place where truth-telling was a right, not a provocation," Mexican international student Frida López '27 wrote for the *Harvard Independent* in May. "In this suspended state, I confront, face to face, the steep price of standing up to a government intent on silencing criticism."

A recent Harvard College graduate from Sweden echoed López's words. "The most dangerous response to authoritarianism is self-silencing. I refuse to retreat into it—and Harvard should not either," Leo Gerden '25 wrote on April 8 in response to the revocation of five Harvard students' visas by the Trump administration; this was before significant federal action was taken against the University.

Harvard international students have also organized demonstrations against the federal government's threats. Founded in the height of funding cuts, Harvard Students for Freedom hosted a protest condemning the Trump administration's requests for international students' academic and disciplinary records in April and have continued since.

"Today, they are coming for some. And tomorrow, when they come for the rest, we need to be together. We cannot, at any cost, leave anyone behind," Harvard Undergraduate Association co-president and international from Pakistan Abdullah Shahid Sial '27 said in a speech during the demonstration. Supplementing such collective shows of support for foreign enrollees, individual students have also spoken out against federal actions.

Finishing his first year in Cambridge after growing up in Wales, Alfred Williamson '28 joined his international peers to champion foreign students' rights. "I thought it could be the last thing of significance I ever did at Harvard," Williamson stated in an interview with the *New York Times* published on June 7.

In an interview with the *Independent*, Williamson pointed out that speaking out is an essential part of American democracy. "I really do believe that the moment that we feel that we have to self-silence is the same moment that the American democracy begins to die," Williamson said. Although international university enrollees across American universities have recently had their student visas revoked for criticizing federal policies, Williamson affirms his commitment to such potentially bold activism, while also acknowledging his unique position to comment on these developments openly.

"I think that I am still in a more privileged position compared to many other international students," Williamson added. "I'm from a country that has always had a good relationship with the United States."

However, despite his apparent willingness to publicly criticize the Trump administration's recent actions against Harvard's international community members, it was not a choice Williamson took lightly. "It wasn't an easy decision at all to speak out," he shared. "We've watched ICE snatch students off the streets in such a brutal fashion, and we are getting to a point where non-citizens in the United States no longer have freedom of speech."

"I know what it means to speak at a cost. I am intimately aware of that danger. As someone who has left a country to flee such a risk, I refuse now to trade that voice for counterfeit safety," López wrote in her article.

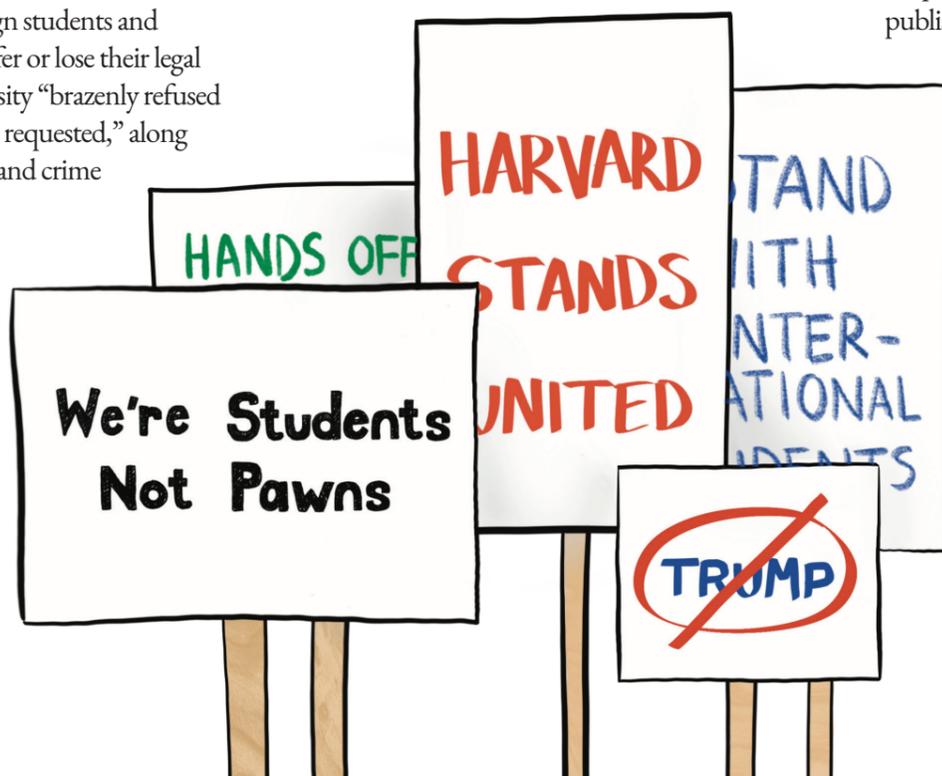
Even as internationals face federal pressure, they have received significant support from the University. Williamson takes pride in Harvard's response to the Trump administration. "I do greatly appreciate Harvard for standing up and making the right decision. I think it proved to me that Harvard had a level of integrity that I deeply respect to go to stand up to the Trump administration's unlawful and un-American demands," he said.

Williamson is far from the only student to receive national media attention. Sial recently did an interview with CNN in which he declared that the Trump administration is using international students as "poker chips." Sial, Gerden and Karl Molden '28, published a Letter to the Editor in the *Washington Post* maintaining their right to speak out.

Harvard is fighting two ongoing court battles against the federal government over funding and its ability to enroll international students. Hearings on the Harvard SEVP International visa lawsuit began on June 16 in Boston. Judge Burroughs extended the block on the entry ban until June 23.

KALVIN FRANK '28 (KFRANK@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WRITES NEWS FOR THE *HARVARD INDEPENDENT*.

GRAPHIC BY NESHAMA RYMAN '28



“This World is Not Conclusion”

Two Harvard orators, half a century apart, confront the question of purpose at renowned University commencements.

BY NATALIE COOPER '28

W *What is Harvard, and what are its students meant to do with it?*

Though separated by decades, the Harvard commencement ceremony speeches of Robert Mule '77 and Thor Reimann '25 converge in their attempts to answer these same questions.

Each year, Harvard College selects one graduating senior to deliver the Senior English address, a speech meant not just to celebrate a class but to speak to its moment in time. For Mule that meant looking back at a decade of protest, from civil rights to women's liberation. For Reimann, it meant facing a campus—and country—in the middle of a national debate. With the College's 2025 commencement wrapping up just one week ago, these two speeches show how a persistent pursuit of tackling global contention is the invisible string connecting Harvard students across generations.

Harvard's commencement spans three days and culminates in a University-wide ceremony in Tercentenary Theatre. Central to the main commencement ceremony are three student speeches: the Latin Salutatory, the Graduate English Address, and the Senior English Address.

Commencement speeches have served as a moment of reflection, activism, and public conscience across many American universities. In 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall used his Harvard address to unveil the Marshall Plan, urging graduates to help rebuild postwar Europe. This year, at the University of Pennsylvania, actress Elizabeth Banks ended her speech with a call to protect abortion rights.

This places considerable pressure—and power—on the students selected to speak. They must strike a delicate balance: saying goodbye to both classmates and Harvard, while also remaining conscious of the nation's moment. At Ivy League universities in particular, where commencement speeches can be highly publicized, the stakes feel especially high. For instance, Donovan Livingston's Harvard Graduate School of Education 2016 commencement speech has gained over 9 million views on YouTube.

The Harvard Commencement 2025 Senior English Address was delivered by Reimann, an Environmental Science and Public Policy concentrator from Minnesota. His speech reflected on uncertainty, responsibility, and the search for meaning beyond Harvard's gates.

This year's ceremony also featured two other student orations. The Latin Salutatory titled *De Hereditatibus Pererinis*, was delivered by Aidan Robery Scully '25. The Graduate English Address, “Our Humanity,” was delivered by Yurong “Luanna” Jiang.

Reimann earned the role through a competitive, multi-round selection process. “It's a three-round application process,” Reimann said in an interview with the *Harvard Independent*. “You submit your speech, then you give it two times to a panel...and you get to watch the other people who are also in the process.”

Likewise, working to write a speech that impressed the administration and his peers, Mule took the same stage around 50 years earlier with a speech titled “The Need and a Desire.” Mule opened his oration with a nod

to the future's overwhelming ambiguity. “I direct myself to those half-smiling members of the class of 1977 who do not know where they will be next year,” he said. “And I direct myself to those troubled seniors who may know very well where they will be after graduation...but don't really know why.”

“As a freshman, I remember feeling like a part of some occupation force which had missed the real battle, which had not fought the long war. Graduates and section people would throw in our young faces such statements as, ‘You can't understand what it was like in 1969. You can't appreciate the struggle which we went through,’” he reflected in his address. “Political activism is dead today.”

Mule spoke to a generation shaped by upheaval. “The tumult of the 1960s had left us with no clear sense—if there ever existed such a notion—about what was right and what was wrong,” he told his classmates at the beginning of his address.

Nearly fifty years later, Reimann too echoed Mule's sense of dislocation—but in a moment when Harvard itself was under fire. “This world is not conclusion,” he began, quoting a 1860s Emily Dickinson poem that had guided him through his undergraduate years and also served as the title of his speech.

“It has a nice certainty that there is a path out of the current moment,” he told the *Independent* about the poem. “I view my time in college as this kind of training—a launchpad for exploring the unknown... this is something I was thinking a lot about and continue to be thinking about.”

He provides guiding advice to those same, uncertain students searching for purpose. “Narcotics cannot still the tooth that nibbles at the soul,” Reimann said, quoting Dickinson.

“I wanted to remind people of the power that they have,” Reimann said to the *Independent*, “and the power that Harvard alumni have had over the history of our country to make really positive impacts in times of deep crisis.”

Reimann was mindful of the responsibility that came with his platform. “Am I talking too much about myself?” he recalled to the *Independent*. But ultimately, he found that starting from personal experience allowed him to reveal shared themes. “While I did give the speech,” he said, “the way I viewed it was, ‘It's not about me. It's about the class, and it's about the crazy moment that we find ourselves to be in.’”

That same impulse—to center community over the self—finds precedent in Mule's 1977 address. Where Reimann emphasized the moment, Mule emphasized the medium. For Mule, Harvard's value was not found in its structure or traditions. “It is not the house system...it is not the books or libraries... Harvard's quality springs from its unique individuals,” said Mule. “When we encounter one another as individuals...we learn, we discover, we build character.”

“Veritas is a private human encounter which reveals what we are: imperfect creatures striving for perfection.”

Mule gave his class a framework for seeking truth when institutions falter. Reimann did the same. “This world is not conclusion,” he repeated. “A species stands beyond.”

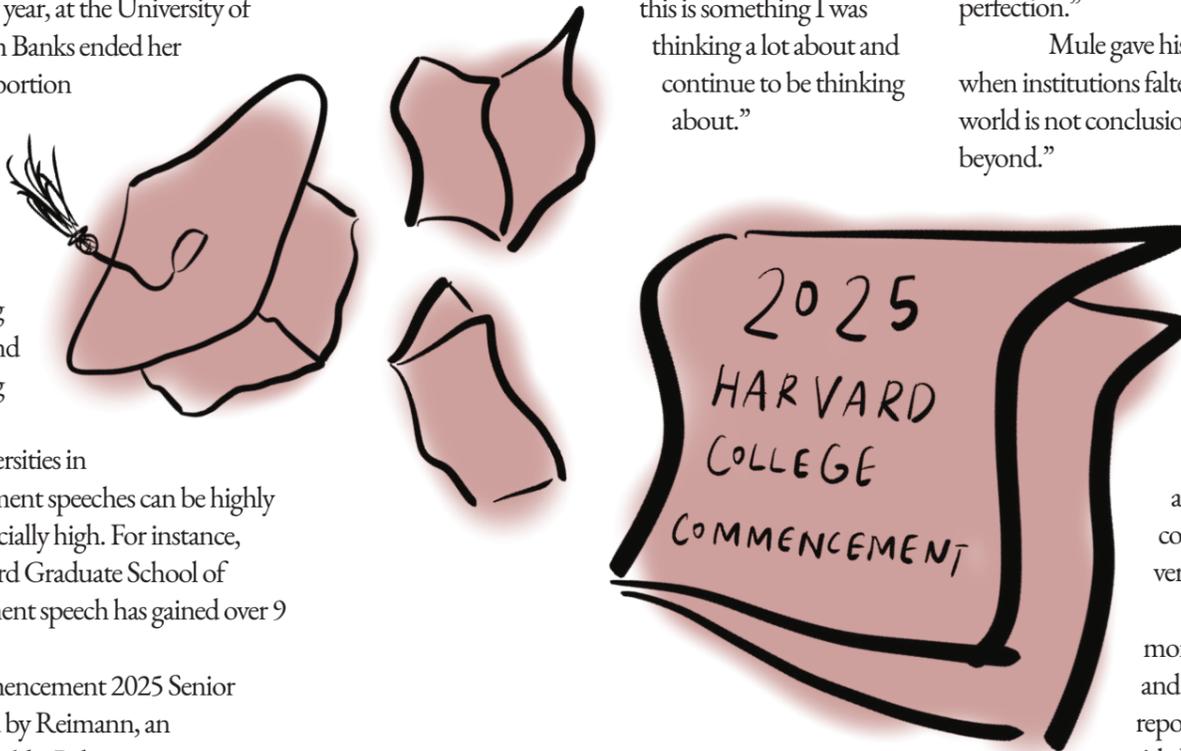
Reimann ended his speech by directly referencing the controversies surrounding Harvard in recent months. “Now look, our University is certainly imperfect,” he said, “but I am proud to stand today alongside our graduating class, our faculty, and our president, with the shared conviction that this ongoing project of veritas is one worth defending.”

Reimann's remarks come after months of contention between Harvard and the federal government. Protests, reports of antisemitism, and funding withdrawals have left the University in a precarious position but a student body who, as Reimann emphasized, is “proud” of administrative dissent.

Spanning nearly 50 years, both speeches reflect how, in moments of national uncertainty, the Senior English Address serves as more than just a farewell—it becomes a statement about what Harvard is, and what its students are asked to carry forward.

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**GRAPHIC BY KERRIE ZHU
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Whereas Mule's speech focused on the loss of direction that followed the 60s, Reimann's addresses the weight of responsibility that falls on students now.

“With no visible commitment to an external purpose ours would be a time of introspection. And with this turning inward, ours would be an age plagued by ambiguity. In such an age where traditional values and institutions seem to crumble under their own weight, students within Harvard cling to whatever they can for consistency and support,” Mule said in his address.

Reimann responds to the lack of direction felt by many students with a call to action. “For me, Harvard has often felt like an end, rather than a beginning,” he reflected. “The purpose of our time here really starts today, as we leave campus, and especially as we leave a much different campus than the one we entered, with Harvard at the center of a national battle over higher education in America.”

The Fallout of the Funding Cuts

The \$2.4 billion freeze in federal funding and grants to Harvard University is being felt in student programs, scholarships, and labs.

BY OLIVIA LUNSETH '28

“Ideas to Enterprise,” reads the recently updated front page of the official Harvard University website. “Across Harvard’s campus, our students, scholars, and faculty turn ideas into ventures that solve problems and create value.” A series of executive orders and lawsuits in recent months have left the institution struggling to actualize such values. With nearly \$3 billion in federal funding cuts made between April and May 2025, organizations and programs that rely on those funds are being forced to shutter their efforts or scramble to find new sources of funding.

After April 14, Harvard received seven stop-work orders associated with awards totaling approximately \$76 million. A little less than a month later on May 6, Harvard received over 950 federal award terminations which summed around \$2.4 billion. This included over 570 subawards to institutions across 32 states, according to a University administrator.

Many of Harvard’s research grants include collaborations with outside institutions around the nation country—when funding is awarded, not all of the involved researchers have to be affiliated with the same University. In other words, peer institutions working on Harvard-affiliated projects may have been impacted by the recent executive orders.

The loss of these federal grants came after Harvard declined to meet a list of demands from the Trump administration, prompting the University to file suit on April 21.

On May 6, the Department of Education announced that Harvard would no longer be eligible for any new federal grants. Education Secretary Linda McMahon advised

that the University “no longer seek grants from the federal government, since none will be provided.”

In response, the University released a statement condemning the move, saying that “today’s letter makes new threats to unlawfully withhold funding for lifesaving research and innovation in retaliation for Harvard’s decision to file its lawsuit.”

Research at Harvard spans disciplines from medicine and life sciences to engineering and public health. “The University currently employs approximately 1,800 research faculty and staff whose positions are partially or wholly supported by federal research grants and contracts. Additionally, approximately 730 graduate students and 790 postdoctoral researchers receive stipends, tuition support, or salary from federally funded research projects,” Harvard’s lawsuit states.

That research is funded partly by the University—\$526 million in 2024—but mostly by hard-earned grants and contracts that researchers apply for. Grants provide researchers with more freedom, while contracts have a set list of requirements overseen by the government as the researcher conducts work.

In Fiscal Year 2024, federal, foundational, and industry sponsor funding totaled \$1 billion—\$686.5 million of which was solely federal. Ivy League schools received a total of \$6.4 billion in federal funding, with Columbia receiving \$1.3 billion and Yale getting \$898.7 million. However, as federal funding cuts are enacted at universities nationwide, the research that this funding sustains is increasingly at risk.

Harvard has recently established a webpage to post updates and resources regarding

the lawsuits against the Trump Administration—the research funding section outlines what critical work is in imminent danger.

“For 75 years, the federal government has partnered with academic institutions, fueling discoveries that have transformed medicine, saved lives, and positioned the United States as a global science leader,” the page reads. “If this funding is halted, it interrupts work on tuberculosis, chemotherapy, pandemic preparedness, Parkinson’s disease, and Alzheimer’s disease.”

In cancer research, research funding at risk includes the introduction of bortezomib, a first-in-class proteasome inhibitor for treating multiple myeloma. In cardiology, scientists have been tracing imbalances in activated molecular units that can cause excessive heart muscle contractions, leading to the organ’s thickening and eventual failure.

Threatened research also includes work on infectious diseases, such as studies identifying vulnerable structures in the deadly Nipah virus that could lead to treatment. Additional areas at risk span neurodegenerative diseases, obesity, and diabetes.

Specific schools across the University have been affected by cuts on varying levels.

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has been among the hardest hit, with 46% of its funding previously coming from federal research grants and reporting that 130 researchers had to terminate projects. “Our partnership with the federal government has powered discoveries that have saved tens of millions of lives around the world,” said Dean Andrea Baccarelli.

“The funding has enabled

breakthrough research on deadly diseases from cancer to Alzheimer's to stroke to HIV. Our faculty's research into environmental pollutants, occupational hazards, and the relationships between diet and health have shaped policies and programs that protect the health of every American—and so many others around the world,” Baccarelli continued.

One of the projects mentioned by the Trump administration's stop orders is run by a T.H. Chan School faculty member, Dr. Sarah Fortune. Fortune's work totaled \$60 million in tuberculosis research, investigating potential disease immunity in the hopes of producing a vaccine. Shortly after receiving the stop-work order, Fortune made several appearances on national news, as this project was the National Institutes of Health's single largest investment in tuberculosis research.

During an interview with MSNBC, Fortune shared that if Open Philanthropy had not donated \$500,000 to the project, enabling the research to be moved to the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine to complete a tuberculosis vaccine study, the macaque monkeys used in the study may have needed to be euthanized.

Harvard Medical School has also experienced a significant number of research setbacks. HMS and Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Professor Donald E. Ingber lost just under \$20 million in contracts for research on the development of drugs to combat long-term radiation exposure and to study the effects of microgravity and radiation in space on human cells.

“The salaries of almost 20 students, fellows, and staff are at risk if this stop order is not reversed soon,” Ingber said in an April interview with the Harvard Gazette.

Scientific research is not the only category under threat. The humanities are also in danger of losing critical research. Harvard Graduate School of Education Professor Elizabeth Bonawitz lost a \$1.5 million grant for research that studied cognitive mechanisms of guided instruction in the early elementary years.

Many undergraduates at Harvard participate in research—a little over half of Harvard's students complete a senior thesis. Despite research efforts being shuttered in many departments, undergraduates seem to be protected for the moment.

“Our office does not support undergraduate research with federal funds. Rather, much of our office's financial support for undergraduates is the result of the vision and generosity of far-sighted donors: alums and their families, friends of the College and University,” shared Dr. Jonna Iacono, Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, in a statement to the *Harvard Independent*.

“Because faculty members have mostly been able to continue their work, we have not seen large adverse and cascading effects on the capacity of our undergraduates to pursue faculty-mentored research projects,” she continued.

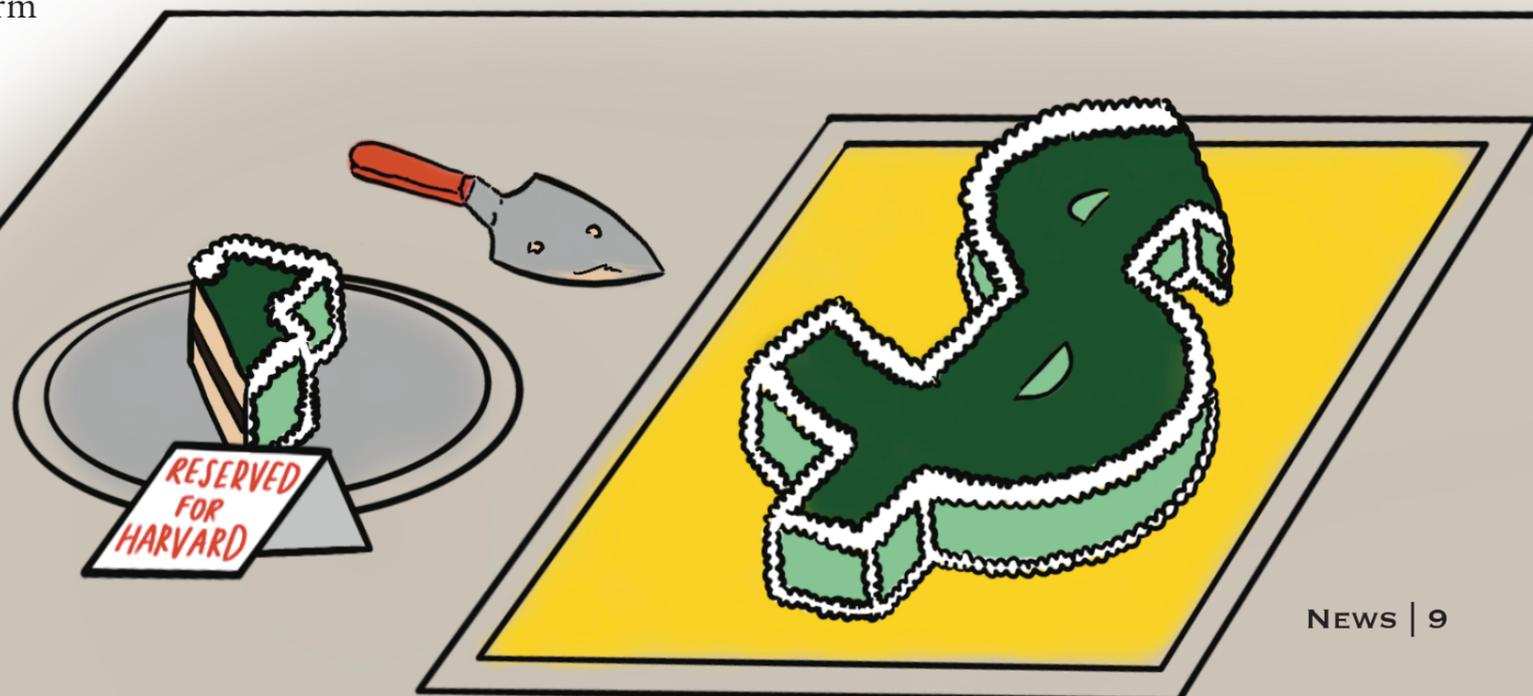
“We do not know what the future holds, but we are certain that research is and will continue to be central to the mission and identity of the University, as will be supporting the next generation of researchers, scholars, and creators of new knowledge and practice at the undergraduate level,” she added.

Harvard is one of 60 institutions that received letters from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights in March. The majority of these institutions are now facing the consequences of federal funding cuts. Columbia University, for example, has lost \$400 million in federal funding. 180 researchers have received termination or non-renewal notices for their funding.

The ripple effects of Harvard's \$2.4 billion funding loss are still unfolding, with more labs, scholarships, and jobs in danger of being lost.

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Who Really Calls the Shots?

Behind Israel's war with Iran lies a deeper ambition—and America is the key to achieving it.

BY PATRICK SLIZ '27

Israel's June 2025 strike on Iran wasn't just a preemptive military action—it was a provocation.

Behind the drone strikes, cyberattacks, and public messaging lies a deeper strategy to draw the United States into a broader conflict—one that could dismantle Iran's regional influence and reshape the international affairs of the Middle East in Israel's favor. With American political support already secured through deep lobbying ties, Israel is now seeking military backing to finish what it started. The question isn't just why Israel attacked, but why it did so in a way that almost guarantees U.S. involvement.

Early morning on June 13, Israel launched a premeditated attack on Iran. The offensive began with a cyberattack on Iranian radar and air defense systems, followed by drone strikes—some reportedly launched from inside Iran—targeting high-ranking officials and critical infrastructure.

According to the Israeli Defense Forces, the operation was intended to disrupt Iran's nuclear program. Israel frames the strike as a matter of national survival—a preemptive act of self-defense against an existential threat. However, a harder question must be asked: Is targeting Iran truly about survival or about expanding Israeli power across the region?

Codenamed Operation Rising Lion, the offensive marks Israel's boldest action against Iran since the 1980s. According to the Associated Press, over 200 aircraft struck more than 100 targets, including the Natanz nuclear enrichment site and the residences of top Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commanders, such as Hossein Salami and Mohammad Bagheri. While Natanz sustained damage, deeply buried facilities like Fordo remain largely untouched, suggesting the nuclear program may not have been the only target.

The June operation was preceded by covert Mossad activity and cyber sabotage—tactics typical of Israel's longstanding campaign against Iran. But this mission's scale and focus on political and military leadership suggest broader ambitions: not merely delaying Iran's nuclear capabilities but potentially destabilizing its regime.

For decades, Israel has pursued a doctrine of preemption, striking enemies

before they can pose existential threats. The Begin Doctrine—asserting that no hostile state should acquire nuclear weapons—justified past attacks on Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981 and Syria's covert nuclear facility in 2007. Both strikes were conducted without public warning or the approval of international partners.

But Israel's preemptive reach has long extended beyond nuclear concerns. In the 1970s and 1980s, it targeted Palestinian Liberation Organization bases in Lebanon, culminating in the 1982 Lebanon War—aimed not just at militants but at reshaping Lebanon's political order. More recently, hundreds of Israeli airstrikes in Syria have targeted Iranian weapons shipments, Hezbollah infrastructure, and even Syrian military assets—all without formal declarations of war.

In Gaza, major military operations—Operation Cast Lead from 2008-09, Operation Protective Edge in 2014, and more recently, the devastating Israel-Hamas war in 2023—have been presented as defensive responses to Hamas rocket fire. Yet they have fueled an ongoing debate over proportionality and long-term objectives.

To be sure, Israel's fears of Iran are not baseless. Iran has openly called for the destruction of the Israeli state, funds armed groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, and supplies advanced weaponry to militias stationed across Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. Its ballistic missile program continues to advance, and its nuclear program—while ostensibly civilian—has raised red flags for decades.

Israel justifies its strike on the grounds that Iran poses a nuclear threat, but the charge rings hollow given Israel's own nuclear history. Israel is widely believed to possess a nuclear arsenal developed in secret, outside the bounds of international oversight. It has never signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, never subjected its facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency inspections, and has maintained a policy of deliberate ambiguity. Iran, by contrast, remains a member of the IAEA and the NPT, and its facilities—while deeply buried and concerning to many—have at least nominal oversight. The irony is stark: the only nuclear-armed state in the Middle East, which acquired its weapons outside

any international framework, now leads a campaign to stop a neighboring country from doing the same.

The logic of preemption—central to the Israeli government's security strategy—has run up against the reality of a decentralized threat that cannot be neutralized in a single blow. Operation Rising Lion represents not just an effort to degrade Iran's nuclear progress but an attempt to decapitate its regional influence—and perhaps, to provoke a larger war that draws in the United States.

And that may be the real objective: American intervention.

By launching such a sweeping assault—disabling air defenses, killing key IRGC commanders, and signaling an intent to destabilize Iran's leadership—Israel appears to be laying the groundwork for U.S. escalation. Despite official reluctance, Washington is unlikely to stay out of the fight. Political pressure—fueled by pro-Israel lobby groups—remains immense.

In the 2023-24 cycle alone, American Israel Public Affairs Committee and aligned groups spent over \$53 million backing 361 pro-Israel congressional candidates. Nearly two-thirds of Congress—349 members—received AIPAC funding. Yet AIPAC is not registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, allowing it to operate as a domestic lobby despite working on behalf of a foreign government's strategic interests—a point recently raised in a high-profile interview between Tucker Carlson and Senator Ted Cruz. With such deep financial ties, it becomes politically untenable for most lawmakers to oppose a U.S. role, even if few want another conflict.

It's not just elected officials pushing for deeper U.S. involvement—American elites in business and media are amplifying the call. Billionaire hedge fund manager Bill Ackman '88, a vocal supporter of Israel, has been involved in a private WhatsApp group including Israeli military leaders and top U.S. executives, created to “change the narrative” by promoting stories of Hamas atrocities and bolstering support for Israel in the American public sphere.

On June 14, Ackman tweeted to his millions of followers that the U.S. should help Israel “finish the job,” arguing that this was the “lowest-risk, highest-probability

moment” to destroy Iran’s nuclear program—a message viewed over 8 million times. Ackman’s deep ties to Israel and access to influential networks reveal the close alignment between certain segments of American elite opinion and Israeli security priorities. This kind of elite narrative pressure helps turn foreign wars into domestic mandates.

For Israel, U.S. military support is indispensable. Despite years of covert operations and proxy wars, Israel lacks the military capacity to dismantle Iran’s regime on its own. Iran’s nuclear infrastructure is deeply buried; its leadership, heavily protected. Only American firepower—bunker-busting bombs, intelligence networks, and sustained airpower—offers a credible path to regime change in Iran.

But Israel needs more than firepower. It needs legitimacy, and only U.S. endorsement can provide that. Without it, a unilateral war risks condemnation and global escalation, possibly drawing in China or Russia, both close allies of Iran. Without U.S. support—under the banners of nonproliferation or counterterrorism—the equation changes. Regime change led by American hands is more palatable to allies, more intimidating to adversaries, and easier to sell domestically in Israel.

By pushing the U.S. toward the brink of war, Israel is not just trying to weaken Iran, but it is trying to reorder the Middle East. It seems Israel hopes to remove the one state that consistently resists its expansion and disrupt the network of militias, movements, and governments that challenge Israel’s regional supremacy.

However, the cost of escalation is already becoming clear. Even limited U.S. involvement risks spiraling into regional war. Iran has already warned that any American support for Israel will be interpreted as an act of war. The Strait of Hormuz—through which a fifth of global oil passes—could become a flashpoint. Iranian proxies might target U.S. forces in Iraq, Syria, or the Gulf. Regional U.S. allies such as Jordan could be dragged in. In the U.S., a war with Iran would likely spike gas prices, destabilize global markets, and send another generation of American troops into a region with no clear exit plan.

Most troubling of all: this is not a war the American public asked for—or supports. In April 2025, the Pew Research Center found that a majority of U.S. adults—53%—now express an unfavorable opinion of Israel. That raises deep questions about the legitimacy of any military action taken



in its name. Yet war may come anyway—driven not by popular mandate but by the influence of a foreign ally with deep sway in Washington.

Israel’s ability to steer U.S. foreign policy through lobbying networks, intelligence partnerships, and congressional ties has created a dangerous precedent: American lives and resources leveraged to serve another nation’s geopolitical goals. That’s a direct challenge to American sovereignty. When one country can essentially trigger another’s military support—not through democratic debate, but through political pressure—that’s not an alliance. It’s a liability.

None of this excuses Iran’s actions. Iran funds proxy militias, threatens its neighbors, and violates international norms. But that doesn’t mean the U.S. should fight a war that serves Israeli goals more than its own. When Israeli military strategy implicates American power, the line between ally and architect begins to blur.

We must recognize what this moment truly represents: a coordinated attempt to reshape the Middle East by force, with the United States as the enabler. The question is no longer just whether Iran poses a threat, but whether that threat justifies another open-ended war, risking global instability and undermining democratic control over American foreign policy.

On June 22, the United States bombed three nuclear sites in Iran—confirming that Israel’s initial strike was designed to trigger American military involvement. B-2 bombers deployed bunker-busting bombs on Fordo, Natanz, and Isfahan, three of Iran’s major uranium enrichment centers. Yet early analysis suggests the airstrikes failed to eliminate Iran’s nuclear capabilities, merely setting them back by several months. A ceasefire announced by President Donald Trump on June 23 was quickly violated by both Iran and Israel, raising serious questions about whether U.S. involvement is truly over—or just beginning.

So we’re left with a choice. Who determines when the United States goes to war? The people we elect—or the allies who know how to pressure them?

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GRAPHIC BY ANGIE LI '28

Thoughts from New Quincy: In Search of Lost Time

Revisiting *La Jetée* and the notebook that keeps taking me back.

BY LUKE WAGNER '26

There's a place I keep returning to—not physically, but in memory. My freshman dorm room. It had a small bed crammed under a wall of movie posters I don't relate to anymore. A portable A/C unit the school kept emailing me to remove. The carpet was that dorm-issue kind—brown and blue, the color of nothing in particular.

I spent whole days in there, sketching in a notebook I carried everywhere. Doodles, half-formed thoughts, the occasional drawing of the room itself—my desk, the corner of the bed frame, the way the light filtered in late in the afternoon. I would often move the bed around. It never seemed to fit.

I drew almost every night, until one day I traded paper and pencil for watercolor and acrylics.

I still have that notebook, and flipping through it now, I'm drawn right back into that room.

Last summer, while I was living in New York—still sketching, still filling notebooks—I picked up Hua Hsu's memoir "Stay True." Somewhere in the middle of the book, after another quiet night spent doodling

alone in my apartment, I came across his description of a short film called "La Jetée:" a story told entirely through still photographs. A man haunted by a memory he never fully understood.

I looked it up. Twenty-seven minutes. A bunch of still images. And a Vimeo link.

I watched it once. Then again. Then again. I couldn't stop. It was like someone had made a film out of the feeling I'd been trying to explain for years—the way a memory loops to remind you of what you can't return to.

"La Jetée" isn't a film in the conventional sense. There's almost no movement and no dialogue, except for a French voiceover with English subtitles. And no acting, only still photographs. It runs a mere twenty-seven minutes and yet it feels suspended, like it's happening inside of a dream you only half-remember.

It follows the story of a man living in the ruins of a futuristic post war Paris, devastated by nuclear disaster. Those left have been driven underground.

Desperate to salvage what's left of civilization, scientists begin experimenting with time travel. They send the man into the past—using memory as the only stable bridge.

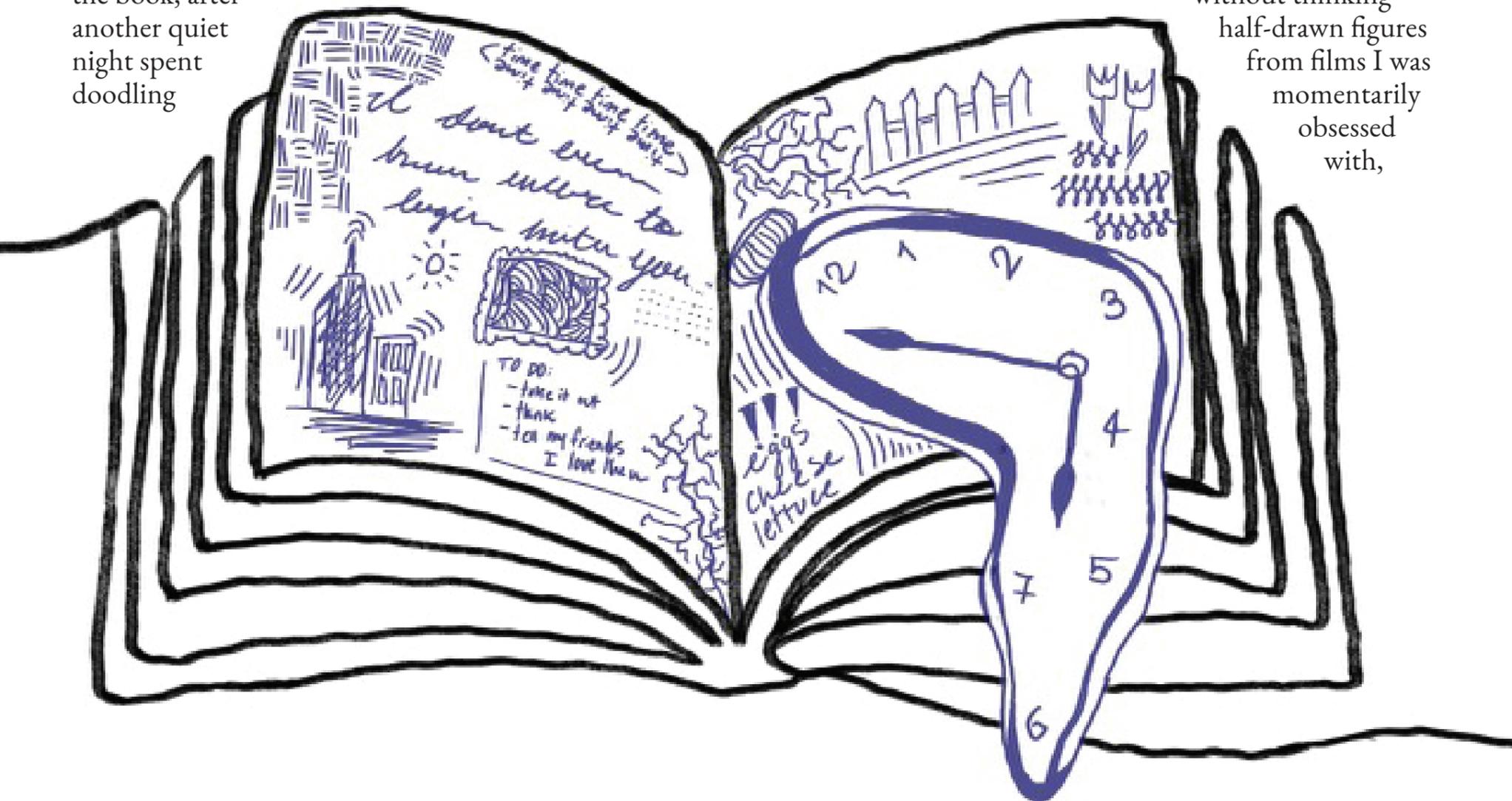
His mission is technical. Save the world. But what he finds is emotional: a woman. A moment. A feeling he once glimpsed as a child—standing on the observation deck of Orly Airport, watching strangers, watching planes. It's not a memory so much as an imprint. Half image, half sensation. But it stays with him. It guides everything.

When I first watched the film, I didn't think of it as science fiction. I barely registered the apocalyptic setting. What stuck with me was the quiet ache beneath the plot—a man consumed by a memory he does not quite understand, yet remains ruled by it.

Something about that—about the stillness, the obsession, the way a single image can become a life raft—felt familiar.

My notebook from freshman year has more of me in it than I realized at the time. I used to fill it

without thinking—half-drawn figures from films I was momentarily obsessed with,



fragments of overheard conversations scribbled down without context, lists of habits I thought I needed to become a better person. There's a whole page filled with a hand I drew over and over and still couldn't get right.

There's no narrative in the notebook—just repetition. The same ideas reworked from different angles: the shape of a room, the longing behind a face, the same stack of books placed differently, the same poster of a band I've outgrown as it peeled by the corners. Figures are scattered all about. It's not a diary. It's surveillance. And I was both the subject and the observer.

That's what watching "La Jetée" felt like: staring at still frames that weren't trying to explain themselves, but refused to be forgotten. A story told not through motion, but through accumulation.

One of the central ironies of "La Jetée" is that the protagonist is chosen for time travel precisely because of his overwhelming attachment to a single memory. That's the premise: memory isn't just a shadow of the past, but a place so emotionally charged it can be reentered—like a portal.

He returns to the same moment again and again: a woman's face, sunlight falling across her features, the edge of a glance at the Orly Airport. It's barely a memory—faint, fragmented, more feeling than fact. But it holds him. It follows him. Like it's more than just a memory. Like it's waiting to become something else.

He doesn't know why that moment matters. Only that it anchors him. It's what makes the past feel real.

Maybe that's the real function of memory—not to show us the truth, but to convince us that the past happened at all.

When I flip through that old notebook, I don't find clarity. I feel something closer to vertigo. The drawings aren't vivid or expressive—they're half-present, distracted, the kind of marks you make when you think nothing important is happening. That's what makes them so haunting now.

It's not what I was capturing. It's everything that sits just beyond the edges: the voice down the hall, the unopened email, the people you shared the space with, the feeling that time was endless and nothing mattered yet.

That's what I'm chasing—not the drawings themselves, but the atmosphere around them. The shape of time bending in on itself.

Upon watching "La Jetée" for the third, maybe fourth time, I noticed how the film doesn't loop in any obvious way—yet it still feels circular. Not because it's repetitive, but because it's recursive. The man dives deeper into the same memory, each time peeling it back a little more. The woman looks slightly different. The lighting changes. There's no progress, only sharpening.

That's how I experience memory, too. A fixed image I rotate like a puzzle piece, trying to make it click into a shape that explains something I don't understand.

The director, Chris Marker, stages this beautifully: the same stills, the same scenes, reappearing across different moments in the story. Then, just once, the rules break. The woman blinks. It's the only moving image in the entire film—and it lands like a breath breaking the silence.

I remember the moment she blinked—exactly. I sat upright, rewound the clip, and watched it again. In a film composed of stillness, any kind of motion feels like a revelation.

That moment—the blink—reminded me of how monotony works. The days blur. Time freezes. And then, suddenly, something breaks through—a laugh, a dream, a sound that shouldn't be there. A small, impossible sign that something's still alive inside all the quiet.

There's a moment near the end of "La Jetée" when everything seems to align. The man has returned to the memory at Orly that he's spent the entire film chasing. He's back at the airport. He sees the woman whose face he is haunted by. It feels like resolution is finally within reach—that if he can just hold onto this moment, he might be saved.

But instead, he dies.

Just before it happens, he realizes that the memory he's been chasing is the moment of his own death. What appeared sudden was always inevitable. The scene he witnessed as a child—a man collapsing on the airport observation deck—was actually a vision of his own death. The moment he had always remembered as safe turns out to have been the end of his life.

I think about that a lot. The risk of memory. The possibility that the things we return to for comfort might also be the things that undo us. That notebook—it doesn't bring peace. It never has. If anything, it makes things feel vivid.

There are days I flip through it, trying to feel close to something I've lost—certainty, maybe. Or softness. The way I used to move through the world without needing to understand it. But what I usually find is a strange kind of distance, like watching a version of myself I no longer recognize but still feel responsible for.

I don't expect the pages to offer answers. It's just that part of me wonders if, by looking long enough, I'll finally understand what I didn't know I was living through.

But some moments resist interpretation. Some records weren't meant to explain. Only to exist.

We like to believe that memory is healing—that to remember is to honor, to preserve, to keep alive. But "La Jetée" suggests something harder: that memory can also be a trap. Looking back might not take us anywhere at all. It might just fold us further into ourselves.

The protagonist believes he's moving forward, that he's reclaiming something—love, meaning, time. But what he's actually doing is completing a loop that was always closed. The end was there from the beginning.

It's easy to think of time travel as science fiction. But what Marker suggests—gently, devastatingly—is that we all do it. Every time we revisit a memory, we travel through a version of ourselves that no longer exists. Memory is less like a scrapbook and more like a rerun: comforting, familiar, and ultimately unchanged.

That notebook still lives on a shelf in my apartment. I don't open it often, but I know exactly where it is. Some days I'll flip through the pages, feeling the presence of time I didn't know was slipping away.

Maybe that's the real cost of remembering—not that it hurts, but that it never finishes. That some sketches and impressions stay sharp no matter how many years pass. That memory, like in "La Jetée," resists closure.

It's not there to be solved. It's there to sit with you—quietly, unchanging.

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GRAPHIC BY ALMA RUSSELL '26





Civility and Privilege

College discourse and the politics of civil conversation.

BY JONATHAN MCCABE

Central to any university's mission is debate, discourse across disciplines, and exchange across backgrounds. Yet, according to University president Alan Garber '76, these conversations are faltering. In a recent interview with the Wall Street Journal, Garber reflected on how life at the University has changed since his time as an undergraduate.

"Students today find it much harder to have conversations with one another about difficult subjects, particularly with someone they don't know well," he said. "And to me, that is a big loss, and it's something my colleagues have also recognized."

This critical view of college discourse is not isolated to Harvard. In recent years, higher education institutions have come under increasing scrutiny for rising incivility in protests and a perceived decline in tolerance across political, social, and economic divides. In response, many colleges have begun implementing measures to reduce these tensions, such as training incoming students to engage in conversations "across differences."

As a graduate of the master's in bioethics program at Harvard, I've experienced the institutional response to incivility first hand. My classes were inundated with "community learning commitments"—sets of principles designed to promote respectful dialogue. For my classmates and me, these measures have served as a surrogate for academic leadership. As reflected in Garber's statement, educators appear especially concerned with preserving civility in the classroom and academic environment, particularly in debate-oriented fields such as bioethics.

In conversations with some of my mentors and professors, they state that the decrease in civility is due to some form of moral decay: that students today are less respectful of each other and their character more fallible compared to previous generations. But this is a shortsighted view. The heated discussions or raised voices of my friends and classmates are not signs of declining virtue; instead, they can be better understood through the lens of identity.

Since Garber's time as an undergraduate, universities have become more diverse. As one example, in 1976, there were 383,000 students of Hispanic ethnicity enrolled in higher education. As of 2023, that number has climbed to nearly 4 million. As a result, the makeup of classroom voices, and how outcomes in class discussion impacts those in it, has changed. Debates around immigration, for example, are no longer just theoretical policy exercises for the students discussing them; they often touch the lived realities of classmates, their friends, and their families.

Today's conversations are more emotionally charged, not because students lack character or the ability to restrain themselves, but because the personal is now, more than ever, inseparable from the political. The integration of the experience of the impassioned student has become as important within conversation as the "rational" or statistical arguments.

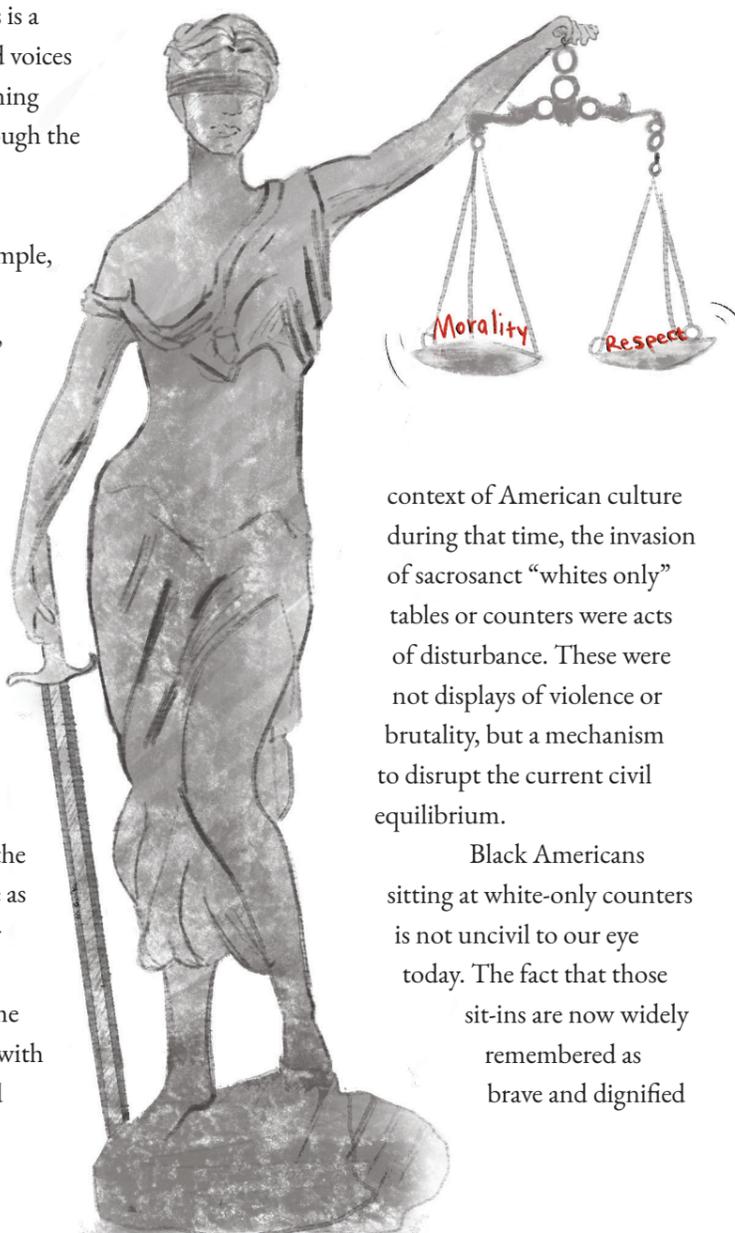
As a collateral of the decline in virtue, some may conflate the impassioned state of campus life with a lack of freedom of speech. That outrage or raised

voices means the reduction of other viewpoints. These are related concepts; however, the idea of civility is more concerned with how messages are presented, not what the messages are. This distinction can help organize discussion on campus around these concepts, and allow individuals to advocate for freedom of speech while critiquing tone-limiting definitions of civility.

So, when I hear critiques of incivility aimed at those close to me, I often find they ignore a crucial dynamic: the call to "weigh both sides" of an argument is itself a form of privilege. This is especially true when the "other side" promotes ideas that threaten the dignity or safety of one's community. In such cases, showing respect for an opposing viewpoint isn't just difficult, it can feel morally impossible. Recent political events have highlighted this dynamic. With heightened tension around immigration policy, discussions of ICE enforcement have taken center stage. But students of this generation are not finding it harder to have difficult conversations about this topic; they are, however, finding it harder to tolerate groups challenging their lived experience and the safety and dignity of those close to them.

If this incongruence among students persists, then what is the role of civility in campus life? If Garber's comments are true, does that imply there is a need to return to some historic equilibrium of respect? Civility, according to both political and moral philosophers, is often treated as a virtue that underpins social life. But in practice—historically and today—it can serve as a gatekeeping tool, used as a mechanism to silence those who disrupt the status quo. In this light, incivility is not always a breakdown of discourse, it can be a catalyst for social progress.

The most famous example of this incivility are the sit-ins of the civil rights movement. Within the



context of American culture during that time, the invasion of sacrosanct "whites only" tables or counters were acts of disturbance. These were not displays of violence or brutality, but a mechanism to disrupt the current civil equilibrium.

Black Americans sitting at white-only counters is not uncivil to our eye today. The fact that those sit-ins are now widely remembered as brave and dignified

shows that civility is not a fixed moral truth. Civility is historically contingent, often defined by those in power. What is called "uncivil" in the moment is often just the first stirrings of social progress. Today, when students protest policies or speech that they find harmful, the same dynamics re-emerge. Their disruptions are framed as a breakdown in civility rather than a form of principled resistance. I am reminded of the Harvard Encampment of 2024, and a letter sent to Garber by Harvard affiliates that encouraged him "to end the encampment swiftly and as peacefully as possible, so that the academic missions of our community...can go forward without further disturbance."

But like the sit-ins, these actions reflect not moral decay, but moral clarity.

In these times, a return to traditional forms of civil discourse, perhaps the kind Garber imagines, is not what is needed. Instead, we need a redefinition of what civil conversation looks like in a diverse, pluralistic university. The contemporary college campus cannot shut down conversations labeled "uncivil" when that incivility is often applied to the impassioned voices of the marginalized demanding recognition and justice. What is called incivility is frequently a response to the deep frustration of being unheard, unseen, or continuously subjected to systems of inequality. Suppressing those expressions in the name of decorum risks sterilizing discourse and maintaining the status quo.

We need a definition of civility that distinguishes between disruption that fosters growth and furthers discussion and disruption intended to harm. We no longer live in a society defined solely by a diversity of thought, but also by a diversity of identity. Garber's concern about the loss of civility confuses these two realities. On modern university campuses, we must critically examine how "civility" is invoked, and how it can be employed to silence others. Civility, when used as a moral standard, must be interrogated for the ways it can marginalize. The discomfort of confronting systemic injustice should not be mistaken for incivility.

When protest or discourse does occur in higher education, the goal of the administration should not be to eliminate "disturbance" for its own sake. The leadership of higher education needs to understand that, if we are to foster truly inclusive campuses, our definition of civility must evolve. It must account for how cultural norms shape who is expected to stay calm and who is punished for speaking out.

If universities are to be spaces of rigorous debate and intellectual growth, they must also be spaces that allow for expressions that challenge dominant norms. The use of civility as a mechanism to oppress others has a storied history, and a return to historical definitions of the concept does not reflect the changing values of our time. To grow intellectually, universities must welcome discomfort, and not disguise it as incivility.

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GRAPHIC BY MADISON KRUG '27

A Broad, No Longer Abroad: Between the Seine and the Subway

Repatriated, caffeinated, and still undecided on where I want to live post-graduation.

BY FRANCES CONNORS '26

The coffee shop where I'm writing this isn't as charming as my favorite cafés in Paris, like Café Vavin or Candle Kids Coffee, but it's a holdover from my abroad days. When deciding where to work today, I debated between a West Village coffee shop and the Harvard Club of New York. As my roommate astutely pointed out, that choice mirrors the broader tension I've felt for months—before, during, and after studying abroad: Do I choose the familiar comforts of home (the Harvard Club's friendly faces) or chase the thrill of the unknown (solo afternoons in unfamiliar cafés)? What began as a decision about going abroad has evolved into a deeper question as I approach my senior year: Where do I want to be after graduation?

The international instinct won today. But since returning to the States and moving to New York City for the summer, I've found myself increasingly grateful for the Harvard community. I've realized that choosing where to live isn't just about aesthetics—it's about the people you share your world with.

On paper, Paris and New York have a lot in common that appeals to a twenty-something: nightlife that never quits, a walkable layout, a train that can take you anywhere, and an energy that hums through every street. After a brief stint back home in the Cleveland suburbs, I'm reminded of the joy of having a city at your doorstep—no car needed.

But Paris still calls to me. I'm drawn to its artistic undercurrent and endless beauty. Maybe it's because I had more free time, but I loved losing myself in Paris's infinite museums and art galleries. While the Met is impressive, I haven't found that art and museums permeate every inch of New York as they do in Paris. (I've also spent a lot less time drawing in parks in New York, though that one might be on me.) And while New York brownstones are lovely, nothing compares to the romance of Parisian architecture, which still lives rent-free in my mind.

I may be offending all the native New

Yorkers right now, so I'll clarify that I'm in no way suggesting New York's art scene is inferior to that of Paris. Instead, I found that my artistic side reemerged while abroad, but in New York, I no longer have time for three-hour watercolor classes on Wednesday mornings. From my experience, Paris is the city where I got to explore the art world while New York has allowed me to pursue my career goals. Each city comes with its own set of habits and personality traits for me.

I've tried to carry some of my Parisian habits with me—most notably, the long dinners. In my first week in New York, I closed out four different restaurants with a fellow study abroad friend, lingering over each meal and eschewing New

York's need for efficiency. But the reality

of working in New York means some routines just don't stick. My first “working lunch”—a

Sweetgreen salad eaten in front of Excel—left me longing for the warm paninis I used to savor along the Seine.

Highway or waiting in line for an intern bar, I never fail to see a familiar face. As someone who loves to say “hi” in passing, New York has been heaven.

During my first weekend here, I ran into a Harvard friend in SoHo, and we got brunch the next day, just as easily as if I had seen her outside Widener and suggested lunch at Eliot House. In Paris, I missed that casual, spontaneous social fabric. But New York is proving that life beyond Cambridge can still feel like campus.

As I weigh the beauty of Paris against the community in New York, I'm not surprised by how much I value the latter. Every spontaneous encounter brings the same thrill as the first. I love spending my weekends with people I met in Annenberg freshman year. When I was abroad, I sometimes feared Harvard would move on without me, but seeing my college friends in New York reminds me that social circles don't vanish in five months.

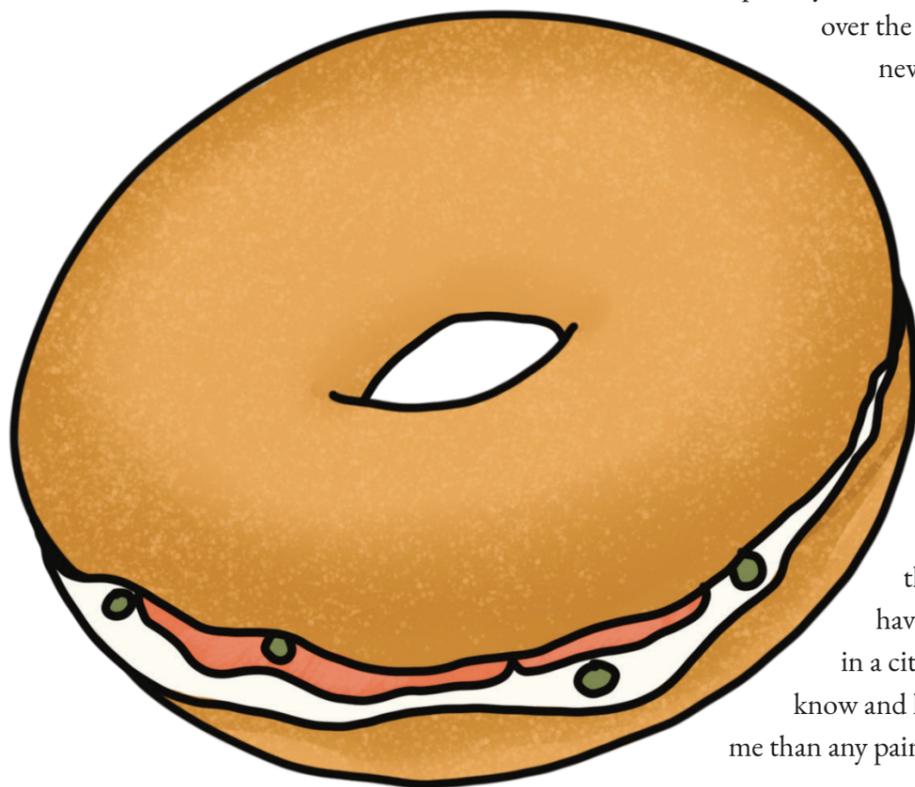
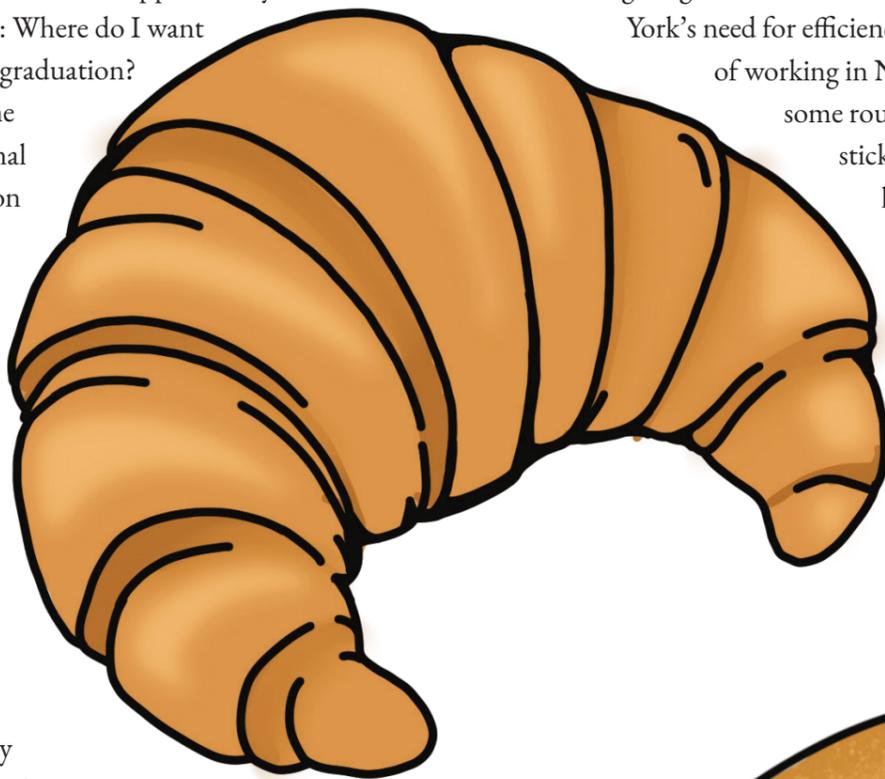
New York feels like a small town when practically half my grade is here this summer, many of whom will probably move back after graduation. That said, I'm less confident that I'll have as many run-ins five years post-grad. I imagine that if I stay in New York, I'd reach an equilibrium where the outflow of old friends would be replaced by new ones. In theory, the same could happen in Paris, though I doubt I could ever reach the same base level of community. A move abroad would mean giving

up many of the relationships I've forged over the past four years in favor of new ones.

And so, where does that leave me? At its core, Paris feels like the city that's more “me.” While abroad, I felt a strong sense of peace, and then a gaping hole in my heart when I left. When I came to New York, that hole was quickly patched by the amazing community I have here. So for now, being in a city surrounded by people I know and love is more beautiful to me than any painting in the Louvre.

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GRAPHIC BY NESHAMA RYMAN '28



Unlike Paris, New York rarely makes time for leisure.

Still, what draws me to the New York post-grad life is the people. While Paris's emphasis on work-life balance allows more time for socializing, New York has something far more important: my community. Since arriving, I've bumped into fellow Harvard students and hometown friends nearly every day. Whether I'm running along the West Side

Love Island Reconsidered

Watching “Love Island” is smarter than it seems.

BY PAIGE CORNELIUS '28

Somewhere in a chemistry lab in Cambridge, a rising sophomore pauses her chemistry experiment to watch an intense recoupling. Across the world in New Zealand, an Econ concentrator spits out his morning coffee because Belle-A was sent home from the Villa. And in suburban Ohio, I trade an hour of nightly reading for the thrill of hearing, for the hundredth time, “I got a textttt!”

We are Harvard students—future politicians, startup founders, and Nobel Prize winners. And yet, at 9 p.m. EST, a shocking number of us cozy up to watch tanned individuals “have a chat” by a fire pit, in the hit reality TV show, “Love Island.”

At first glance, tuning into a nightly reality TV show may seem like intellectual laziness. But in actuality, it’s something more: intellectual indulgence. As Harvard students, we tend to feel some moral opposition to consuming what most consider “trashy TV.” However, there are clear benefits to indulging in media that aren’t intellectual by nature—positives that may not be found in textbooks.

With slightly less ethics and much more Botox, “Love Island’s” Fijian villa functions like a living, breathing psychology experiment. Twelve participants are flown to a secluded villa and stripped of their phones. Romantic stimuli like flirtation, physical attraction, and the pressure to couple up are introduced. Their attachment patterns, stress responses, and conflict resolution skills play out on national television. The producers, acting as researchers, manipulate variables by dropping bombshells (new islanders) and throwing in unpredictable challenges. Participants are compensated with Instagram followers, brand deals, and newfound fame. And we, the viewers, are the peer reviewers, voting for which participants deserve the cash prize, and which should be dumped from the island.

But “Love Island” isn’t just psychological—it’s literary. The love triangles and betrayals echo Shakespearean drama. When an islander sacrifices their place in the villa to leave with a partner, it’s a modern-day Romeo and Juliet. Timeless tropes appear every season: the star-crossed lovers, the charming villain, the loveable fool. Like any good play, the show offers arcs of real character development—some islanders find their happily-ever-after, others are blindsided. And as with Shakespeare, viewers spend half of the episode deciphering the islanders’ confusing language.

capturing the intensity of human connection under pressure.

“Love Island” is a social experience. It shifts dining hall conversations from looming p-set deadlines to the latest episode’s drama, relieving students of academic stress. It connects peers outside of the classroom and lights up forgotten group chats. It brings people together in an intense atmosphere that can drive competition. Among young adults who obsess over intellectual performance, bonding over something unserious can be a lifeline. It reminds us that laughter, levity, and the occasional dramatic

recoupling are just as important for our mental health as office hours and exams.

So no, I don’t take personal offense if you’re still unconvinced. In this case, I urge you to indulge in reality TV nonetheless. As Harvard students, we often feel that every piece of media we consume should be intellectually stimulating.

However, even without literary

analysis or psychological insight, there’s value in joy and relaxation. And that is more sustaining than burnout. Therefore, I’m done feeling guilty for loving reality TV.

Watching “Love Island” doesn’t make viewers less smart. It makes us emotionally attuned, culturally literate, and better at spotting red flags from miles away. It might not challenge our brains like a documentary or philosophy textbook—but it serves just as useful of a purpose.



Even the supposed “lack of intellect” among islanders is a misconception. Many of them are playing a game—strategically. While the premise is love, there’s always someone scheming for popularity and the cash prize. These are social chess players, navigating alliances, performing loyalty, and weaponizing emotional intelligence. Manipulation hides beneath perfect teeth and a dimpled smile.

Yet beyond all the academic parallels, “Love Island” offers moments of true emotional sincerity. I’ve shed more than a few tears watching someone indulge in Casa Amor’s temptations, only to return to the Villa and find their partner standing alone. The show wrestles with universal relationship themes: trust, jealousy, forgiveness. It fast-forwards through months of emotional growth in a matter of weeks,

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GRAPHIC BY EMMA CRAGO '28

Stranger in My City

Why this summer back from college feels different.

BY MIA WILCOX '28

On my first day back from Harvard, I had lunch with my high school friend Talia. We picked up takeout sushi from a popular market near our old school and strolled down Madison Avenue, chatting and window shopping. We had done the exact same routine on one of the last days before leaving for college—same restaurant, same stores.

So much had changed since I last saw her. Aside from a brief visit during Harvard-Yale, we hadn't really kept in touch. And yet, we picked up right where we left off. After a quick SparkNotes-style recap of the past nine months, our conversation drifted back to familiar topics. It felt eerily unchanged, as if we had stepped into separate universes and then returned to the same one we left behind, our time apart only a distant memory. Obviously, so much was different, and yet I couldn't shake the feeling that nothing had changed at all.

I had a similar feeling the day my dad came to pick me up from campus in May. We cleaned out Pennypacker 25 until it was spotless. My roommate had already shipped her things out, and the room looked just as it had in August. On the four-hour drive back to the city, I found myself expecting everything at home to be just as I'd left it. And for a few days, it was. I went downtown with my girlfriends, took long walks in the park with my mom, and made the breakfast I ate nearly every morning in high school. I felt completely comfortable, and the chaos and uncertainty of transitioning to college seemed to melt away.

But that comfort didn't last.

I thought coming home would feel like stepping back into the life I had left behind. Instead, I found I'd outgrown it and had to learn how to live at home all over again.

Soon enough, reality set in. My parents, now empty nesters, had built routines without me. It seems obvious in hindsight, but I was jarred by how

independent their lives had become. Once I started working, they were often out of the house, and I found myself living alone for much of May and June. I quickly became overwhelmed, juggling time with old friends and new, and adjusting to the relentless pace and heat; the city felt suffocating. I had worked so hard to create a new routine in Cambridge, and suddenly, back home, I felt aimless. Without the structure high school had provided to see my friends daily, I now had to make plans with intention. That seemed to mean the fading away of some old friendships.

newest. There is something special about introducing them to each other—about watching my different worlds collide.

Beyond this convergence of friendships, I made an effort to reconnect with all of the things I love and miss about home. One of my first stops was the newly renovated Frick Collection. The Gilded Age mansion on 71st and 5th had long been a favorite of mine, but after a year immersed in Harvard's History of Art and Architecture program, I had gained a newfound appreciation for the porcelain halls, the ornate clocks, and the quiet sunlit courtyard.

My mom and I ventured to Broadway, where we saw Sarah Snook take on a 29-role one-woman show in "The Picture of

Dorian Grey," and Cole Escola's Tony-winning performance in "Oh Mary!" My dad and I revived an old tradition, watching the Yankees beat the Red Sox (sorry, Boston) while enjoying classic New York hot dogs.

It was in these activities that I found a balance that worked for me—a harmony between home and school, New York and Boston. This summer has shown me just how much my world has expanded since starting college. I can look forward to returning to Cambridge—to my routines and independence—but I'm also learning to appreciate everything I love about home, as I continue to evolve and grow beyond those old comforts.

Last week, as I rode the 4/5 uptown with my blockmates on a sweltering afternoon, it hit me: the city is still the city. What's changed is me. I'll always be a New Yorker, no matter how long I live in Boston—maybe I can learn to bring a little bit of each city to the other.

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GRAPHIC BY AMELIE LIMA '27

Big
apple



taxi
taxi



pigeons
pigeons



The beginning of summer had always felt relaxed, but this year, with my upcoming work schedule, I felt as though I had too much time yet somehow not enough. Nothing was carefree or simple anymore.

After many afternoons of spiraling, feeling like a stranger in my home, I finally came to terms with my situation: this was just another adjustment. I had grown used to independence at school—going to bed and waking up at my convenience, strolling along the Charles after classes, hunkering down in Widener, but always with the certainty that I would see my friends at Berg or in Tatte at some point during the day. Home now required a different kind of independence—one without built-in structure or community.

That realization shifted my perspective. I began to see that not all change was bad. Many of my Harvard friends were in New York for summer jobs and internships. On any given night, I could start the evening with my oldest friends and end it with the



ARTS

Overheard on Safari

If looks could talk.

BY HEIDI HEFFELFINGER '26

A Animals may not be able to speak with humans, but they are certainly not silent. If you spend enough time watching them, you might begin to wonder what is going through their heads. This photo series has no claim for accuracy—but rather, offers a guess at the inner monologues and wild thoughts of the animals I came across during my trip to Africa.



“Make way for elephants”



“What are you looking at?”



“Practicing for the runway show”



Quick kids! Pretend something interesting is over there”



“He started it first”



“I walk, they watch”



“Smile, kids! This is going on the Christmas card”



“Hydrate or Diedrate”



“We don't always sprint”



“Playtime is my favorite time”



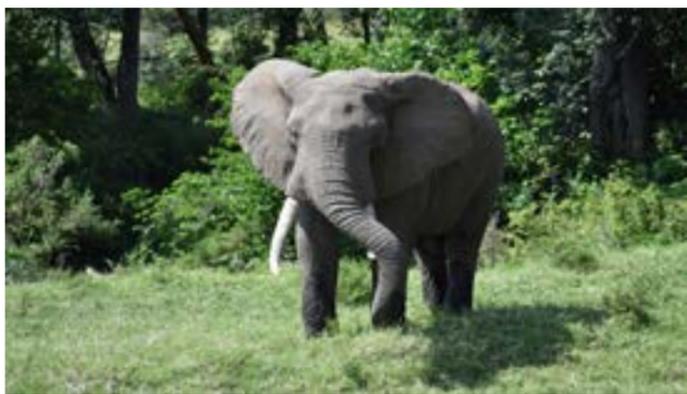
“My kids are camera shy”



“Practicing my RBF”



“One step at a time...”



“Tired trunk”



“The perfect spot”



“You weren’t supposed to find me”



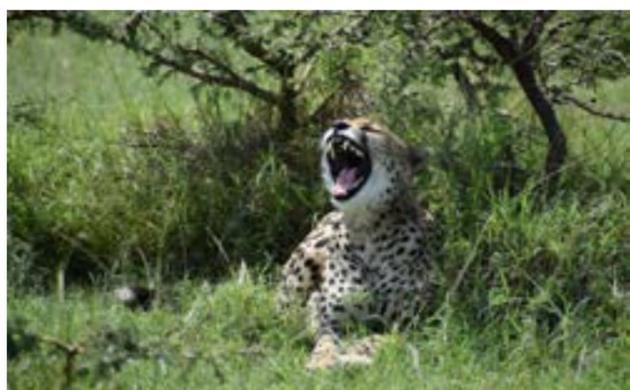
“Biiiiiiiiig stretch”



“Practicing my roar”



“Mufasa won’t know what hit him”



“Do I have any food in my teeth?”



“They’ll never know I’m farting down here”



“Two long necks, zero clue what’s next”



“Late for happy hour”



“Wait for me, I’ve got little legs!”



“These hips don’t lie”



“if these tusks could talk...”



“Relaxing with mom”



“Am I black with white stripes of white with black stripes?”



“Here, get my good side”



“Is it weird we’re friends?”



“The mullet was definitely a good play”



“This is going to be a good nap”



“Snack time”



“Definitely didn’t hit my step count today”

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The Summer of the Audiobook

And other Good Ideas.

BY CLARA LAKE '27

Just hours after my summer began, the lifestyle change of “having free time” came as a bit of a shock. So, when someone I know who has very good ideas (my mother) suggested that I “read more this summer” and asked whether I had a book for the plane and subsequent weekend trip, I replied that I did not. I had not found the time to carefully select a book from the catalog of my 2013 Kindle Paperwhite (which was dead), nor comb through the various options around my house.

“You can get a book at the airport,” she suggested. I said I would, mostly just to quell her good ideas. But then, I soon found myself sitting at gate B21 of the Boston Logan Airport with a delayed flight and three hours to kill.

My mother’s suggestion resurfaced in my mind as I stared at the wall of flashy book covers in the nearest Hudson News.

Overwhelmed by the pressure to make the perfect selection from so many options, I nearly walked right back out. Luckily, as I turned to go, I noticed a stand featuring books by one of my favorite authors—Fredrik Backman. As it turns out, he had published a new book just months before.

After scanning the inside cover, I walked out with a crisp hardcover copy of Backman’s “My

Friends” and a pack of gummy worms. I was so immersed in the story during the flight that the jolt of the landing came as a harder shock than “having free time” did. Each of Backman’s novels leaves me wondering how he understands so much about the human experience. His words allow me to view life in a completely new way—through the eyes of his characters—while being entirely relatable. Throughout the weekend, I was enraptured in his world—a beautiful story about friendship, grief, paintings, and other concepts that survive the passing of time.

And that was the success of Good Idea No. 1: Get a book at the airport.

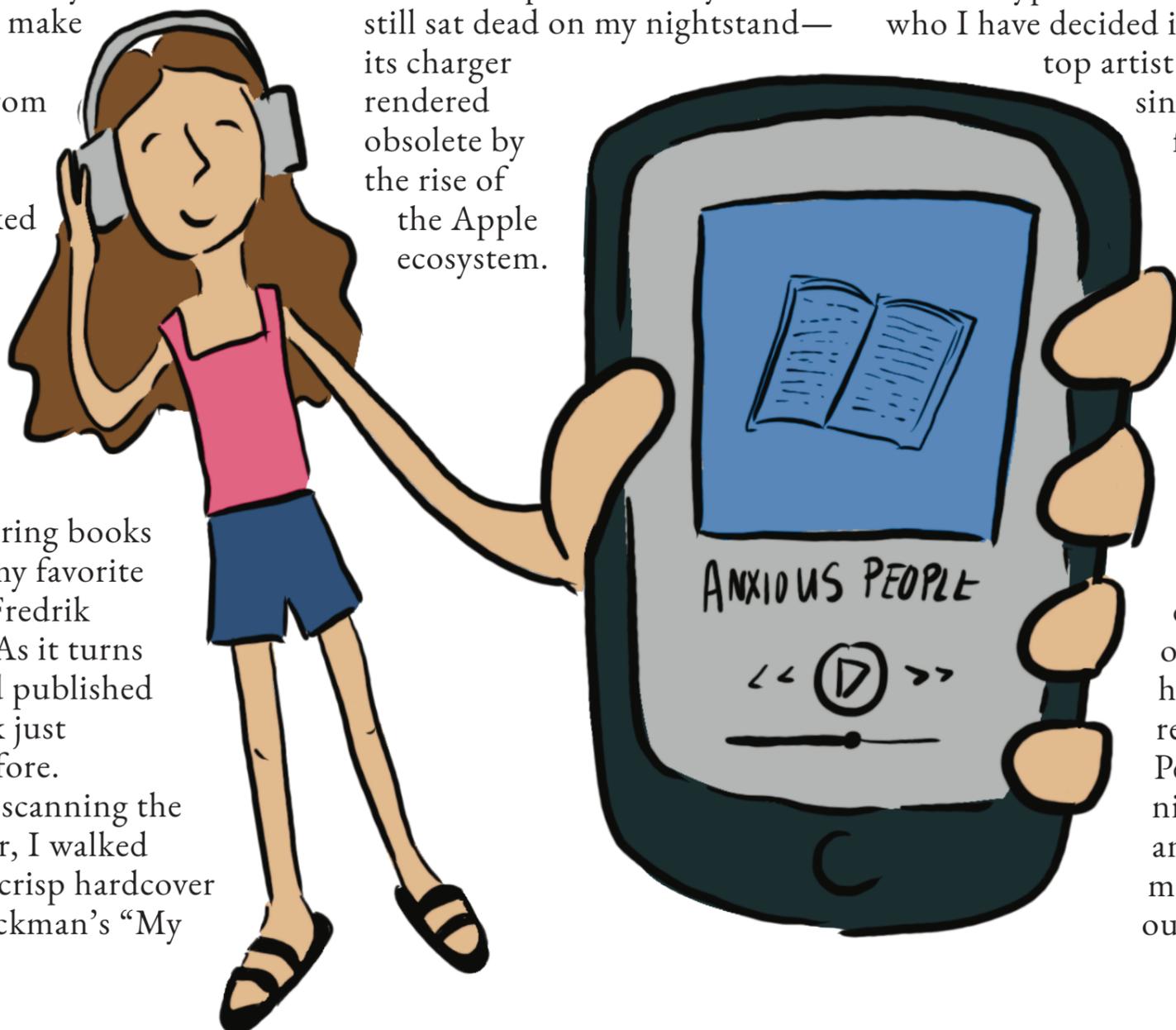
At this time, however, an issue arose: I was desperate for another Backman novel, but I knew the desire to continue consuming these hardcover books might be unsustainable for my wallet. Unfortunately, my library card had expired, and my Kindle still sat dead on my nightstand—its charger rendered obsolete by the rise of the Apple ecosystem.

My Hail Mary? Good Idea No. 2: Listen to an audiobook.

During the pandemic, I discovered that audiobooks were practically designed for social distancing. I would lounge in a hammock for hours with my headphones playing books from Hoopla, a streaming service that connects with libraries, where you can access audiobooks and eBooks linked to your library card. Before that, my family listened to the entire “Harry Potter” series on Audible during our annual road trips to Canada to ski. And even before that, we had “books on tape,” cassettes that we would insert into the player in the center console of our old car. So, audiobooks and I go way back. But, I just recently learned that Spotify started including audiobooks for free with a Premium subscription in 2023.

I then opened Spotify, yet instead of shuffling any of my playlists, I navigated to the search bar and typed in the name of who I have decided is my current top artist (hint: not a singer!). At my fingertips lay Fredrik Backman’s discography: recordings of his books narrated by a woman with a very soothing voice.

I downloaded one that I had not yet read, “Anxious People.” For nine hours and fifty-four minutes spread out over the



following week, the narrator's calm tone followed me as I went about my day. My mind was constantly engaged, but my hands were blissfully free.

Then I unlocked Good Idea No. 3: Listen to an audiobook during nearly any activity.

I made hours of progress on a painting while hearing about what inspired a bank robber, and then why the bank robber's epic fail was probably the second-best thing to ever happen to them. As I ran up the street, unexpected connections and heart-warming twists distracted me from a knot in my hamstring and played loudly enough into my earbuds to silence my panting. I used to always listen to the same hip-hop and rap playlist at the gym, but recently, I opted to listen to my book while pumping iron. It was the same in the car or on the train. Instead of Adele, I would choose Backman.

Book junkies and psychologists weigh the value of listening to an audiobook in comparison to reading. A 2010 study suggested that students who read an article retain more information than students who listen to it as a podcast. However, a 2016 study found no significant difference in comprehension between groups who listened to a non-fiction book or read it as an eBook.

Psychologist Daniel Willingham wrote in the *New York Times* that a critical difference lies in whether the material is for "pleasure or learning," different experiences that require different styles of focus. The latter is more successful when students can go at their own pace and re-read, a potential explanation for the 2010 study's results. But the former is rooted in oral tradition and written plays, which can be easier to follow with a narrator's intonation.

I admit that my selections for the summer are largely feel-good reads (listens?). When tackling a more information-heavy book or reading for a class, I always read

it on paper. But the summer is for fun. I grew up listening to a pleasure book rather than reading it; my first memories of books involve them being read aloud to me by loved ones. I learned how to appreciate literature while sandwiched between my brothers on the loveseat where my mother read us "Little House on the Prairie" and my father read "Geronimo Stilton."

So... Good Idea No. 4: Enjoy feel-good books during the summer!

I love that audiobooks are a supporting source of entertainment. They add to the enjoyment of other activities while resembling a companion who tells engaging stories and offers thought-provoking concepts. Audiobooks allow the world to feel less silent, and a listener to feel less alone. As they fill my ears, my mind creates vivid images that entertain tedious tasks—much like very structured daydreaming.

Willingham's piece was in response to a question often asked of him: whether reading an audiobook is "cheating." (He explains that no, it is not cheating, just a different experience.) I would like to clarify that this "cheating" is not my concern, and in light of Good Idea No. 1 that started this whole journey ("read more this summer"), enjoying audiobooks is simply a more accessible form of engaging with written content, and comes with bonuses. The most meaningful aspects of experiencing a book are still strong.

Reading for enjoyment does not have to be about comprehension, but rather, about feelings. If reading a book would elicit particular feelings for you, then an audiobook version would do the same, and perhaps more strongly, as there is voice intonation prompting a mental response. The voice changing for different characters and different emotions makes it easier to imagine them as the author depicted. Sometimes, the

author even narrates their own books. Listening to an author read their book just as they intended seems far from "cheating" and contributes to an enhanced experience and higher level of connection.

Finishing an audiobook is just as bittersweet as finishing a paper copy. I feel the familiar slight disappointment, as if I spoke with someone captivating on the street and know I will never speak to them again after saying goodbye.

I was pulling into a grocery store parking lot when "Anxious People" by Fredrik Backman came to a close. After writing down a quote to remember, I sat there for a second, grasping at my final moments with his characters in their small Swedish town. In this case, it was certainly Backman's talent that left me momentarily unable to snap back to reality, rather than the fact that the story came to me on audiobook. But if it were not for the audiobook, I would not have been able to so deeply immerse myself in the novel. Reading a hard copy would put the book back on my list of things I "could" do in my free time after my summer job started picking up. The audiobook form allowed me to tune in whenever I wanted.

Later that day, I started "People We Meet on Vacation" by Emily Henry as I ran on the treadmill. Her exciting tale of vacations, a search for meaning, and a developing love arc has been by my side this week.

Good Idea No. 5: Summer 2025 is the summer of the audiobook.

**CLARA LAKE '27
(CLARALAKE@COLLEGE.
HARVARD.EDU) CONSIDERS
THIS HER THANK-
YOU NOTE TO FREDRIK
BACKMAN.**

**GRAPHIC BY CLARA LAKE
'27**

My Summer Watchlist

Movies that I will be watching during my time off.

BY KALVIN FRANK '28

This summer, I'm challenging myself to complete a watchlist of movies. I could share a collection of any old films, but what's better than a list tailored to the season? Join me as I share the movies I plan to watch during the slower, more relaxing days of summer.

"Mamma Mia!" (1 and 2)

Until I see the beautiful Greek sun someday, I'll enjoy it from afar by watching "Mamma Mia!" and "Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again." "Mamma Mia!" follows Sophie and her mother, Donna, in the preparations for Sophie's wedding. But chaos ensues when Sophie invites her three potential fathers to the wedding without Donna knowing. "Here We Go Again," the prequel, gives the backstory of Donna's three suitors. These films top my list for their breathtaking landscapes and fantastic ABBA music. After I finish these masterpieces, I'll likely also be belting these soundtracks in my car on the way to the beach.

"Luca"

The first time I heard about this film was when multiple kids ran up to me to tell me I looked like "Luca" (back when I had luscious curly locks... May they rest in peace). While I don't see the resemblance, "Luca" has a special place in my heart. This joyful Disney film is set in a seaside Italian village and follows a group of three friends as they look to find freedom and adventure, but little does Giulia know that two of them are sea "monsters." Although the plot sounds more like a horror film, it truly is a wholesome movie with the perfect vibes for summer.

"The Sandlot"

So far, European settings have topped my list—but don't worry, I haven't forgotten about the classic American summer. "The Sandlot" combines all the essential elements of a childhood summer: baseball, mischief, fun, and, of course, friends. The movie follows Scott, the new kid in town, as he tries to make friends. He meets a group of guys at the baseball diamond, unbeknownst to him launching his true summer adventure. Even though my parents forced me to watch this movie from their childhood, I've come to appreciate it. The themes of friendship and figuring things out as you go still hit—and honestly, it's hard to beat a summer story that doesn't take itself too seriously.



"Top Gun" (OG and Maverick)

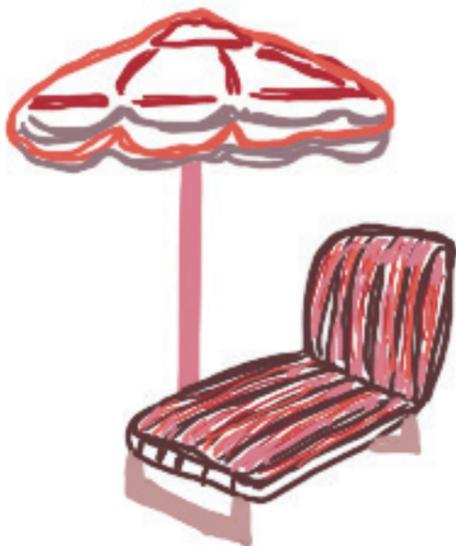
I must admit I have never seen these films—yes, I plan to be in the Navy, and yes, it is disgraceful that I haven't watched them yet. "Top Gun" follows Maverick, a Naval Aviator played by Tom Cruise, who is sent to the TOPGUN Navy Fighter Weapons School and must overcome high-stakes combat challenges. The sequel "Top Gun: Maverick" takes place 30 years after the original in which Maverick is now a test pilot and instructor that must train a new batch of TOPGUN graduates on a special mission set; the sequel leaves enough room for adventure and thrill while maintaining the series's award-winning storyline. Set among the sunny benches of San Diego, these action-dramas are a must-watch for me this summer.

"In the Heights"

"No me Diga?" "In the Heights" is a stellar movie adaptation of a musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the infamous creator of "Hamilton." The vibrant and high-energy musical is an ode to community, love, and dreams, taking place on the hot summer streets of Washington Heights in New York City. Miranda grew up a few blocks from the Heights, inspiring the creation of this musical.

"The Princess and the Frog"

In another life, I would live in the Louisiana Bayou, playing my trumpet while hunting for crawdads on the marshy lands. But in this life, I watch "The Princess and the Frog" to scratch that itch. In one of my favorite Disney films, writers beautifully combine Cajun and Creole culture and melodies into a story about a girl who works her hardest to achieve a dream, but never really has time for fun, until a certain frog prince spices up her life. The Princess and the Frog leaves me believing that "dreams do come true in New Orleans."



"The Sound of Music"

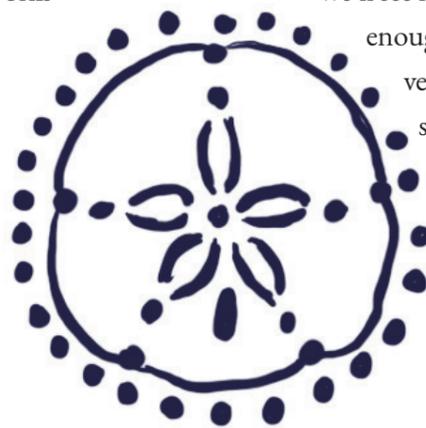
My mom has tried to get me to watch this movie countless times, but I keep putting it off. I need to get on it because of the great music, fascinating history, and beautiful scenery—"These are a few of my favorite things." "The Sound of Music", set in Austria on the brink of World War II, is based on the story of the Von Trapp family, a world-renowned Austrian music group, and their governess Maria, played by Julie Andrews. I can't wait to watch this iconic movie with my mom.

"Jaws"

Growing up in the "Great Lakes state" sharks always fascinated me. Yet I never saw or heard about them, because most of my swimming was confined to freshwater. "Jaws" tells the story of a great white shark that repeatedly attacks people in a beach town. To stop the attacks and keep tourism, the mayor hires a hunter to take down the beast. A friend suggested this movie when I was eight, but after seeing the infamous cover of the giant shark under a swimmer, I said, "absolutely not!" I've never gotten around to watching, but Jaws will after much anticipation be playing on my TV this summer.

"Lilo and Stitch"

"There's no place I'd rather be" than on a couch watching this masterpiece. It's pretty self-explanatory why "Lilo and Stitch" is a great summer movie—the Hawaiian sun is a main character in the show, and watching the development of a non-traditional Ohana (family) tugs on the heartstrings. We'll see if I'm ever motivated enough to watch the live-action version, but for now, I'm sticking to the timeless film I grew up watching.



To be honest, many of these films have nothing to do with summer, but they do seem to evoke a joyful sunny feeling. Whether it's the majestic setting they take place in or the childhood nostalgia they bring me, it's a warmth that I could only describe as a summer-y feeling. Maybe this list inspired you to grab the remote and binge one of these films, perhaps it didn't. Either way, finishing these movies will top my summer bucket list.

KALVIN FRANK '28 (KFRANK@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) BEGAN TACKLING HIS WATCHLIST WITH TOP GUN AFTER WRITING THIS AND IS IN SHAMBLES ABOUT GOOSE.

GRAPHIC BY AMELIE LIMA '27

SPORTS

Hot Takes of the NBA

Some NBA debates to keep you busy this offseason.

BY TYLER DANG '28

Just as the school year has come to a close, we wave goodbye to yet another NBA season as the Oklahoma City Thunder has defeated the Indiana Pacers in Game 7 of the Finals. Filled with surprising breakout players, heartbreaking injuries, and monumental trades, this season has given NBA fans fuel for conversation. However, the debates do not cease with the season's end; we at the *Independent* have provided a brief recap of the biggest talking points going into the 2025-26 season.

Foul-Baiting as a Skill?

It is no secret that scoring in the NBA has ramped up over the years. With greater spacing from the preference for three-pointers, a faster pace throughout the league, and, put simply, more skilled offensive talent, teams are scoring at a historic level. With this surge in offense comes much stricter policing of defense, and players who use this trend to their advantage. Many NBA fans claim the strategy of foul-baiting is hurting the league.

But can we blame players for making use of this strategy, and does it actually decrease the validity of their offensive ability? James Harden's 2018 MVP season in Houston saw immense offensive potency, scoring 30.4 points per game. However, Harden was criticized for defensive liabilities, an abusive and ugly three-point tendency, and a frustrating reliance on "flopping" techniques to get to the charity stripe. In his MVP season, Harden had a Free Throw Rating, which tracks free throw attempts per field goal attempt, of .502. Meanwhile, Giannis Antetokounmpo, a forward known for his aggressive finishing at the rim, had a Free Throw Rating of .457 that same season.

This season, MVP-winning Shai Gilgeous-Alexander was criticized for overtly foul-baiting and being rewarded for it. The MVP averaged a league-high 32.7 ppg on 52% efficiency. Indeed, SGA had a Free Throw Rating of .404 this season, and he does make use of the whistle; however, his ability to draw fouls is just another facet of his expansive offensive game. He was only 13th this season in Free Throw Rating.

But foul-baiting, like taking a charge, is a skill. If a player excels at the free-throw line, it would be a poor strategy to not make use of that fact. Why would a three-point specialist resort to contested lay-ups instead of the higher-percentage longball? Beyond the logical reason, foul-baiting requires a level of finesse from the player. SGA does not simply get to the line by asking the ref nicely—he drives and forces contact. Yes, he accentuates much of this contact, but so can the rest of the league. Players like SGA and New York Knicks point guard Jalen Brunson have mastered maximizing their efficiency and time on the court. Moreover, SGA this year has averaged fewer free-throw attempts than twelve other MVP winners from the past 25 years, including Kobe Bryant, James Harden, and LeBron James.

Personally, I take issue with foul-baiting as

a fan, not because I don't respect the skill, but because it is boring. Players like SGA can score at a high level from anywhere on the court, and as a fan, I would rather watch him make tough buckets worthy of a highlight reel. That being said, I understand and can respect the decision to rely on the whistle.

Bye-Bye to Superteams?

We have long passed the days of the successful superteam. It's been twelve years since the final stint of LeBron's Heatles, six since Durant left Golden State. Meanwhile, the two teams in the 2025 finals have much more naturally constructed rosters. While both Oklahoma City and Indiana have made trades to achieve their current lineups, the packages pale in comparison to the haul that the LA Clippers gave for Paul George or the Phoenix Suns for Durant. Instead, both OKC and Indiana have played the draft and made successful trades for great role players.

Why have the superteams failed, and further, why is that a good thing for the NBA? Trading for these big, blockbuster names comes at a huge price. Look at the Suns: picking up Durant and Beal ruined their bench depth and future draft picks. What's more, the contracts that these stars have negotiated are horrible for the rest of the team. Paul George signed a massive \$212 million deal over four years to join the Philadelphia 76ers. He only played half of the regular season, averaged a personal least amount of points in a decade, and failed to help them make the playoffs.

Simply put, building a superteam has become too expensive to reach success. As we have seen from the previous championship winners, a trusty bench lineup goes a long way. Starters get tired or can have a bad day; injecting a couple of bench players to ignite fire is important for enduring the playoffs.

Moreover, this shift back to more crafted teams is great for the NBA as a whole. Instead of seeing superstars leaving their rookie-year teams, fans can watch as their favorite players stick close to home and bring the franchise to success. While some front offices will fail to provide stars with any backup, this shift might encourage players to resign instead of joining a pre-established team in the face of adversity.

Takeaways

The 2025-26 NBA season begins Oct. 21. With several big names and key role-players projected to enter Free Agency—along with stars looking to be traded to contenders—this offseason promises major roster changes. With Kevin Durant having been traded to the Houston Rockets for Jalen Green, Dillion Brooks, and a handful of picks, we will again learn if trading for a superstar produces championships (though in this case, the Suns got fleeced).

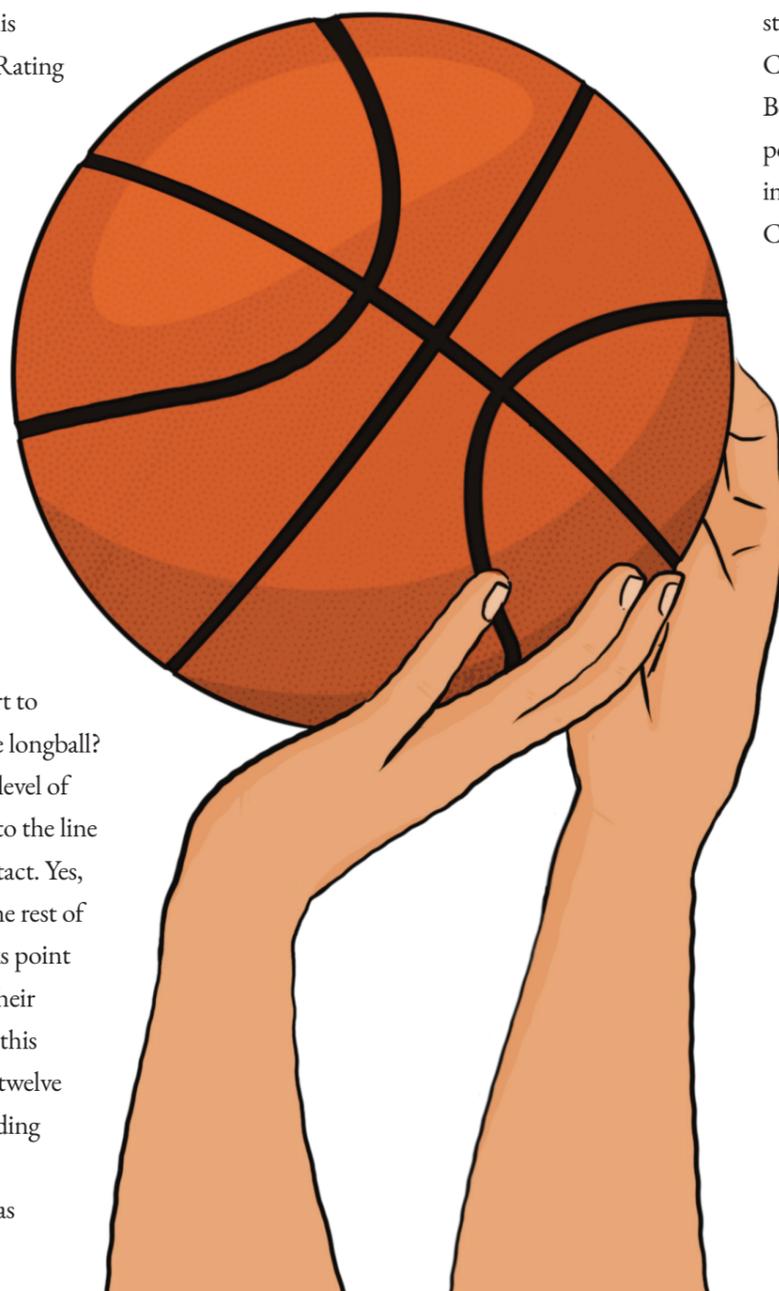
With ongoing trades and new rookies having just been selected, it is difficult to predict exactly what teams have the best chance to reach the championship. ESPN puts the recent champions as the clear favorite coming from the West while the East is up for taking between the Cavaliers and Knicks. However, a few teams will see their star players returning from injury late into the season. Celtics' forward Jayson Tatum may return and help propel Boston back into playoff contention. Similarly, Maverick's point guard Kyrie Irving will return later from his achilles injury and, depending on how the team performs with Cooper Flagg, has the potential to compete with OKC.

With SGA winning both MVP and the championship, much attention (and pressure) will be placed on his shoulders to keep up this pace and win a second MVP. However, will three-time MVP Nikola Jokić continue to put up unbelievable stats and further cement his place in the Hall of Fame? Or will Victor Wembanyama enter into MVP talks with his play?

More importantly, what new debates will the season prompt? Perhaps it will introduce another contender for a place on the list of greatest players, or offer a better indicator of how to construct a winning roster. In any case, we at the *Independent* will be sure to keep you informed.

TYLER DANG '28 (TYLERDANG@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WILL MISS HAVING DESMOND BANE ON HIS TEAM.

GRAPHIC BY NESHAMA RYMAN '28



Indy Sportsbook: FIFA Club World Cup 2025

The *Independent* takes a deep dive into the final group stage matches of CWC.

BY ALEJANDRO SANCHEZ '26

The FIFA Club World Cup 2025 launched its first game on June 14 and will continue until the final on July 13. Since its inception in 2000, this tournament has invited club teams from around the world and will be hosted in the United States this year. Recently, FIFA increased the invited teams from seven to 32, with 16 of these teams coming from Europe's international football confederation (UEFA), while the rest are from the football confederations of Asia (AFC), Africa (Caf), North and Central America (Concacaf), South America (Conmebol), and Oceania (OFC).

Teams from these confederations have accrued points through a ranking system based on their performances in the past four seasons; however, only two teams from each nation may qualify. The FIFA Club World Cup 2025 will proceed from the current group stage to the round of 16. The addition of more games to the tournament has been criticized by many for the burden it places on players. Although this tournament appears to favor European teams, and it does financially, most European teams compete in more competitions in a calendar year than any of the teams from other confederations.

Depending on match results, teams are awarded victory bonuses from a budget of \$1 billion. However, bonuses are larger depending on a team's confederation: UEFA, Conmebol, Concacaf, AFC, Caf, OFC (ranked from highest to lowest).

Although you will not see any of this prize money, the Sportsbook has got you covered with match predictions, as June 26 is the final match day for the group stage.

Juventus vs Manchester City (-125):

Both teams competed in a similar number of matches this past season and are suffering from exhausted legs; however, Manchester City has a squad with more depth which will help Pep Guardiola manage his players' fatigue. Juventus did have a solid season, finishing in fourth place in the Serie A, but lost in the UEFA Champions League round of 16. Manchester City finished

third in the Premier League and also lost in the UEFA Champions League Round of 16. For many other teams, Manchester City's season performance would have been impressive, but for the former UEFA Champions League and Premier League winners, it was a letdown for many fans. Even with Pep Guardiola's squad roulette and new signings like Rayan Cherki finding their way into the squad, Manchester City are without a doubt the favorites in this matchup. Despite a narrow 2-0 win against Wydad AC and an unremarkable performance from Cherki, Manchester City still has world-class players with the likes of Phil Foden, Jeremy Doku, and Savinho, who can secure victories.

Wydad AC (+170) vs Al Ain FC:

Al Ain FC had a terrible first showing in this tournament, losing 5-0 to Juventus. Despite connecting five shots on target, Al Ain FC was unable to put together any threatening sequences to demonstrate dominance of the ball. We think that this will be a back-and-forth match in which Wydad AC will finish ahead after several goals are scored. Being the slight favorite, Al Ain FC will likely attempt to dominate possession of the ball in Wydad AC's third, but Wydad AC will look to score off of quick counter-attacks and set pieces.

Al Hilal (-130) vs CF Pachuca:

Al Hilal had an impressive showing against Real Madrid, sealing a 1-1 tie. Despite playing against weaker competition in the Saudi Pro

League, Al Hilal's starting lineup is filled with stars familiar with this type of competition, including João Cancelo, Rúben Neves, and Sergej Milinković-Savić, all of whom were bought from top European clubs. Although Pachuca performed well in their 2-1 loss to Salzburg, they will not be able to hold up against Al Hilal. Al Hilal attempted and succeeded in maintaining possession of the ball in build-up play against Real Madrid and Salzburg, which will carry into this fixture against CF Pachuca.

As FIFA attempts to increase the competitiveness of the FIFA Club World Cup 2025, the addition of more teams from across the world sets the stage for upsets as small clubs seek to topple European giants. We have already witnessed unexpected draws from the underdogs: Boca Juniors 2-2 Benfica, Fluminense 0-0 Borussia Dortmund, Monterrey 1-1 Inter Milan, and Real Madrid 1-1 Al Hilal. In many of these tied games, the heavy favorites complained about the extreme conditions of the U.S. tournament, citing the heat and game times as factors hindering their performance. The U.S. heat has already played a massive role in many matches so far, with many European teams accustomed to playing in cooler weather. In the upcoming rounds, we will likely see many more upsets as European teams continue adapting to this new climate.



ALEJANDRO SANCHEZ '26
(ALEJANDROSANCHEZ@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) HAS MANCHESTER CITY WINNING THE FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP 2025.

GRAPHIC BY MIRANDA CHAO HWANG '28

If I Were the NHL Commissioner

Just give me a chance, Gary Bettman.

BY JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27

Ladies, gentlemen, and otherwise, I have been inspired—not from any sort of philosophical epiphany, but due to an X post from NHL insider Pierre LeBrun outlining the changes he would make if he were NHL commissioner. I think the hockey world could benefit from my thoughts as well. LeBrun worked for 13 years as an NHL reporter for the “Canadian Press,” then another nine at ESPN, before joining TSN in 2011, where he has remained since. After 30 years as a professional hockey journalist, working through the NHL’s highest and lowest moments, LeBrun is certainly qualified to suggest major changes to the sport and league as a whole.

As you may have guessed, I have not been a professional hockey journalist for thirty years. In fact, I have not been a professional hockey journalist for any period of time. I am, however, a religious hockey fanatic to an unhealthy degree, which I think qualifies me to opine on how to reform and improve the NHL. So, with that, here’s what I would do if I were commissioner of the National Hockey League.

1. Convert the playoffs to a straight, 1-16 seeded best-of-five format

For those who do not watch hockey, the NHL playoffs consist of 16 teams, with the top three from each division (Pacific, Central, Atlantic, and Metropolitan) and two wildcard teams from each conference (West and East). The playoffs are split and seeded by conference, so the best team in the East plays the second Eastern wildcard, the second team in the Metro plays the third team in the Metro, and so on. There are four rounds of best-of-seven series, with the last being the Stanley Cup Final between the Eastern and Western conference champions.

This is already the best playoffs in sports. Teams are playing their hardest right from puck drop of Game 1. Many players succumb to injury quickly, making playoffs a battle of sheer will, endurance, and perseverance until the bitter end. It is also deeply flawed in its design. The best-of-seven format results in an absurdly long playoff period, usually around two months; this year the playoffs lasted from April 13 to June 17. It’s too long for players and fans, inevitably turning the most exciting sport on earth into a spectacle you’re just waiting to end.

Instead, I propose teams enter a best-of-five format. Fewer games means each game matters more, resulting in more exciting and intense games overall. That should, in turn, make viewers feel like they have to tune in to every part of every series, increasing league revenues and creating a more riveting playoffs experience overall. As for the seeding, in round one of this new playoff format, the number one team would always play the number 16 team regardless of conference, number two would play number 15, and so on. From then on, you’d just go through the bracket like normal.

This in turn would allow for far more diversity in matchups in every round. The lack of conference requirement could create some incredible Stanley Cup Final rivalries that we’ve never seen before (Rangers/Bruins, Avalanche/Stars).

2. With shorter playoffs, move the draft to the first week of June, the start of free agency to 48 hours after the draft, and the start of the regular season to mid-Sept.

LeBrun wanted to move the opening of free agency to within 48 hours of the draft, shorten camp and preseason, and drop the puck on the regular season around September 15. I completely agree. Going right from the Stanley Cup finals into the draft and, subsequently, free agency would make for one of the most exciting weeks in professional sports. Furthermore, it would keep fans engaged in a way that the end of the NHL season currently lacks. If implemented, it would only make sense to move up the start of the season to keep timelines roughly the same.

3. Move the trade deadline from three-quarters to halfway through the season

In recent years, the NHL trade deadline and the three weeks prior have become a focal point of the season, with deadline rumors and trade talks filling the early months of the season. Entire team rosters have been shaped at the deadline, but some less-than-fair competitive shenanigans have begun to appear. Teams who know they are going to make the playoffs use the trade deadline as a way to circumvent salary caps, benching high-paid players in the last quarter of the season. By doing this, teams can trade for players that would, ordinarily, make the team exceed its cap limit. When the cap disappears during the

playoffs, teams that use this strategy have an unfair advantage.

Moving the trade deadline to the halfway mark of the season decreases the amount of cap space teams can accrue before disincentivizing teams from trying to circumvent their salary cap. Sitting a star for that long could have major negative ramifications on a team’s success. Spending half the season without one of your top players could result in a team missing the playoffs entirely. Even if they do make it, the months off the ice might make that player relatively ineffective in the postseason. A new trade deadline might also be beneficial for moving players as they have more time to get used to their new team.

4. No more all-star games in favor of annual Four Nations-style tournaments.

All-star games are pointless. Fans know it, insiders know it, broadcast networks know it, and most importantly, players know it. Every sport has, historically, suffered from the same issue here. Players simply don’t try during All-Star games, and a week that should be best-on-best competition turns into a slog. This past season, the NHL found a solution.

In lieu of an all-star game, fans witnessed a face-off between the four nations most represented by player nationality (excluding Russia), giving us some of the most electric hockey we have ever seen. Every game was great because each player cared deeply about representing their country. The USA-Canada final was the most-watched hockey game on ESPN in history, with 9.3 million viewers. For the first time in my life, hockey was at the forefront of every sports fan’s mind.

It’s hard to get into a sport if you didn’t grow up with it, and it’s hard to grow up with hockey since the majority of the country can’t realistically play. It’s really easy to tune in for a week and watch the best players in the world battle each other to the bitter end. It’s even easier to watch 22 men in red, white, and blue literally bleed on the ice for our country. In short, this is how you grow the game.

5. Allow for trade deals between 3+ teams

This last one isn’t necessarily solving a problem; it’s just pure chaotic fun. Currently, in the NHL, there can be trades between two teams. Sometimes trades will bring in a third team, usually to supply some trade piece in exchange for taking on part of a player’s salary. Why limit it to three? The NBA did away with the three-team limit several years ago resulting in some of basketball’s biggest blockbuster deals, including the Harden and Lillard trades in the 2023-24 season. In fact, from 2019-2023, each NBA season averaged eight three-or-more team trades. It’s time for the NHL to get wild with this as well. Maybe Connor McDavid decides he’d rather play in New York than Edmonton. But New York can’t afford his \$12.5 million AAV? No problem, get four other teams to each take \$1M for draft picks and prospects, and now the best player on earth is putting up 140+ points per season at only \$6.5 million. Hockey needs more drama, and this is a way to do it.

The NHL is renegotiating their Collective Bargaining Agreement soon, so if any general managers or league officials are reading this, maybe bring it up when you all get together? Realistically, what’s the worst that could happen from listening to me?

JORDAN WASSERBERGER '27 (JWASSERBERGER@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) WOULD LOVE TO SEE THE “WASSERBERGER RULES” IMPLEMENTED FOR THE 2025-26 NHL SEASON. THEY DON’T NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE CALLED THAT, BUT IT WOULD BE COOL.

GRAPHIC BY EMMA CRAGO '28



ACROSS

- 3. June, A.K.A. _____ Month
- 6. Toasty Season
- 7. Cold Sweet Relief On A Stick
- 8. Edible Term For Money

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

DOWN

- 1. As Opposed To Hers
- 2. Easy Class
- 4. Cutest Harvard Dining Hall
- 5. Enthusiasm

hot crossword summer

BY FRED KLEIN '28

DESIGN BY CLARA LAKE '27



Lottie Merriam L.C. Larsovi

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