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# HARVARD INDEPENDENT

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The Student Weekly Since 1969

# CONTENTS


**3. Blarney, Block Parties, or Bust**
by Audrey Adam ’27

**4. Students Respond to the “Salient” Revival**
by Courtney Hines ’28

**5. Iranian Women Weep Too**
by Noah Basden ’29

**6. The Green Line**
by Rohan Tyagi ’29

**7. Green Shoots in Red Soil: The Texas Primary Race**
by Ella Rickets ’28

**8. The Story of the Celts as Told Through Their Art**
by Kalvin Frank ’28 & Ellie Guo ’29

**9. Comic Collection: Fourth Lie**
by Ellie Guo ’29 & Sam Park ’29

**10. The Real G Spot**
by Cameron Bernier ’29

**12. Kitchen Sink No. 7**
by Luke Wagner ’26 & Jonah Karafiol ’26

**14. An Irish American’s Guide to St. Patrick’s Day**
by Frances Connors ’26

**15. Writers With the Luck of the Irish**
by Eden Bridge-Hayes ’29

**16. The Art of the Comeback**
by Daniel Kim ’26

**17. The History of the Boston Celtics**
by Tilly Butterworth ’28

**18. Harvard at the 2026 Milano Cortina Olympics**
by Whitney Ford ’28

**19. Harvard has a New Track Star: Amari Turner**
by Asher Meron ’29

**20. We Belong To No One But Ourselves**
by Neshama Ryman ’28


# About the Independent

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

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**We belong to no one but ourselves.**

# MASTHEAD

# Blarney, Block Parties, or Bust

How St. Patrick's Day is celebrated across different college campuses.

BY AUDREY ADAM '27

Across college campuses, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in wildly different ways, from 6 a.m. pregames at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to radio silence at Harvard, as the Yard empties each year for spring break.

The fifth-century commemoration of Saint Patrick—the man credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland—was historically celebrated as a religious observation. However, in 1762, the day began taking on a more celebratory character as Irish immigration to America increased. As the immigrant population continued to grow over the 19th and 20th centuries, the holiday evolved into the celebration we know today, filled with shamrocks and leprechauns. This shift is most evident on college campuses, where the holiday takes on its own distinct form.

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into one of the most widely known campus parties in the region. Students celebrate "Blarney" on the Saturday before the holiday to avoid conflicts with spring break. The festivities center on a group of off-campus houses commonly known as the "Townies."

"People wake up at six in the morning to start drinking," Emily Belmont '27, a student at UMass Amherst, said. "You'll just see people walking miles from their dorms to get there."

According to Belmont, the typical day's trajectory begins at the Townies, moves to one of the campus dining halls for breakfast, pauses for a quick afternoon nap, and then ends at the bars in downtown Amherst. The event has grown large enough to attract students from nearby colleges. "No matter how much the school tries to prevent it, there are just so many people," Belmont said.

The increase in crowds has led to greater surveillance, Belmont explained with expanded police presence and officers from surrounding towns called in to monitor the area. Students say that enforcement has increased in recent years. During one celebration, Belmont recalled, police vehicles lined a nearby street with officers issuing citations for open containers of alcohol.

"They were literally mass-arresting people," Belmont said. "If you had an open container, they would throw you in a van, take you to jail, and give you a court date." Despite these crackdowns, the event remains fixed in the university's social calendar. "It's honestly chaos," Belmont said. "But it's the event that unites everyone at UMass."

At the University of Notre Dame, home of the Fighting Irish, St. Patrick's Day has a different kind of significance. Given the school's association with Irish heritage, the holiday might be expected to play a large role in campus life, but students say celebrations tend to be contained. Unlike large universities, Notre Dame does not have fraternities, and students live in the dorms for their first three years, student Nick Candela '26 explained. Off-campus celebrations tend to focus on a row of senior houses known as Legacy Street.

Students organize a block party-style function along Legacy Street, where houses are owned by sports teams or cohorts of seniors. "All the houses will throw at the same time," Candela said. "Everyone tends to gather outside on the street."

One informal tradition, known among students as the "Ginger Run," draws the most attention. "Everybody lines up on both sides of the street, and a bunch of redheads run down the road while people cheer," Candela said.

However, students believe the holiday's significance is more of an obligation than a cultural celebration of the school's mascot. "We definitely celebrate St. Patrick's Day because it's like, 'We're Irish, we have to,'" Candela added. Still, he acknowledged that the identity is not especially strong. "I wouldn't say there is a strong Irish influence on campus."

At Williams College, the holiday plays an even smaller role. "It's kind of an afterthought here," said Luke Rostan '27, a Williams College student. "It doesn't mobilize people here like it does at other schools."

Similar to Notre Dame, the social scene at Williams revolves around a street of off-campus houses on Hoxsey Street. Houses are primarily owned by seniors on the athletic teams that often host mixers or "throw" for the general school population. Holidays often turn into the theme of an existing gathering, rather than their own spectacle. "If a team happens to be throwing that weekend, the theme might become 'Wear Green,'" Rostan said. "That's about the level of engagement."

Timing also plays a large role. The holiday falls close to the College's spring break and the school's "100 Days" party, celebrating seniors' final hundred days before graduation. "Every week that the school hosts a senior dance, Hoxsey tends to shut down," Rostan said. With the school's main social gatherings closed, St. Patrick's Day seldom becomes a central event.

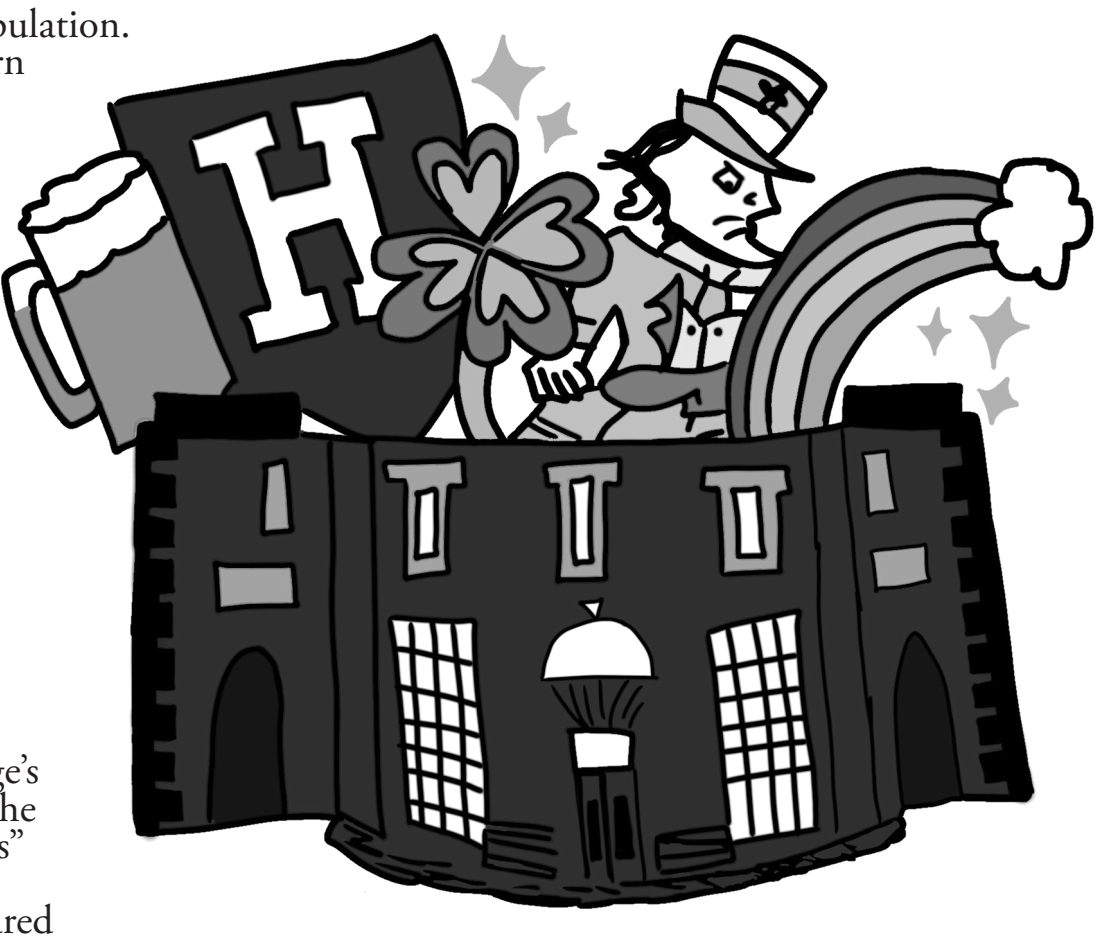
At Harvard, the holiday tends to overlap with spring break, shifting celebrations away from campus almost entirely—most students aren't present in Cambridge when the holiday arrives. Those who remain often cross the Charles River to celebrate in Boston, which has long been known for its Irish cultural influence.

"It's really big in Boston," Aliza Fergang '27, a current Harvard student, said. "If people are back from break, they'll just go bar hopping." Each year, Boston hosts a vast parade, drawing thousands of spectators in the region. The absence of campus festivities perpetuates the pattern of students heading into Boston for their green fix.

Yet across all four campuses, whether the day means beers before breakfast in Amherst or a downtown bar crawl in Boston, St. Patrick's Day has a way of finding students, even those who don't seek it out. "Everyone says they didn't really have fun," Belmont said. "But you still have to go. It's kind of a rite of passage."

**Audrey Adam '27 (audreyadam@college.harvard.edu) can't wait for an excuse to eat Lucky Charms.**

**Graphic by Mia Stewart '29**



# Students Respond to the "Salient" Revival

## Undergraduates react to the publication's attempt to move past a scandal involving Nazi-linked rhetoric and alleged racist content.

BY COURTNEY HINES '28

"Neo-Nazis at Harvard? Not surprised," Aaron Thompson '27 said. "They're just very 'red pill,' irritating men, you know? Just terrible," an anonymous sophomore in Mather House added.

"I think the revamp is a scam," another sophomore in Cabot House commented.

In the wake of a leadership shakeup at the "Salient" due to past publication of antisemitic, sexist, and racist material, the conservative student magazine publicly relaunched on Feb. 27 with new interim president Keri Collins '29 and revised editorial guardrails. But despite internal restructuring, many Harvard undergraduates say the publication's effort feels less like a reset and more like an unwelcome return. Some students chose to remain anonymous, given the severity of the rhetoric discussed.

The collapse of the "Salient" began publicly in late Oct. 2025, when its board of directors announced it would suspend the publication after article drafts surfaced that the publication's graduate board of directors called "reprehensible, abusive, and demeaning." This came alongside "credible complaints" about the organization's broader culture. The most widely circulated flashpoint was a Sept. 2025 draft article by David Army '28 that included lines closely mirroring rhetoric from Adolf Hitler's 1939 Reichstag speech.

Army's piece urged a return to values "rooted in blood, soil, language, and love of one's own," explicitly invoking "blood and soil," a Nazi slogan historically used to tie ethnic purity to land and justify exclusionary nationalism and territorial expansion.

By Dec. 2025, internal documents and message logs tied to a student complaint involved members' casual use of racial slurs in group chats, draft materials containing swastikas and Nazi slogans, and an unpublished issue described as featuring a call for mass executions.

After months of turmoil and resignations, the "Salient" is now trying to rebuild under interim student leadership, including a pledge to abandon pseudonyms and restructure editorial oversight.

That promised reset has not impressed some undergraduates, who said the relaunch feels disconnected from the magnitude of what happened. "I don't necessarily know if there's a need for it," Thompson said. "This whole revival campaign feels more gimmicky than anything."

"It's kind of like, coffin buried. You're six feet under. Stay there."

For the sophomore in Mather, the pattern was familiar: "I would hear about something that they had written, and I would then go back and read it and just be disgusted," the student said. "I never respected them just based off of the things that they choose to write about and say," the student added.

"I don't understand how they're still allowed to operate on this campus after the whole N-word scandal," the sophomore from Cabot said.

Before their "scandal," the "Salient" was recently revived in 2021. This followed a surge in right-wing ideology amongst college-age men. The publication door-drops its issues to all upperclassmen houses and freshman dorms. This led some houses to add black mailboxes last year in response to management concerns about fire hazards from door drops, combined with the "Salient's" concerns that their issues were being trampled.

According to the "Salient" website, it has distributed over 117,000 issues and maintains 3,700 substack subscribers—though student sentiment does not always agree with such readership statistics.

"I never really took the 'Salient' seriously in the first place," Thompson said.

"I had never heard of the 'Salient' before the scandal," Steven Miall '29 said.

The scandal arose around the same time President Alan Garber '76 responded to the Trump Administration's concerns that the University marginalized conservative perspectives. University administrators have since reaffirmed the need for "intellectual vitality" on campus.

"If Harvard is the place for diversity of thought, you can have that. You don't have to agree with opinions," Thompson stated. "In instances where you channel, cite, are inspired by, or allude to things that I don't consider controversial but more dehumanizing … that's where you draw the line."

"If it's known it'll incite a lot of backlash … you're starting something that doesn't need to be started," Miall commented.

A month before the Trump Administration called for Harvard to become less politically liberal, a "Salient" article published in September encouraged Harvard to consider reinstating the pre-Radcliffe merger, which separated the men's and women's colleges. The article emphasized the distracting nature of female students on-campus.

"People who like Hawaiian pizza—that's a controversial opinion, if you say you like it," the Mather sophomore said. "But to say something that's hateful towards a specific group isn't a controversial opinion. That's just straight-up disrespectful and discriminatory."

"It does make me think about the group as a whole," Miall said. He elaborated on his belief that when students choose to identify with an organization, outsiders often assume that the organization's published positions reflect the organization's collective beliefs. "The stuff they're saying, it usually tends to mirror what the group is thinking," he said.

The challenges facing the "Salient" also spilled beyond Cambridge, becoming another headline in the ongoing national debate about Harvard. Students said that scrutiny comes with the institution's brand. "The New York Times" reported on the suspension in Oct. 2025, featuring the controversy around the "Salient's" use of Hitler-adjacent rhetoric and the board's decision to halt operations.

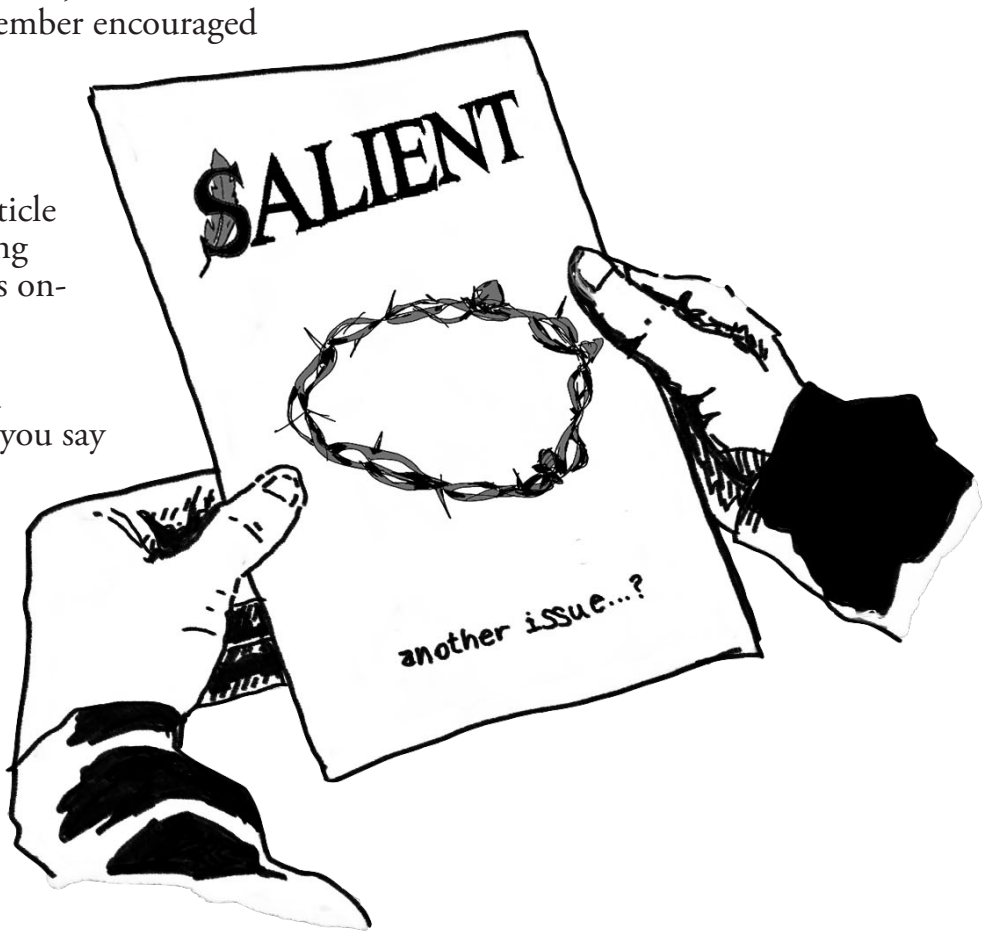
"The name of Harvard sensationalizes everything. So I think that kind of comes with the territory," Thompson said. "[Outside] publications are publishing things that may not reflect the full truth or don't necessarily center a student's narrative."

The anonymous Cabot student agreed that scrutiny scales with prestige: "I think any school with the status that Harvard has will be scrutinized to a higher degree," the student said. "People just need to remember that things can be extremely sensationalized by the media," the student added.

"I think if you really want to know what's happening on Harvard campus, you just got to talk to normal students," they concluded.

**Courtney Hines '28 (courtneyhines@college.harvard.edu) is the News Editor for the "Independent."**

**Graphic by Sage Wiley '29**



# FORUM

# Iranian Women Weep Too

## For those who never made it back from class.

BY NOAH BASDEN '29

On February 1998, Tony Benn, then over 40 years into his career as a Member of Parliament, rose in the House of Commons and delivered a legendary speech in opposition to the proposed bombing of Iraq. His words that day left no shortage of memorable lines: one in particular has never left me. "Are not Arabs and Iraqis terrified? Do not Arab and Iraqi women weep when their children die?" he said, speaking on the human cost of war. These words have been on my mind recently, more so than ever before, in the wake of the war in Iran.

On Mar. 1, over 150 Iranian families woke up their young daughters, nieces, and cousins and rushed them to Shajarah Tayyebeh Elementary School in Minab, southern Iran. Surely they wouldn't have sent their children to school that day, had they known that hours later, a missile reportedly fired by the United States would tear through the girls' school, killing over 150 children and students, and injuring hundreds more. Families ruptured, futures ended—all by our current President, who promised peace and a cease to "endless" wars. This moment ought to be remembered as a horrific stain on the nation and an even worse indictment of a President who's made a career of lying to the American people. However, with how enamoured the Republican Party has become with President Trump, I do not doubt that the civilian lives lost will be nothing but a footnote in many accounts of his second term in office.

The same day, six American servicepeople were tragically killed in an Iranian drone strike on an operations center in Kuwait. A grateful nation grieves their losses, yet the President, when asked about the death of soldiers he sent to a war of choice, said: "Sadly, there will likely be more [deaths] before it ends, that's the way it is." Secretary of War Pete Hegseth went a step further, suggesting the media's coverage of the deaths of U.S. troops in the war in Iran was an attempt to "make the President look bad."

I can hardly believe this is the reality that we live in, because what about this isn't bad? American soldiers dying in a war widely recognised as illegal is bad. The conflict hasn't lasted more than a few days, and over 1,000 Iranian civilians have already died, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency. That is bad. Even borrowing the language of "bad" from Secretary Hegseth doesn't do the situation justice.

This is not in any way to excuse the barbarism enacted by the Iranian regime, but I must note that we were all taught from a young age that America was the good guy. You can't put a missile through the windows of an elementary school and remain the good guy. It is not hard to see that those girls were victims of an evil government long before the music of American bombs sang their last lullabies. We were the ones who killed them, and we have to reconcile with that fact.

Since the President won't say their names, I will. Below is a list, so far, as collected by Middle East Eye, of the civilians killed at Shajarah Tayyebeh Elementary School:

Hana Dehqani, eight years old. Fatemeh Salari, 34 years old. Reza Habashian, seven years old. Arya Bahadori, nine years old. Ali Asghar Zaeri, eight years old. Zahra Bahrami, seven years old. Ahmad Soltani, eight years old. Hamed Parashegh-nezhad, seven years old. Fatemeh Yazdanpanah, young girl, age unknown. Mahdis Nazari, seven years old. Athena Chamani-nezhad, six years old. Amirghasem Zaeri, seven years old. Fatemeh Dorazehi, ten years old. Arad Ahmadizadeh, eight years old. Saman Karimzadeh, seven years old. Fatemeh Shahdadi, age unknown. Nadia Shahmiri, nine years old. Parham Ranjbari, nine years old. Mahmoud Gholamyani, 35 years old. Fatemeh Rahdar, ten years old. Amir-Hassan Rasouli, eight years old. Zahra Behrouzi, eight years old. Mohammadhatam Raisi, ten years old. Asna Raisi, 12 years old. Benyamin Jangjou, eight years old. Mohammad-Sadra Zarei, eight years old. Maryam Pazark, ten years old. Liana Mohammadi, seven years old. Mandana Salari, 29 years old. Sara Shayesteh, five years old. Zoha Pasand, eight years old. Esra Zakeri, nine years old. Salma Zakeri, six years old. Fatemeh Taherifard, 29 years old. Zahra Ansari, seven years old. Fatemeh Fadavi, ten years old. Mahna Zarei, two months old. Athareh Zarei, ten years old. Alireza Zarei, nine years old. Mohammadreza Shahsavari, eight years old. Samira Basarde, 38 years old. Ehsan Saleminia, six years old. Fatemeh Zahra Karimi, seven years old. Zeynab Bahrami, ten years old. Mohammad Shahdousti, eight years old. Reza Barani, seven years old. Athena Ahmadzadeh, ten years old. Khadijeh Darvishi, nine years old. Roqayyeh Karimi, 42 years old. Reza Ranjbar, six years old. Marzieh Bashiri-far, 38 years old. Mohammad-Mehdi Chegini, ten years old. Mohammadian Bahrami, 17 years old. Ali-Akbar Karyani Pak, eight years old. Hananeh Mehdikhah, seven years old. Fereshteh Sangarzadeh, 44 years old. Mohammad-Ali Karyani Pak, seven years old. Parsa Mokhtarinasab, 12 years old. Arina Arab-Kish, eight years old. Makan Nasiri, 12 years old. Esra Farahi-Zadeh, young girl, age unknown.

61 names.

These are lives that have been cut short in what many, including Senator Mark Warner, the leading Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, have labeled "a war of choice." A choice that has already cost the American taxpayer $5 billion and is sure to cost a lot more. This administration has made significant cuts to key assistance programs that millions of Americans rely on, all in the name of fiscal responsibility. But, for a war that nobody asked for, and nobody, potentially with the admission that the Trump administration has no clear phase two for Iran, may benefit from, there's money for that.

It is worth stating clearly: the Iranian people deserve better than the authoritarian theocracy that has ruled over them for decades. Many of them know this fact better than we do. They have fought, bled, and died protesting against the current Iranian regime, and their liberation is a cause that the West should support. There are many ways to do this, but "hitting them […] unapologetically," in the words of Pete Hegseth, is not the way to do it. It is important to note that the death of the former autocratic Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is a step in the right direction towards liberation, but the price of liberation cannot be children's lives.

"Does not bombing strengthen their determination?" Tony Benn, a British politician, asked his fellow parliamentarians, in reference to the civilians caught in the crossfire of war. The answer is no, it only strengthens the determination of the Iranian regime's leaders to justify their brutality and retaliatory strikes on neighboring nations.

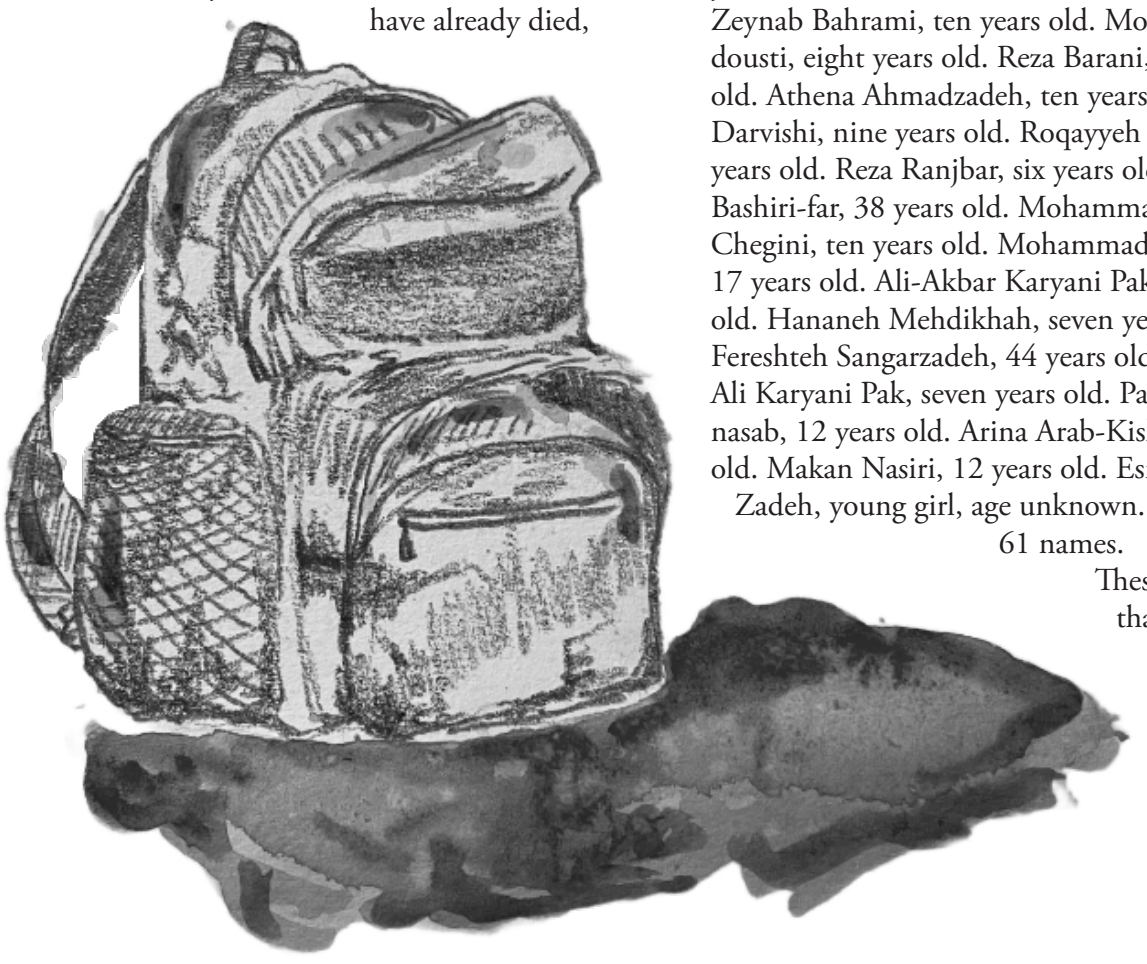
Benn knew, as we all do, the answer to his original question; we've just confirmed it once again. Arab mothers have been weeping for decades; the majority of us just weren't watching. It is ironic that I, as someone who hopes to join the military reserves post-grad, am so anti-war, but shouldn't we all be?

Former Army Staff Sgt. and Medal of Honor recipient David Bellavia said it best: "We've seen war. We don't want war." He then issued a cruelly ironic statement: "But if you want war with the United States of America, there's one thing I can promise you, so help me God: Someone else will raise your sons and daughters."

What are civilians supposed to do when their sons and daughters are no longer there to be raised? The mothers in Minab, with no children to raise, mourn what was and what could have been. These women weep, and we should all be watching.

**Noah Basden '29 (nhbasden@college.harvard.edu) writes Forum for the "Independent."**

**Graphic by Sarahluna Sassine '29**



# The Green Line

## How a diaspora painted Boston green.

BY ROHAN TYAGI '29

Every March, Boston slips into shades of green. The city's color palette, usually a winter wash of red brick and slate, takes on an unmistakable hue. This green does not arrive with the weather, but rather a ceremonial cast on the 17th. It appears in flags hanging off of fire escapes, in the bunting draped across South Boston triple-deckers, and in the jackets of children perched on their parents' shoulders along Broadway. In Boston, St. Patrick's Day is not just a holiday—it is a season. It arrives, backed by centuries of history, the city's reminder of what it once was, and the roots it holds for thousands. Yet today, it is easy to dismiss "St. Paddy's" as a caricature—a time when Irishness becomes a socially acceptable costume worn by people with no connection to the culture.

Despite the annual spectacle of St. Patrick's Day, the origins of the holiday are far less pronounced. The holiday began as a religious feast in Ireland, a day for Catholic Mass and modest family gatherings. For centuries, it remained a solemn observance. By law, all pubs were closed, and the day was dedicated to prayer.

Over time, the traditions associated with St. Patrick's Day have evolved, as many diasporic traditions eventually do. The religious solemnity of the feast has softened, replaced with a communal, more exuberant celebration. Fleeing the Irish Famine in the mid-nineteenth century and carrying little more than their faith, Irish immigrants gave the holiday a new meaning of cultural pride and presence in Boston. The Irish, who historically endured poverty, prejudice, and exclusion, established institutions of their own in the city, including the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and social groups.

Gradually, the celebration became not just Ireland's tradition anymore; it was uniquely Boston's, shaped by the distinctive experience of the diaspora. The corned beef and cabbage served in countless kitchens each March, for instance, is not an Irish dish but an Irish-American one, borne from the proximity of Irish immigrants to Jewish delis in 19th-century New York and Boston. The holiday's iconography of shamrocks and tricolors took on new meanings in the hands of people building a culture between being completely Irish and completely American, and this movement was rooted in a particular Boston neighborhood.

South Boston, or "Southie," became the heart of the resistance against Catholic discrimination in the city. With its dense rows of worker housing and its tight-knit Catholic parishes, Southie was a refuge for Irish families that had been pushed to the outskirts of Boston due to religious persecution. In 1901, the parade was placed in the heart of its streets and soon became a demonstration of solidarity. Veterans' groups carried banners honoring Irish and Catholic men who had fought in American wars, even as their families faced discrimination at home. Irish aid societies like the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick were also established during this period.

As the Irish community in Southie grew, its voters became a powerful political bloc. Figures like John F. Kennedy and Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill soon appeared at the parade, eager to court Irish-American voters. For Irish-Americans, the parades became a space to voice political stances, whether it was support for Northern Ireland in the 70s, or modern peace in the Middle East.

Today, the Sunday parade in Southie is one of the city's most anticipated events—yes, for Irish-Americans, but also for the city's robust college population. Donning green from head to toe, local undergraduates swing around BORGs while families stake out the same patch of sidewalk year after year, passing down stories of grandparents who marched on the same streets in the 1940s or 1950s.

Gentrification has reshaped the neighborhood's dynamics, and the political battles and activism that defined it have moved, but the parade connects the city back to its history. It is one of the few moments where old Southie and new Southie occupy the same space. The sound of bagpipes echoing off the triple-deckers, the sight of children waving flags from second-floor windows, and the smell of boiled dinners drifting from open doors speak to cultural integration, but not assimilation.

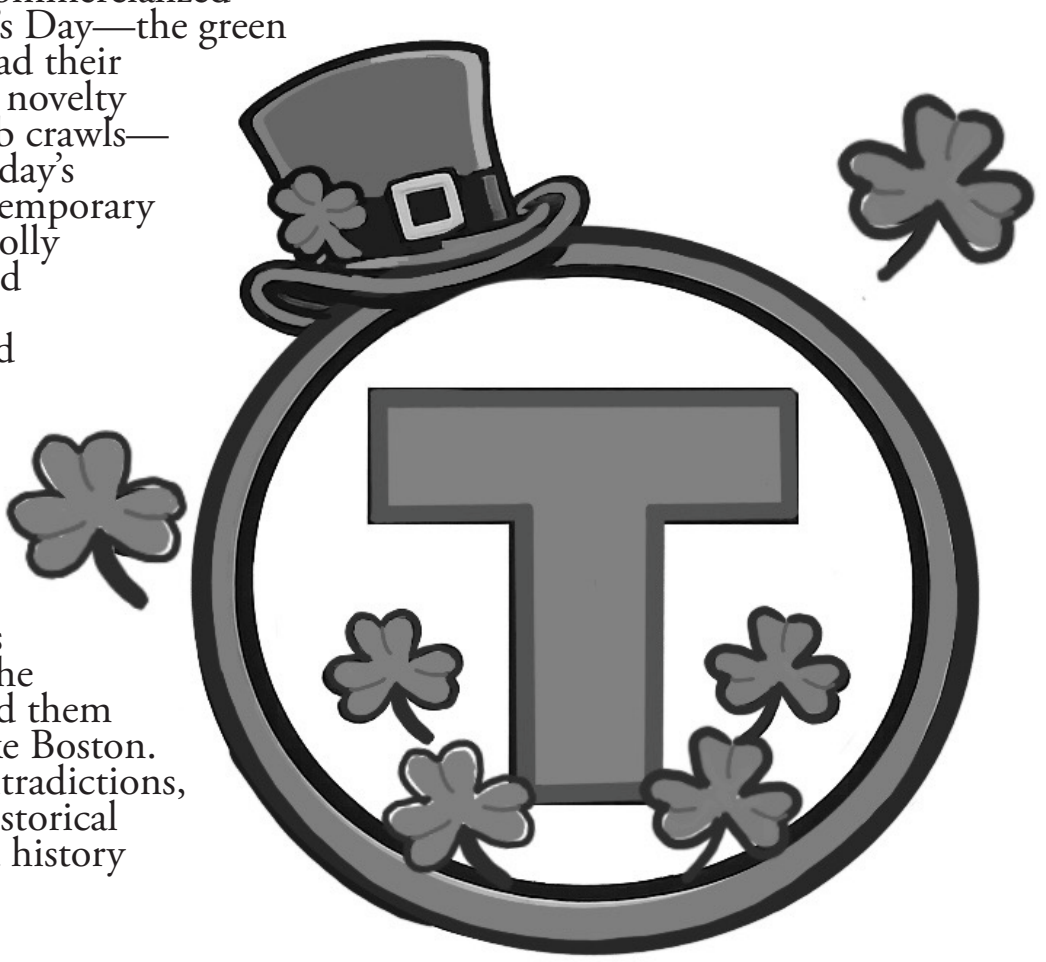
The modern, commercialized version of St. Patrick's Day—the green beer bars use to unload their low-quality suds, the novelty hats, the 12-hour pub crawls—overshadows the holiday's lineage. Yet, the contemporary celebration is not wholly inauthentic. Time and time again, diasporic cultures have survived by absorbing new influences while preserving old ones. The exuberance of the American St. Patrick's Day is not a betrayal of the holiday's Irish origins but an extension of the resilience that allowed them to endure in cities like Boston. The day is full of contradictions, sacred and secular, historical and commercial, and history itself is no different, so who's to say it doesn't reflect the complexity of a community?

Harvard, historically wary of Catholic immigrants and slow to admit them, now sits within a city whose identity cannot be separated from the people it once excluded. This year, students may be away on spring break when the parade passes through South Boston, but the University's presence remains tied to the Irish diaspora. The descendants of famine refugees now teach in its classrooms, lead its departments, and shape everyday intellectual life. The holiday that divided insiders and outsiders now reveals how porous that boundary has become.

The Green Line literally remains in the way the sun hits South Boston's brick facades as the rumble of the city's T carries hundreds of parade attendees under the city. However, the "green line" is also in the tug of a child's hand on a parent's sleeve, and the rambunctious exchange on an aged-wood countertop in an Irish pub. It is in the green that lingers long after Mar. 17, in every street where a community has walked, leaving pieces of themselves behind—Boston's own pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

**Rohan Tyagi '29 (rohantyagi@college.harvard.edu) is finding a green uniform for this year's rendition of the St. Patrick's Day parade.**

**Graphic by Angie Li '28**



# Green Shoots in Red Soil: The Texas Primary Race

How Representative James Talarico's victory represents a blueprint for grassroots campaigns.

BY ELLA RICKETTS '28

Money is the engine of politics. It fuels campaigns and elections, and, by extension, our politicians. Each dollar purchases yet another 15-second campaign advertisement or a canvasser to knock on undecided voters' doors. Currency and power are synonymous in a game that systematically rewards the highest spender.

The hopeless cycle in which money determines political outcomes seems unbreakable. It appears that private interests will always pull the strings while the public sits and watches puppets play. But for the first time, there may be a glimmer of hope in the recently nominated Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate: James Talarico.

A Presbyterian and member of the Texas House of Representatives, Talarico leveraged his faith to call for love in politics, stringing together an unlikely coalition of devoted Christians and progressives. In the early hours of Mar. 4, he triumphed by roughly six percentage points over the U.S. Representative Jasmine Crockett, the former public defender known for her quick-witted opposition to the Trump administration.

While both candidates argue for similar liberal policies, they differ noticeably on one issue: messaging surrounding campaign finances.

Big money dominates American elections. In the 2022 midterms, a mere 21 of the largest donor families contributed $783 million, while billionaires covered approximately 15% of all federal financing. Since the "Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission" Supreme Court ruling—allowing corporations, organizations, and individuals to spend unlimited amounts on campaigns through independent groups known as super PACs—outside spending has skyrocketed. These political action committees can raise limitless funds to support or oppose candidates unofficially, with their contributions now overtaking aggregate small donations ($200 or less per person).

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee PAC alone spent $53 million in 2023 to support pro-Israel candidates. This shift in campaign finance has drawn political attention away from voters and toward those whose wallets are large enough to rise above the nation's clouded cries.

Perhaps most alarmingly, Elon Musk, the world's wealthiest man, contributed a quarter of a billion dollars to super PACs in support of Donald Trump's 2024 presidential run. He similarly threw $20 million towards a judicial race in the state of Wisconsin, albeit unsuccessfully.

Still, the ability of the wealthy elite to influence the highest position in office treads towards a dangerously dystopian path. In this new era of politics, elected officials are teetering close to becoming the equivalent of NASCAR drivers, except their corporate sponsorships are stitched inside the lining of their suits instead of plastered across their race jackets. They race for those who fund them, rather than those who cheer. Only the most informed voters can uncover the source of campaign funding through meticulous research, and even then, the trail can be murky because certain donations to super PACs remain confidential.

Throughout his campaign, Talarico has been an advocate for ending corruption in Washington, promising to ban both super PACs and corporate PACs once elected. Talarico's own decision to have "never taken a dime" of corporate money since his first run for the Texas State House in 2017 assists in validating his promise. However, while the majority of his funds come from small donations, it is worth noting that Talarico is still backed by one major super PAC, the Lone Star Rising. The non-corporate PAC obtained $6.1 million in funds from Jan. 1 through Feb. 11 to air its own pro-Talarico advertisements.

A skeptic may raise an eyebrow at Talarico's messaging, given his connection to the Lone Star Rising. Yet he shows integrity beyond most, pledging not to hold any stocks, and pushing further for the outlawing of congressional stock trading to prevent officials from ogling their own bank accounts over those of their constituents. His philosophy aligns with that of economist Richard Salsman, who once said that "the only way to get money out of politics is to get politics out of money-making."

Removing external incentives to pass laws in favor of the top 1% and corporations is indeed the first step in striking down the Achilles heel of democracy: favoritism towards donors. It recenters the focus back to people who have the most to lose each election—those relying on Medicaid, SNAP, and other forms of social welfare. At least by restricting campaign funds, politicians will have to listen when the people demand bread instead of the billionaires whispering, "let them eat cake."

Looking ahead to the 2026 midterms, as both parties battle for control over the congressional chambers, restoring faith in their intentions will be critical for winning votes. At a time where 25% of Americans believe neither party represents their interests even somewhat well, transparency could be the starting move to winning favourability—the belief that they stand for the little man. Rejecting corporate money takes off the jacket and reveals the inner lining, signaling dedication to the will of the constituents, not the wealthy.

Does this mean the path is certain? No. Even Talarico, despite his propulsion into stardom, faces a steep challenge to flip a Texas seat that has remained solidly red for almost four decades. But his grassroots campaign, should he fully commit, represents a tentative green light in America's Great Gatsby story—a hope that politics will once again be about communities, not corporations.

**Ella Ricketts '28 (ericketts@college.harvard.edu) ironically could have made a lot of money on Polymarket had she bet on this race.**

**Graphic by Linden McCarl '28**

# The Story of the Celts as Told Through Their Art

Rare Celtic art on display at the Harvard Art Museums.

BY KALVIN FRANK '28 AND ELLIE GUO '29

From Mar. 6 to Aug. 2, the Harvard Art Museums is displaying "Celtic Art Across the Ages," an exhibit curated by Susanne Ebbinghaus, Penny Coombe, Laure Marest, and Matthew Rogan with sculptures, paintings, and artifacts dating from 800 BCE to today. This exhibition is the first major showcase of Celtic art in the United States, featuring artwork spanning almost three millennia and illuminating the rich and complex history of the group.

A common misconception is that the Celtic people are exclusively from Ireland, Scotland, and the British Isles. Their history is actually significantly more complex, spanning multiple continents.

While many people today believe the Celts are from Ireland, they are actually a diverse group of people who lived throughout Europe, including what is now Ireland and Britain, starting around 1200 BCE. "Celtic" is an umbrella term that contains the sub-groups of the Gauls of mainland Western Europe, Britons of the British Isles, Galatians of Anatolia, and more. In fact, many of the objects and artifacts in Harvard's exhibition were excavated in modern-day France, Germany, northern Italy, and even as far as Slovenia.

The etymology and history of the word "Celt" are highly debated, and it is unclear what the term used to mean. Originally, it was a Greco-Roman term used to refer to the "barbarian" tribes surrounding their empires. Today, the word "Celtic" typically refers to speakers of Celtic languages, including Irish, Gaelic, and Welsh, among others.

In pop culture, the word "Celtic" has a different definition than it does in history. Contemporary society often associates it with stereotypical images, such as the leprechaun mascot of Boston's home basketball team.

Recognizing these common misconceptions, the gallery opens by guiding viewers through its presented artifacts. Before entering the gallery, the wall display over the entrance already begins to tell a story. Located on the left is a close-up of an ornament from 800 BCE, and on the far right is a piece of Celtic art from the 20th century. Although they appear to be similar at first glance, this subtle difference reveals that Celtic art is an ongoing form of expression for a group of people whose identity has been consistently overlooked and misrepresented.

After walking through these images of Celtic ornaments, viewers are immediately brought face-to-face with the "La Tène head from Heidelberg," a fragment of a statue cut off right below the nose. Made of sandstone, the statue once stood taller than the average person, and was placed outside a Celtic burial mound from 450 to 380 BCE. The figure depicted is thought to be a warrior or druid, wearing a crown of leaves dubbed "Mickey-Mouse ears" due to its resemblance to the contemporary rodent character. Unlike Greek art of the same period, the Celtic statue is abstract instead of hyperrealistic—the face has a "palm-tree" motif on its forehead, perfectly circular eyes, and stylized hair detailing on the reverse side.

The next room of the gallery is filled with bronzes and various decorative items, such as jewelry or burial items. It is important to note that, unlike more stable metals such as gold, bronze decays and turns green over time. This means that many of the objects have lost their original luster. To honor their original states, the museum collaborated with an expert at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to recreate the "Bracelet or Anklet Fragment" from the fourth to third century BCE. Next to the dull and green-tinged original is the gleaming reconstruction, allowing viewers to imagine how stunning these pieces of jewelry would have been when they were worn.

The exhibit also displays the stunning and intricate bronzework of Celtic metalworkers. The "'Dome with Dragons,' from a chariot burial at Roissy-en-France (Val d'Oise)," initially seems like two concentric circles with a vine or leaf motif. However, if viewers look closely at the shapes, they may notice the almond-shaped eyes representing the heads of seahorse like creatures.

Art historians are unsure what Celtic artists called these figures; the modern approximation is "dragon." Like an optical illusion, it is initially difficult to make out the bodies of these creatures, but once someone does, they cannot "unsee" them. As the dragons swirl in and out of the rings, viewers are left marveling at how the artist created such fluid

*Head, 450–380 BCE. Sandstone; height: 29 cm, width: 36 cm, depth: 13.5 cm. From Bergheim, Heidelberg, Germany. Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, C6828. Photo:© Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe; Thomas Goldschmidt.*

Because of the famous artwork by Greek and Roman artists of the same period, Celtic art is often overlooked or less studied. The style was distinct from the others: more abstract. However, a case of coins in the exhibition illustrates that this did not ring true for all works. Curated by Marest, who is an expert on ancient coins, the installation proves that the Celts were capable of imitating this realism—they simply were not interested in it.

The first set of Celtic coins was minted in the 4th century BCE in Greece by Alexander the Great's father, Philip II, and depicts his side profile wearing a crown of leaves.

Next to it, the Gallic imitation of these coins is remarkably similar, depicting Philip II with slightly more detailed facial features. However, by the second century BCE, the Gauls had abandoned the serious realism of the Greeks, minting a coin depicting a side profile with luscious, flowing curls, the face taking up only a small portion of the space. The last coin in the installation is even more abstract; the only recognizable part is a chevron-like pattern, representing the laurel wreath in the original coin.

As you enter the final room of the exhibit, the curators follow the development of Celtic art beyond the ancient and medieval periods. The conquest of Celtic Gaul (modern-day France) by the Roman Empire under Caesar's reign in the first century BCE significantly changed Celtic culture. The gallery displays a 19th-century plaster cast of the Roman-era statue "Dying Gaul," depicting a wounded Celtic man in a realistic style. It serves as a reminder of the conquest of the Celtic people, evoking feelings of shame as the figure stares at the ground in defeat. The man has unkempt hair and a torc, a type of Celtic necklace, perhaps conveying the Romans' view of the Gauls as "barbaric."

The rest of the exhibit emphasizes the continuation of Celtic art into the 20th century and beyond. A case of silver objects from more contemporary Celtic silversmiths concludes the gallery. It includes the "Freedom of the City of Edinburgh Chest," which was owned by Joseph Patrick Kennedy Sr. (John F. Kennedy's father), illustrating that Celtic culture lives on through the lives of Irish-Americans.

The exhibit does more than educate its viewers on the complexity and beauty of a forgotten cultural group—it also tells a story. It tells the narrative of how a people: their conquest, their incorporation into a dominant culture, and their reemergence in the modern era.

"Those people that Greeks and Romans considered barbarians actually made this really elaborate, technically, highly skilled art," Ebbinghaus said in an interview with the "Independent."

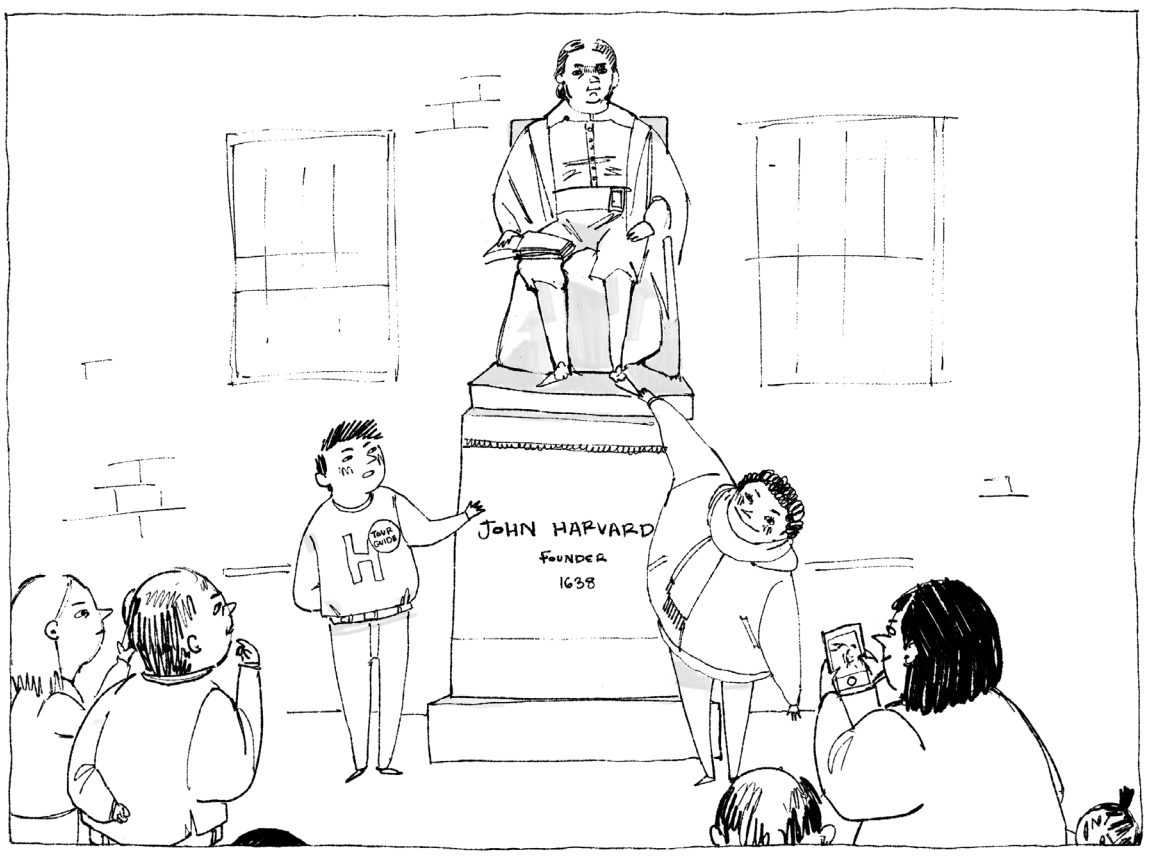
"Celtic Art Across the Ages" is an unprecedented project—and it's right in our backyard. Many of the objects are on loan from collections all over Europe, such as the British Museum, the National Library of France, the National Museum of Ireland, and more. In fact, the "Stater of the Arverni," a gold coin depicting the Gallic chieftain Vercingetorix, is one of the few remaining coins of its kind. The particular coin on display is extremely rare because the imprinted text is still fully legible.

"This is the first major exhibition in the U.S. on this topic. So, many of the things are on view for the very first time," Ebbinghaus said. "And I think that's also what made our colleagues at the lending institution so excited that they really sent us some of their star objects, because they felt almost a missionary zeal to make this art known here in this country."

The Harvard Art Museums is located on 32 Quincy Street and open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. "Celtic Art Across the Ages" is located in the Special Exhibitions Gallery on the third floor. The exhibit also features an interactive, family-friendly activity and frequent performances, which you can learn more about on their website.

**Kalvin Frank '28 (kfrank@college.harvard.edu) and Ellie Guo '29 (eguo@college.harvard.edu) are the Arts Editors for the "Independent."**

**Photos Courtesy of the Harvard Art Museums**




# Fourth Lie

**Written By Ellie Guo '29, Graphic By Sam Park '29**

*"There's a fourth, recently discovered lie about the John Harvard statue. Many people believe that touching his foot will bring you good luck and good grades, but it actually only works about 20% of the time."*


GUINNESS
GUINNESS
OLMERS
KISS ME
I'M IRISH

# Kitchen Sink No. 7

## BY LUKE WAGNER '26 AND JONAH KARAFIOL '26

The ash was under my left thumbnail when I woke.

I noticed it before I noticed anything else—before the grey light coming through the curtain, before the cold, before the particular silence of early morning that the building produced when it was trying to pass as uninhabited. I lay still and held my hand up and looked at it. A thin dark crescent. Not ink. Not dirt. I knew the difference by now. I pressed it with my other thumb, and it held, the way soot holds, the way it settles into the skin and declares itself permanent.

I sat up. My clothes were on. I had fallen asleep at the desk again and must have moved to the bed at some point, though I didn't remember moving. The lamp had burned out. The Bacchae was open on the desk to the Agave scene, and I had left notes in the margins that I didn't remember writing: small, close letters that looked like mine but weren't quite mine, the handwriting of someone concentrating harder than I had been. I read one back: the blood is still on the hands even if the hands don't remember holding it. A quotation from the tutorial, I thought. Or something I'd added myself. I couldn't separate them.

The window gave me the quad. The oak tree. The pale stone turning grey in the early light. Nothing in the scene was wrong, which was the most unsettling thing about it. The world does not rearrange itself to accommodate what you've lost. It continues, indifferent, presenting its usual face.

I went to the sink. The hot water took its time—one, two, three—then came through in a thin, reddish stream that cleared. I held my hand under it and worked at the thumbnail with the nail of my other hand until the ash came loose and spiraled toward the drain. The water ran grey for a moment, then clean. I dried my hands on my trousers and stood there, not yet ready for the day to have started.

I didn't remember the fire.

That was the precise shape of it. Not: I had been careful with the lamp and had no idea how soot came to be on my hands. And not: I had been burning papers, and the ash had transferred without my noticing. The shape was simply a gap—the lecture hall at four in the afternoon, and then waking just now, and between them nothing. A few hours that belonged to someone else, or to no one, hours I could not reach.

There were fragments, but I distrusted them. A smell. Not quite the lamp. Larger. The smell of something that had been wood and had chosen to become smoke instead. And a sound—low, continuous, the patient sound of something being consumed. And a feeling of warmth on my face, closer than the fireplace, closer than was comfortable. I could not tell if I was remembering or constructing. I have never been certain of the difference, but usually the uncertainty is manageable. This morning it was not.

I changed my shirt, which smelled of smoke.

…

Tutorial was at nine. I had been awake since before the light came, so by the time I climbed the stairs to Hendricks's room, I had been alone with myself for too long, which is never a good condition in which to be examined.

He was standing when I entered. Not at his desk but at the window, looking down at the same quad with his hands behind his back, and he did not turn when I came in. I stood in the doorway for a moment, wondering if I had the wrong hour, then closed the door and sat. He let me sit. The fire had been going long enough that the room was almost too warm, the air thick with tobacco and the sweetish smell of old paper, and I felt my thoughts begin to slow in it the way thoughts do when the body is more comfortable than it should be.

He said, still at the window: Tell me what Agave feels when she comes back to herself.

Not what I had prepared. I had prepared the philosophical argument—guilt, consciousness, the structure of divine madness. This was different. This was asking me to be inside her.

I said: I think she feels nothing yet. For a moment. There's a delay between what the eyes receive and what the mind will accept.

He turned then. He looked at me with the expression I had always found difficult to interpret—not unkind, not kind, the expression of a man watching something move that he is not yet certain is alive.

He said: And in that delay—in that gap between the seeing and the knowing—who is she?

I opened my mouth and then closed it. The fire in the grate shifted. Outside, someone crossed the quad, and Hendricks's eyes moved to follow them without his head turning, a movement that struck me as slightly wrong, slightly too controlled, and I thought: he is not actually asking about Agave.

I said: She's no one. In that gap, she's no one. She hasn't received herself back yet.

Hendricks said: Yes. He said it quietly, the way you say yes when someone has confirmed something you wished they hadn't. He moved to his desk and sat, and I watched him open a folder, extract two pages, and lay them side by side on the surface between us with the deliberateness of a man laying down evidence.

Your essay, he said, touching the left page. Then: This one arrived yesterday. He touched the right. I looked at them. The handwriting on the right was not mine, though something in its formation—the angle of certain letters, the particular way the t's were crossed—was familiar in the way a stranger's face can be familiar, the way you can recognize a structure without being able to name where you know it from.

Whose is it? I said. He said a name I had never heard. A student apparently on my floor, apparently known to Hendricks well enough that he produced the name from memory, immediate and certain, without consulting any paper.

I don't know him, I said.

Hendricks looked at me. Not with surprise. With a quality I can only describe as watchfulness—the quality of a man who has decided to observe rather than intervene, who believes the situation will produce its own conclusion if he simply waits long enough.

He said: He writes about Orestes. The son who is commanded to commit an act he cannot survive committing. He said it without emphasis, without apparent intention, the way you might read aloud from a register. Then, He argues that Orestes is not mad. That he is perfectly lucid. That lucidity and horror are not opposites.

I said nothing. The fire was very warm. The two pages lay between us, and I did not look at the one on the right again because looking at it produced a sensation I did not have a name for—somewhere between recognition and nausea, the feeling of almost remembering something that never happened to you.

Hendricks closed the folder. The tutorial, apparently, was over. I stood. At the door, he said, without looking up: Get some sleep. I'm fine, I replied.

Yes. That's what concerns me, he said.

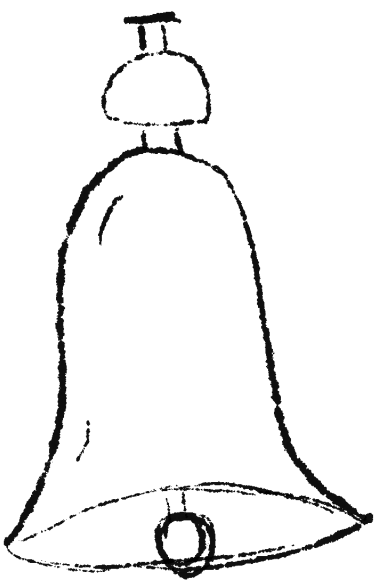
…

The quad at midday was cold and full of movement—gowns, books, voices that rose and fell and were carried off by the wind before they could be deciphered. I walked through it without direction, which was unlike me. I preferred to have a destination. Destinations organize a body's passage through space. Without them, you are only moving, and moving without direction looks from the outside like agitation, which I did not want to project.

I was thinking about the essay Hendricks had described when someone said my name.

I stopped. Turned. He was a second-year, I thought, though I didn't know his name. We had nodded at each other in the dining hall once or twice, the brief acknowledgement of people who share a building but have no other claim on each other. He had a book under his arm and an expression of mild, genuine friendliness that I found immediately difficult to process.

I saw you last night, he said. In the quad. He said it lightly, conversationally, as though he were paying me a trivial compliment.



I told him I had been in my room last night.

He shook his head, still smiling. Late, he said. Past eleven. You were standing under the oak tree. I nearly called out, but you seemed—occupied. He paused, then added, You were laughing. I didn't know what. I assumed you'd had a better evening than I had.

I held his gaze and said nothing. I was working to keep my face in its ordinary arrangement. He looked at me a moment longer, then seemed to decide that nothing further was required of him and went on across the quad, already opening his book. I watched him until he turned the corner.

Past eleven. Standing under the oak tree. Laughing.

The oak tree was directly below my window. I could see it from my desk when I was working. I had looked at it every morning since I arrived. I knew its shape—the particular way its branches distributed themselves, the way its shadow crossed the quad in the afternoon. I knew the flagstones below it, worn smooth, a slightly different shade from the ones around them. I had no memory of standing under it. None at all. Not a fragment, not a smell, not the ridges of bark under my palm. Standing there and laughing, apparently, at something I could not name, and then returning to my room and falling into the kind of sleep I sometimes fell into when my body had been doing things my mind had chosen not to register.

I turned and walked back to the building.

…

The library was quiet in the late afternoon. The usual arrangement—long tables, brass lamps, the particular smell of paper doing its slow work of becoming dust. I had come for Aeschylus, or I had told myself I had come for Aeschylus, but I stood at the entrance for a moment before going to the shelves and looked at the room as though something had already happened there.

She was shelving in the classical section when I found it. Her back to me, moving with that efficiency I had catalogued early and often—each book placed without hesitation, her body angled slightly forward, sleeves rolled. I stood at the end of the aisle and watched her for a moment before she heard me, or felt me, and turned.

The expression that crossed her face was brief and quickly managed. Not a surprise exactly. Something closer to the look of someone who has been expecting a conversation they have not fully prepared for.

She said my name. Then she said: You smell like smoke. I said I had been burning old notes. I had changed my shirt. I was less sure about my hands.

She held my gaze for a moment in a way that meant she had decided to accept this, not because she believed it, but because she had chosen not to press. She turned back to the books. I stood where I was.

I asked if she had seen me recently. In the last few days. Outside of the library. The question came out more carefully than I intended, and she heard the care in it, and turned back again.

When she said: Last night, I said: Or recently. I wanted to know if she had seen me somewhere I might not have been fully present.

She looked at me for a long moment. The lamp at the end of the aisle threw her shadow down the length of the floor. When she finally spoke, her voice was measured, the voice of someone deciding how much of what they know to release at once.

She said: I saw someone last night. Under the oak tree, quite late. I thought it was you. She paused. But he was—different. The way he was standing. Something in the posture. I thought I was wrong. I thought it was someone else.

I asked: What was different about him.

She considered this. Then, he looked like he was listening to something. Not watching, not thinking. Listening. As though someone were speaking to him that no one else could hear.

The aisle was very quiet. Somewhere above us, a board settled.

I said: But you thought it was me. She said: I thought it was you.

She picked up the last book from her pile and shelved it with the same unhesitating precision. Then she looked at her hands for a moment—I noticed this, the way her attention dropped to her own hands and rested there briefly, as though checking they were still in the right condition. Then she looked back at me. Whatever she had been about to say, she chose not to say it. She picked up her empty cart and wheeled it toward the door without speaking again.

I stood alone in the classical section. Aeschylus above my right shoulder. Sophocles. Euripides. All the Greek tragedians arranged in their accustomed order, witnessing nothing, as always. I pulled "The Oresteia" from the shelf and stood there with it in my hands, not opening it, only holding it, the weight of it, while the lamp burned behind me and the shadow of the shelves fell across the floor in long, patient bars.

There was a man who stood under the oak tree past eleven, laughing at something no one else could hear. He had my face and my height and my hands, and he was not me, and there is no language for that that does not make it worse.

I put "The Oresteia" back.

…

Room 14 was cold when I returned. I had left the window open a crack, and the afternoon had come in and settled there. I closed it and stood in the room's center for a moment, aware of it in the way you are aware of a space you have returned to after it has been occupied by something else. The desk was as I had left it—The Bacchae, the margined notes I didn't fully remember writing. The bed. The wardrobe. The cold brass handle of the closet door.

I sat on the bed without undressing. "The Oresteia" was still in my hands. I hadn't decided to bring it—I had put it back on the shelf, or I thought I had—but here it was. The cover worn at the corners, the binding cracked along the spine. I set it on the mattress beside me and looked at it for a moment, and then looked away.

The chapel bell struck the hour. I counted without meaning to, and when it stopped, I couldn't have said what number I had reached.

The room settled into its evening sounds—pipes, boards, the low movement of the building doing whatever buildings do when they believe themselves unobserved. I lay back without pulling the covers up, the way I had apparently done the night before, and looked at the ceiling. The plaster had a crack running from the corner toward the center that I had been aware of since I arrived and had never examined closely, preferring not to know how far it went.

After a while, I turned my head toward the window.

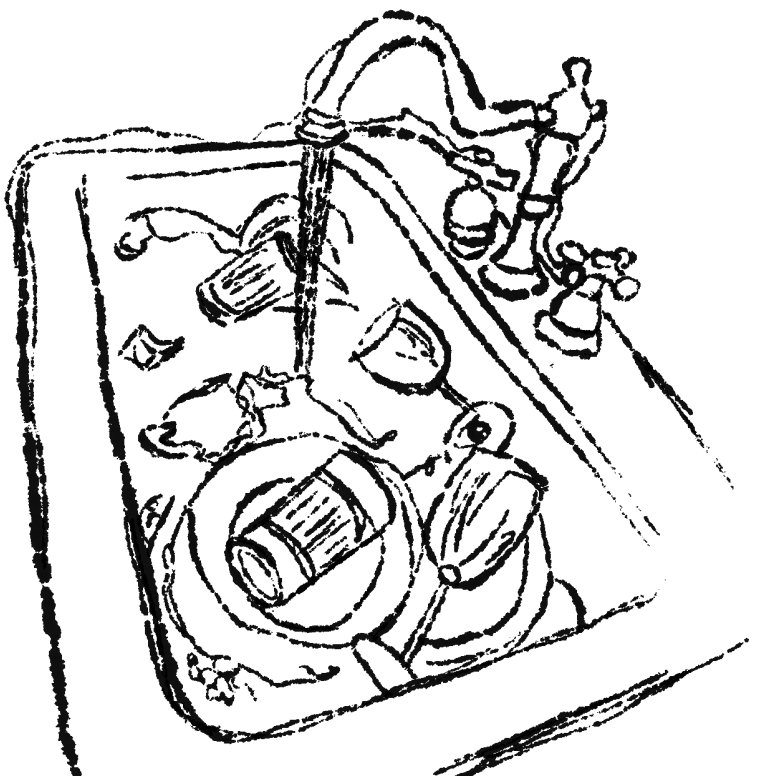
The oak tree stood where it always stood. Its branches held their shape against the darkening sky with the patience of something that has never been required to explain itself. The flagstones below it were empty. The quad was empty. There was no one laughing, no figure standing in the particular posture of a man listening to a voice no one else could hear. There was only the tree, doing what the tree did, which was persist.

I watched the tree until the light was gone and the window gave me only my own reflection, pale and approximate, floating above the dark quad. I watched that too, for a moment. Then I closed my eyes.

Whatever was next came in the dark, in the hours I could not account for, arriving the way it always arrived—without announcement, without permission, taking what it needed and leaving me in the morning with the evidence of its passage and no language for what it was or what I was when it was using me.

**Written by Luke Wagner '26 (lukewagner@college.harvard.edu) and Jonah Karafiol '26 (jonahkarafiol@college.harvard.edu).**

**Graphics by Hafsah Khan '29**



# An Irish American's Guide to St. Patrick's Day

How to celebrate the classic Irish holiday.

BY FRANCES CONNORS '26

While I'm proud every day to be the great-granddaughter of Irish immigrants, there's one day a year when I feel an extra sense of pride in my heritage: St. Patrick's Day. Since I was a child, "St. Paddy's" has been one of my favorite holidays. I always looked forward to donning green from head to toe and coming home from school to eat my mom's corned beef, cabbage, and Irish soda bread.

My hometown of Cleveland, Ohio, loves the holiday too; its annual St. Patrick's Day parade attracts crowds of more than 10,000 people and is the city's biggest single-day event. Growing up, I loved watching Irish step dancers and bagpipe players march through the streets of Cleveland at the parade. Though I haven't spent the holiday at home in a few years, I've learned a thing or two about how to celebrate in my four years at college. Below, I've compiled my recommendations for every aspect of the holiday, so you too can celebrate St. Patrick and Ireland.

**Location**

As Harvard students, the best place to celebrate might seem obvious: Boston's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. With up to one million spectators, it's the second-largest parade in the country behind New York City—needless to say, it's a fantastic time. With nearly one in five Bostonians claiming Irish heritage, the city's pride in the island nation makes the parade a big deal here. When I participated in the parade my freshman year, the crowd's energy was electric. College students and families alike crowded the streets of Boston, sporting orange and green, in a lively, congenial mood. Everyone was friends with everyone that day, and perfect strangers let us join them on their first-floor apartment roof for a better view of the parade. It's a day meant to celebrate the city's heritage and how far Irish immigrants have come in Boston since their mass influx during the Potato Famine of the 1840s and 1850s.

This year, the parade starts at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, Mar. 15, so if you haven't dashed off for spring break, it's worth the T-trip.

If staying in Boston next weekend isn't your vibe and you're still trying to figure out spring break plans, then you're just in luck. Dublin, Ireland, is a 6-hour direct Aer Lingus flight away and the actual best place to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Last year, my friends and I squished into an Airbnb by Trinity College Dublin and had the time of our lives. Every study-abroad student I knew flocked to the city like sheep guided by a young St. Patrick (back when he was a shepherd). The bars were standing room only, with the celebration spilling onto streets across the city.

**Outfit**

Most days of the year, I avoid being overly prescriptive with fashion rules. But on St. Patrick's Day, the number one rule is that you must wear green, or else you risk being pinched. Once you have that covered, there are many other ways to display your appreciation for Irish culture. Originally worn by fishermen on Ireland's Aran Islands, a classic Aran sweater (or any chunky knit) is the perfect attire if you're anywhere cold. An Irish flat cap will also make you fit in well in any climate.

**Music**

On St. Patrick's Day, it's time to turn down the house music at your function and switch to the more traditional Irish folk music. If you're celebrating here in Cambridge, it's definitely bad luck not to play "I'm Shipping Up to Boston" by the Dropkick Murphys. The classic "Rattlin' Bog" is another favorite for the holiday, as is any song featuring a fiddle.

**Food**

There are two ways to go when it comes to food on St. Patrick's Day. The traditionalists stick with classic Irish fare. Potatoes in any form are a staple in my diet on the 17th, and I'd also recommend trying corned beef hash, bangers and mash, cabbage, or soda bread. If HUDS doesn't deliver on the day of, you can also go the new age route, which involves a lot more sugar and green food dye. A McDonald's Shamrock Shake is sure to put you in the holiday spirit, as are Lucky Charms Rice Krispies treats.

**Drinks**

As a holiday with an emphasis on beer, I'd be remiss not to offer recommendations for drinks on St. Patrick's Day. If you're over 21 and want to partake in tradition, a classic Guinness pint is a must; bonus points if you can split the G. Given that most parades start in the morning, another favorite is an Irish Coffee. Made with coffee, sugar, Irish whiskey (preferably Jameson), and whipped cream, the drink is sure to wake you right up. If whiskey in coffee isn't your cup of tea, you can opt for Baileys Irish Cream, which was invented in Ireland in 1974. While not exactly traditional, green Jello shots are another fun way to celebrate.

If you're under 21, you can always mix lemonade and blue Powerade for an on-theme green drink or go for a Guinness 0.0, so you can still enjoy a pint.

Beyond the fun food and festivities, to me, St. Patrick's Day has always been one of my favorite holidays because I get to embrace my Irish heritage and family history. When I visited Dublin for the first time last spring, I got chills walking down the streets because I felt such a deep sense of kinship with the city where my ancestors had once lived. St. Patrick's Day is a way for me to feel that same way, no matter where I am. Whether you're in Boston, Dublin, or anywhere else in the world, I hope you, too, can find time to have fun in the name of St. Patrick.

May the luck of the Irish be with you!

**FRANCES CONNORS '26 (MARYFRANCESCONNORS@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) CAN DO A MEAN IRISH JIG.**

**GRAPHIC BY MADISON KRUG '27**

# Writers With the Luck of the Irish

## Authors you can read to show your St. Patty's Day pride.

BY EDEN BRIDGE-HAYES '29

For those more inclined to spend St. Patrick's Day at home rather than in a pub, there are still ways to show your appreciation for Irish culture. Ireland has a rich literary history filled with wit, disillusionment, and an ardent love for its country. So for those who don't feel like going out and drinking pints of Guinness until you pass out, honoring Irish authors is a fitting way to celebrate the holiday (and perhaps in a way that Saint Patrick may be more inclined to approve of).

**Oscar Wilde**

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, better known as Oscar Wilde, is praised as one of the greatest authors of the Victorian era. From his Gothic horror novel "The Picture of Dorian Gray" to comedic plays such as "The Importance of Being Earnest," Wilde's oeuvre has achieved broad literary success over the past 150 years.

In "The Picture of Dorian Gray," Basil Hallward creates a portrait of his muse, the novel's titular character, to capture his incredible beauty. After Lord Henry Wotton, an associate of the two, emphatically declares that beauty is the only thing in life worth pursuing, Gray wishes that his portrait would age in his stead. His wish comes true, allowing Gray to pursue a hedonistic, reckless lifestyle without fear of how this will affect his physical appearance. The novel delves into themes such as society's impact on individual morality, the expressions of sexuality, and the dangers of egotism, and it remains one of the most brilliant commentaries on 19th-century aestheticism.

**Bram Stoker**

Bram Stoker, another Gothic writer, is the author of "Dracula," a horror novel that uniquely employs its epistolary form to build a creeping sense of dread, leaving the reader wondering whether another letter will arrive—or whether the writer will be killed. Because he is famously associated with Transylvania, the author's actual country of origin may come as a shock. However, it is speculated that "Dracula" was inspired by such figures in Irish folklore as Abhartach, a chieftain who rose from his grave and demanded to drink the blood of others to sustain his unnatural life. "Dracula" is a novel that deals with numerous types of expression, including physical, sexual, and religious, reflecting inner turmoil within Ireland at the time.

Stoker's close friendship with Oscar Wilde is also suspected to have influenced his writing of "Dracula." He began writing the novel just one month after Wilde was arrested for indecency, an arrest related to his homosexuality. Although this correlation does not mean that Wilde's arrest compelled Stoker to write "Dracula," the inclusion of themes dealing with expressions of homosexuality seems reminiscent of Wilde's life at the time.

**Samuel Beckett**

Although it would be easy to overlook that Bram Stoker was Irish, Samuel Beckett's namesake bridge in Dublin serves as a constant reminder of the playwright's roots. For his contributions to the theatre of the absurd, evident in his use of dark comedy and literary nonsense, Beckett received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. His most famous play, "Waiting for Godot," is a bleak tragicomedy that illustrates the meaninglessness of life and the passage of time.

In "Waiting for Godot," Vladimir and Estragon both wait for the arrival of the title character, who never appears on stage. Irish literary critic Vivian Mercer famously describes the two-act drama as "a play in which nothing happens, twice." The minimalist setting, characterization, and dialogue within the play invite numerous social, political, and religious interpretations, ranging from viewing Godot as an allegory of the Cold War to a God-like figure. However, when Beckett himself was asked what the play was about, he reportedly replied: "It's all symbiosis."

**James Joyce**

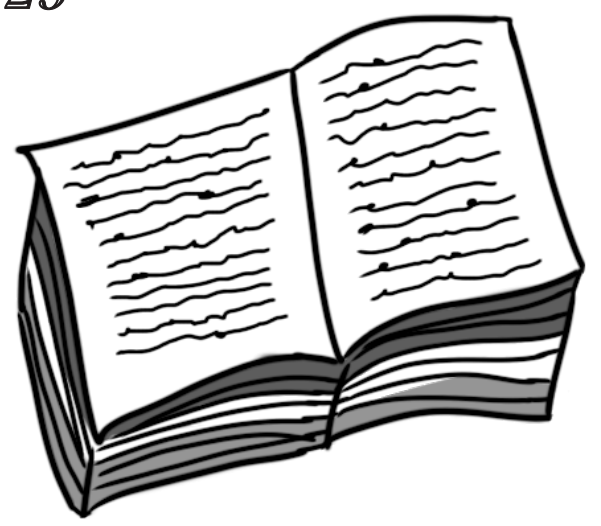
Despite James Joyce famously setting many of his works in Dublin, the writer actually spent most of his adult life alternating between Zurich, Paris, and London, returning to Ireland only for brief periods. However, Joyce clearly held Dublin close to his heart. "For myself, I always write about Dublin, because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the heart of all the cities of the world. In the particular is contained the universal," he explained.

This idea is especially prevalent within Joyce's famously befuddling and complex novel "Ulysses." The work seeks to capture an average Irishman's heroic journey home—paralleling "The Odyssey"—within a singular day of Leopold Bloom as he navigates the streets of Dublin. Each book within the novel loosely draws inspiration from an event or character from the original epic, such as "Hades," which deals with a funeral, and "Circe," which depicts several characters' hallucination-based transformations. The penultimate book is "Penelope," containing only eight sentences as Molly Bloom, Leopold's wife, expresses a whirlwind of thoughts and ultimately declares her loyalty to her husband.

**William Butler Yeats**

W. B. Yeats is perhaps one of the most politically dedicated Irish authors to his nation. Having served two terms as a Senator in the Irish Free State and having founded the Abbey Theatre, also known as the National Theatre of Ireland, Yeats was a driving force behind the Irish Literary Revival of the early 20th century.

Among Yeats' most famous poems are "The Second Coming," "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," "Easter, 1916," "Sailing to Byzantium," and "The Wild Swans at Coole." His works capture a wide variety of themes, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1923—less than one year after Ireland gained independence—for, according to the laureate committee, "his always inspired poetry, which in a highly artistic form gives expression to the spirit of a whole nation." Both by his contemporaries and recent critics, Yeats has been hailed as a bearer of Irish nationalism through an exploration of the association between art and politics.



**Sean O'Casey**

When John Casey became interested in Irish nationalism, he Gaelicized his name to "Seán Ó Cathasaigh," later to be known as Sean O'Casey, in order to sound more Irish. His first accepted play, "The Shadow of a Gunman," was performed at the Abbey Theatre in 1923 and was the first in O'Casey's "Dublin Trilogy," which also includes "Juno and the Paycock" and "The Plough and the Stars."

Set during the Irish War of Independence, the Irish Civil War, and the 1916 Easter Rising, respectively, each of the three tragicomedy plays explores the impact of the Irish revolution on the working class through a bitter, sardonic lens. The final work in the trilogy was performed to a sold-out crowd at the Abbey Theatre. Despite this, the play's content sparked riots. In response to these outbursts, Yeats publicly scorned the audience's behavior. "Is this going to be a recurring celebration of Irish genius? Synge first and then O'Casey," he proclaimed, referencing the riots in response to John Millington Synge's "The Playboy of the Western World."

Learning more about Ireland's diverse yet entangled literary history makes it easier to understand why St. Patrick's Day has evolved into what it is today. Starting riots at theatres, getting arrested for indecency, and changing your name because your original one does not sound Irish enough—these are all testaments to the Irish people. So even though Saint Patrick may not understand putting on a fake red beard and pub crawling to commemorate Irish history, I can almost guarantee that Oscar Wilde or Sean O'Casey would.

**EDEN BRIDGE-HAYES '29 (EDENBRIDGEHAYES@COLLEGE.HARVARD.EDU) IS WEARING HER SHAMROCK ON HER SLEEVE THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY.**

**GRAPHIC BY MIA STEWART '29**

# SPORTS

# The Art of the Comeback

## How taking two years off may lead to becoming an Olympic and World Champion.

BY DANIEL KIM '26

The 2026 Winter Olympics may be over, but the world's obsession with Alyssa Liu is just beginning. Hailing from the Bay Area, California, the 20-year-old with halo-hair took the world by storm after winning the gold medal in women's figure skating at the Winter Olympics, less than a year after she won the world title in Mar. 2025. It was a thrilling night at the Milano Ice Skating Arena, and one that recaps just how much a difference in mindset can make.

**Retirement-Me-Not**

I vividly remember opening Instagram in April of 2022 to a—now deleted—post from Liu. "heyyyyy so i'm here to announce that i am retiring from skating," she casually wrote. Less than a month after her bronze-medal-winning performance at the 2022 World Championships and almost two months since her Olympic debut in Beijing, Liu suddenly retired from the sport at the age of 16. By that time, she was already a national champion, a World Championships medalist, and an Olympian. When I was 16, I was a meager high school junior who dabbled in violin.

After some post-season ice shows, Liu disappeared from the skating world. While she experienced what "normal" kids do—she trekked to the Mount Everest base camp—I mourned the "loss" of one of my favorite skaters. During her retirement years, other figure skating stars rose through the ranks. By 2024, Japan's Kaori Sakamoto (bronze medalist from Beijing) won three consecutive World titles, and American stars Amber Glenn and Isabeau Levito each earned a national title.

Two years went by before Liu initially stepped back on the ice. This time, she would be skating on "her own terms"—no longer under her father's watchful eye, she had control over her training and coaches. No one knew what form she would return in. Two years off the ice is a long time when you consider having to regain jumps, spins, steps, and stamina. However, while many fans were skeptical of her skill set, I was firm in my belief that she would be back, even better than before.

Boy, was I right—after some trial-and-error. After subpar outings on figure skating's fall international invitational series, which features the world's top skaters, Liu came into the 2025 World Championships with little expectation. Held at TD Garden, I was lucky enough to be able to see her skate in person. To be honest, I wasn't sure how well she would place among the world's best. The same competition featured the likes of Kaori Sakamoto and Amber Glenn, just to name a few. But in the end, Liu came out on top, defeating the defending champion Sakamoto and cementing her comeback.

Reclaiming the Ice Fast forward to the 2026 Winter Olympics, where Liu arrived with more accolades to her name than before she began her athletic hiatus four years earlier. The first half of the 2025-26 season saw Liu continue her momentum from Boston, winning the Grand Prix Final (a competition for the top six in each discipline from the Grand Prix series) in Dec. 2025. A month later, she placed second to Amber Glenn at nationals. She landed in Milan with a streak of clean performances, with the best yet to come.

For those unfamiliar, figure skating competitions are split into two segments: the short program and free skate. The short program comes first, consisting of programs two-and-a-half minutes long with a required set of elements. The four-minute free skate gives skaters more freedom with their elements. The top 24 skaters after the short program move on to the free skate.

There's a common figure skating phrase that emphasizes the high stakes of the short program: "You can't win it in the short program, but you can lose it." Maybe that's why I'm always more nervous for the short: everyone has similar starting base values, so it all comes down to execution. As the first note of Laufey's "Promise" fell around the arena, the atmosphere shifted. Once Liu entered her final layback spin, it was obvious that she was in the mix for an Olympic medal—but what medal would it be?

Golden Dress, Gold Medal, Golden Girl The short program ended with Japan's Ami Nakai and Kaori Sakamoto finishing first and second, with Liu closely behind in third. With just over two points separating the top three, the gold was anyone's to take. Skating in reverse order of their short program rankings, Liu was up first.

As she stood on center ice, her golden dress sparkled, reflecting off the arena's lights and the ice—a perfect match for her program's music selection, Donna Summer's "MacArthur Park Suite." Adding to her golden dress was her contagious smile, which stayed as she went into every jump with confidence. The audience was on their feet before she even struck her ending pose, clapping along to the music. Every landing was pristine, her steps and spins were of the highest caliber, and her performance quality never faltered.

The night ended with two Japanese skaters back-to-back: Sakamoto (the heavy favorite) and Nakai (the 17-year-old newly minted senior with a triple axel). However, neither skated at their best. While their technical arsenals were similar to that of Liu's, the execution wasn't there; their performances felt more defensive than offensive. As the judges tabulated their technical elements and component (artistic) marks, both fell behind Liu. with Sakamoto dropping to second and Nakai to third. Alysa Liu became America's golden girl.

**The Future is in Sight**

Winning Olympic gold catapulted Liu to fame—not just domestically, but globally as well. Her gold medal-winning free skate garnered more than 2.5 million views on YouTube, and her gala exhibition to "Stateside" by PinkPantheress went viral, not to mention the numerous media appearances that have accompanied her 7.4 million (and counting) followers on Instagram.

She was already a welcoming presence in the skating world, but now, it's hard not to know who Liu is. Even with her newfound fame, I'm happy to share that I have been a fan of hers since she won her first senior national title in 2019. She's come a long way since then: she went to her first Olympics, retired at the age of 16, and then came back to the sport on her own terms. I've come a long way, too: I got into Harvard, planned to be pre-med, and am now becoming a consultant instead. In the time that has passed, I have watched her become both an Olympic and World Champion and an inspiration to many.

**Lessons from Liu**

Liu's story differs from the "work hard, play hard" mindset that many Harvard students possess. Her journey teaches that success is not always the result of a predictable path or perfectly executed plan. Rather than following a rigid formula, Liu embraced exploration and allowed herself to pivot.

While dedication is important, Liu's path suggests that growth often comes from moments of doubt, experimentation, and deviation from expectations. Especially at Harvard, it's important not to immerse yourself in social comparisons; an internship offer, extracurricular leadership, or completed thesis shouldn't serve as a benchmark. Perseverance is not just about pushing forward on a single track—it's also about having the bravery to change direction.

Before returning, she stepped away, recalibrated, and chose her path deliberately, rather than simply following expectations. That decision—not the medals—is what makes her story powerful. Her journey consistently reminds me that growth doesn't follow a strict timeline. What matters most is the willingness to keep moving, to keep choosing, and to trust that redefining your path is not falling behind.

I may not be chasing Olympic gold, but I am chasing growth—and like Liu, I'm learning that sometimes stepping away, starting over, or trying something new is its own kind of victory.

**Daniel Kim '26 (danielkim@college.harvard.edu) has been an avid figure skating enthusiast since 2016.**

**Graphic by James Foss '29**

# The History of the Boston Celtics

Remembering the Boston Celtics' historic celebration and representation of Irish heritage.

BY TILLY BUTTERWORTH '28

Every March, Boston erupts in green spirit for St. Patrick's Day, celebrating the city's Irish roots. Nearly a quarter of Boston's population has Irish ancestry, underscoring the importance of the holiday. The Boston Celtics, current No. 2 in the NBA Eastern Conference, feel particularly at home on Mar. 17, as their name and origins arose from this deep Irish heritage. So, how do they ensure this important cultural tie to history is maintained and honoured?

The influence of Irish culture in Boston's sports scene dates back to the 1880s—the immigrant experience during the 19th century influenced the development of Boston's sporting culture. In fact, the Boston Athletic Association was partly founded by famous Irish rebel John Boyle O'Reilly in Jan. 1887. Traditional sports such as Gaelic football, hurling, and boxing became prominent East Coast sports during this period, retaining Irish heritage, whilst many immigrants from Ireland experienced the new and different culture of America.

Sport has long served as a way of preserving history in America, with Irish heritage remaining strongly rooted across different competitions and teams. Gaelic sports such as hurling, football, and camogie enriched Irish culture in Boston further in the early 20th Century. These sports are centered around the Boston GAA (Northeastern Division), and host competitive matches and leagues. Youth programs are also run by the Irish Youth Sports League, therefore showing a clear intent for Gaelic sporting culture to expand and thrive across Massachusetts. The relationship between Irish heritage and sport runs deep in Boston, acting as one of the special ways this history is maintained and celebrated.

This connection of Irish history in Boston is strongly reinforced and revered through the Boston Celtics franchise. For sports lovers, the NBA is a talented and widely followed league that is followed by millions across the world. The Celtics are known for their long-standing history of success as a record 18-time champion franchise, making them the most successful NBA team in history. Based at TD Garden in Boston, they typically compete in front of approximately 19,000 fans from October to April each year. The team's main rivals are the Los Angeles Lakers and the Philadelphia 76ers.

Whilst the Boston Celtics' success carries their name across the global stage, they also carry a significant history. Founded by Walter Brown in 1946, the timing of the club's establishment coincided with the postwar proliferation of television in the United States, allowing the Celtics to capture media attention. Many players over the years have become iconic figures as the franchise's profile has grown.

The Celtics' unique name stems from a large, rich Irish diaspora in the United States. When Brown was choosing the team's name, he wanted to officially acknowledge the Irish roots grounded in Boston, as well as his own Irish descent. During the 19th century, a mass migration of Irish immigrants to the United States from Ireland following the devastating Great Famine from 1845-59, the "Celtics" became an obvious choice. The Boston Celtics name also holds strong basketball tradition from the older team, the Original Celtics, in New York during the 1920s.

The Celtics are recognized by the iconic four-leaf clover symbol on their uniform—a historic beacon of luck derived from Irish culture. The team's mascot is Lucky the Leprechaun, further representing Irish mythology.

The team plays in green, white, and black; while these colors riff on the team's heritage, one has a deeper meaning. There's no doubt the green of the Celtics' jerseys is associated with longstanding athletic class and success. The team's early years during the 1950s and 60s saw the "Dynasty Era," led by Bill Russell, who won 11 championships during a 13-season period. The team featured stellar players such as Bob Cousy, Tom Heinsohn, and Sam Jones. The 1970s and 80s featured the memorable trio of Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, and Robert Parish, who together secured three titles during the decade. Breaking into the 2000s, the iconic players such as Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett, and Ray Allen brought home a championship in 2008, with the team's shape transitioning into the present-day stars of Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown.

So far, the Celtics hold a 42-21 record for the 25-26 season, with more games still to come. The team currently sits first in the Atlantic Division, with the New York Knicks close on their heels in second. Tatum's return from a severe Achilles injury has sparked speculation from the basketball world, naming the Celtics as the league's most dangerous team. Brown's class has continued to shine through this season, averaging 28.3 points, 7.1 rebounds, and 5.1 assists in 58 games.

This year, for St. Patrick's Day festivities, what better way to celebrate than by cheering on the Celtics against the Detroit Pistons on Mar. 18? The streets of Cambridge and the rest of Boston will be filled with green coloured parades, Tatum jerseys, and maybe some leprechauns—if you're lucky. This tradition is celebrated every day by the Celtics, as their name, badge, and mascot are a consistent reminder of the special Irish history within Boston.

**Tilly Butterworth '28 (mbutterworth@college.harvard.edu) enjoys going to watch the Celtics play.**

**Graphic by Neshama Ryman '28**

# Harvard at the 2026 Milano Cortìna Olympics

## On the mountain and on the ice, five alums carry on Harvard's Olympic legacy.

BY WHITNEY FORD '28

Harvard athletes have long represented the College at the Olympics, with alumni and students earning over 150 medals since the first modern Games in 1896. This winter, five athletes with Crimson ties carried this legacy forward as they competed at the XXV Olympic Winter Games in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

**Rémi Drolet '24: Canada – Men's Cross-Country Skiing**

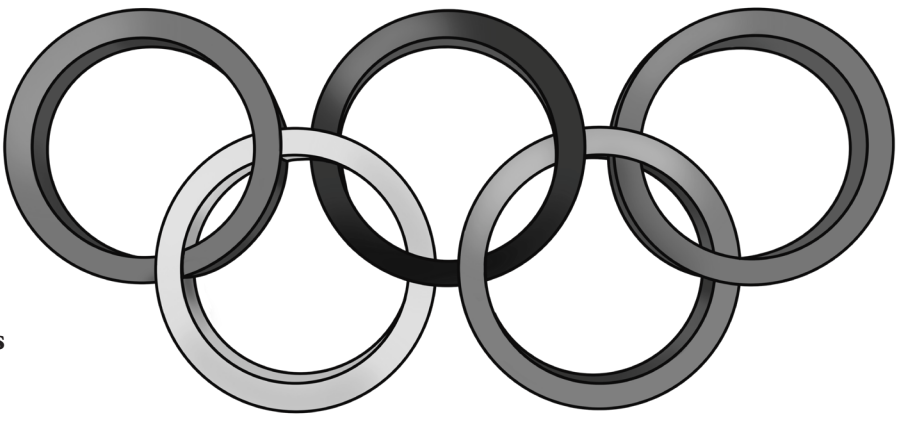
Drolet, a native of Rossland, British Columbia, graduated from Harvard College in 2024 with a degree in Physics and Math. During his time at Harvard, he became a three-time All-American, won the 2023 NCAA national championship in the Men's 20k Classic, and represented Canada at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. Post-graduation, Drolet joined the SMS T2 Team, an elite cross-country ski team based in Stratton Mountain, Vermont, which combines training with community outreach to grow the sport and promote healthy lifestyles.

In his second appearance at the Olympics this year, Drolet participated in four events, starting with a 42nd-place finish in the men's 10km + 10km skiathlon on Feb. 8, followed by a 56th-place finish in the men's sprint classic on Feb. 10. He earned his top individual finish in the men's 10km interval start freestyle, earning 19th place with a time of 21:50.8 in a field of 111 athletes. The final event and highlight of his Olympic experience was the men's 4 x 7.5km relay, where Drolet took the third leg for Team Canada, helping the team earn a fifth-place finish behind only Norway, France, Italy, and Finland.

**Kristin Della Rovere '23: Italy – Women's Ice Hockey**

Della Rovere is an Italian-Canadian professional ice hockey center who grew up playing in the junior leagues in Caledon, Ontario. During her last year with the Crimson in the 2022-23 season, she led the NCAA with 529 face-off wins. She was drafted in the tenth round, 56th overall, in the inaugural 2023 Professional Women's Hockey League Draft by PWHL Ottawa, one of the league's six charter franchises now known as the Ottawa Charge. She later signed with EVB Eagles Sudtirol of the Italian Hockey League while obtaining her Italian citizenship, and currently serves as a reserve player for the Toronto Sceptres of the PWHL.

In her first Olympic appearance, Della Rovere scored a pair of goals and two assists, helping Italy earn third place in Preliminary Group B after defeating France and Japan. Italy's run to the quarterfinals came as a surprise, as the team had only qualified for the Olympic tournament due to the country's status as the host nation and entered as the lowest-ranked team. In the quarterfinals, the team went head-to-head with Team USA, and while the American powerhouse went on to win the gold medal, the Italian women's squad still walked away from their 6-0 defeat with their heads held high.



**Emerance Maschmeyer-Lacasse '16: Canada – Women's Ice Hockey**

Maschmeyer-Lacasse is a Canadian professional goaltender from Bruderheim, Alberta. A decade after her graduation, she still holds the Crimson's record for 2,538 career saves and helped lead the program to three consecutive NCAA tournament appearances. After several years in the National Women's Hockey League and Canadian Women's Hockey League, Maschmeyer-Lacasse was one of three initial free agent signings made by PWHL Ottawa in the league's first year (2023) and recently signed a two-year contract with the Vancouver Goldeneyes. In 2022, she represented Canada at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, where she helped lead the team to the gold medal.

Maschmeyer-Lacasse's second Olympic tournament starts with an unexpected stumble, facing a 5-0 loss to Team USA in the preliminaries. Team Canada came back to charge into the gold medal game against Team USA—with Maschmeyer-Lacasse's help. She did not take the ice during the final, where Canada fiercely battled the United States, ultimately conceding the gold medal in an overtime loss.

**Don Sweeney '88: Canada – Men's Ice Hockey, Assistant General Manager**

Originally from St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Sweeney was drafted by the Boston Bruins out of high school but postponed his NHL career to attend Harvard. In his four years playing for the Crimson, he was named an NCAA East All-American and an Eastern College Athletic Conference First Team All-Star. After graduating, he played 15 seasons for Boston before finishing his playing career as a member of the Dallas Stars. In 2015, he stepped into the role of General Manager of the Boston Bruins, leading the team to win the Eastern Conference Finals and a chance to take the 2019 Stanley Cup. Despite their loss to the St. Louis Blues, Sweeney was named NHL General Manager of the Year. As general manager of Team Canada, he also helped Canada conquer the inaugural 4 Nations Face-Off in 2025.

As Assistant General Manager for Canada's Men's Hockey team in Milano-Cortina, Sweeney helped the team dominate Group A in the preliminaries. Team Canada struggled against Czechia in the quarterfinals yet eventually secured the 4-3 win in overtime, and beat Finland 3-2 in the semifinal to advance to the gold medal game against Team USA. In a tight contest, USA scored the winning goal 1:41 into overtime, forcing Canada to settle for silver.

**Dan Cnossen: USA – Men's Paralympic Biathlon and Paralympic Cross-Country Skiing**

Born in Topeka, Kansas, Cnossen is a former Navy SEAL who graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2002 before earning a Master of Public Administration from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School. While serving as platoon commander for SEAL Team One in Afghanistan in 2009, an incident with an improvised explosive device resulted in the loss of both legs above the knee. Cnossen was awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor for his service in combat, and is the only double-amputee Navy SEAL in history.

Cnossen made his first Paralympic appearance at the 2014 Games in Sochi, Russia, and made history at the 2018 Winter Paralympics as the first American male and second American ever to earn a gold medal in biathlon in either the Olympics or Paralympics. Across his three Paralympic appearances, he has earned two gold medals and two silver medals in Men's Biathlon, as well as two silver medals and one bronze medal in Men's Cross-Country skiing.

Cnossen finished the Men's Cross-Country Sprint Sitting on Mar. 10 and ranked 15th.

Across disciplines and decades, these alums have carried the Crimson's legacy of excellence onto the Olympic stage. In addition to representing their countries, they have also defended the University's commitment to leadership and achievement on a global scale and reaffirmed Harvard's place in the long history of Olympic competition.

**Whitney Ford '28 (wford@college.harvard.edu) writes Sports for the "Independent."**

**Graphic by Neshama Ryman '28**

# Harvard has a New Track Star: Amarì Turner

## Amari Turner '27 is making waves and breaking records in his first competitive season of college track.

BY ASHER MERON '29

On Feb. 7, the Harvard track team had plenty to celebrate. Their meet in Lowell, Massachusetts, had gone exactly as planned, with Fabiola Belibi '26 winning the 60-meter hurdles the day before, and the team firing up after Arpad Kovacs '29 broke the school record with a time of 46.56 in the Men's 400-meter. But the fireworks weren't over yet. Amari Turner '27 would cap off a great weekend for the Crimson with a school record in the 200-meter sprint with an impressive time of 20.77, marking a major spark in Turner's career. Turner had taken a break from running during his freshman and sophomore years at Harvard. Upon his return, he is quickly becoming a star for the Harvard program.

After taking a gap year following his freshman year, Turner did not run competitively upon returning, as he no longer met the athletic credit requirement. Thus, 2026 is his first official season. Despite the hiatus, Turner's confidence never wavered: "I knew that I had this in me for a while," he said in an interview with the "Independent."

With his recent success in the Ivy League competition, Turner's patience is finally paying off. "I felt good, obviously, happy, but just kind of felt relieved and proven to myself that I do belong on the team, and now that people can understand and witness what I can do instead of just seeing it at practice," he said.

Turner has always been a star in the making. A native of Sanford, Florida, Turner attended Seminole High School, where he was a standout track athlete. His school record-breaking time of 20.77 seconds in the 200-meter in Feb. 2026 wasn't even his fastest time in a competitive event—he logged a 20.66 in May of 2023 when he was a senior in high school.

This early success helped fuel Turner's confidence heading into his first competitive indoor season. When he broke the 200-meter record in February, he earned Ivy League Athlete of the Week honors in recognition of his achievement. Just a few weeks later, he capped off his indoor season with gold, winning the 200-meter race at the Ivy League Championships in New York with a time of 21.21 seconds.

With only one year left at Harvard, Turner is in a unique position, considering he has only competed for one season at the collegiate level. However, he doesn't let the threat of time scare him. In fact, he uses it as motivation. "I know that I don't have too much time left, so I want to make every single meet, every single competition count," Turner said.

What Turner has learned from the uncommon timing of his career could be valuable to those similarly feeling rushed. "Originally, every meet I was trying to swing for the fences and overperform, and do too much to try to get it all back in one meet." With experience, Turner gained insights that improved his strategy, and with that came the titles. "I slowed it down, really just breathed, relaxed, and let it come naturally," he said.

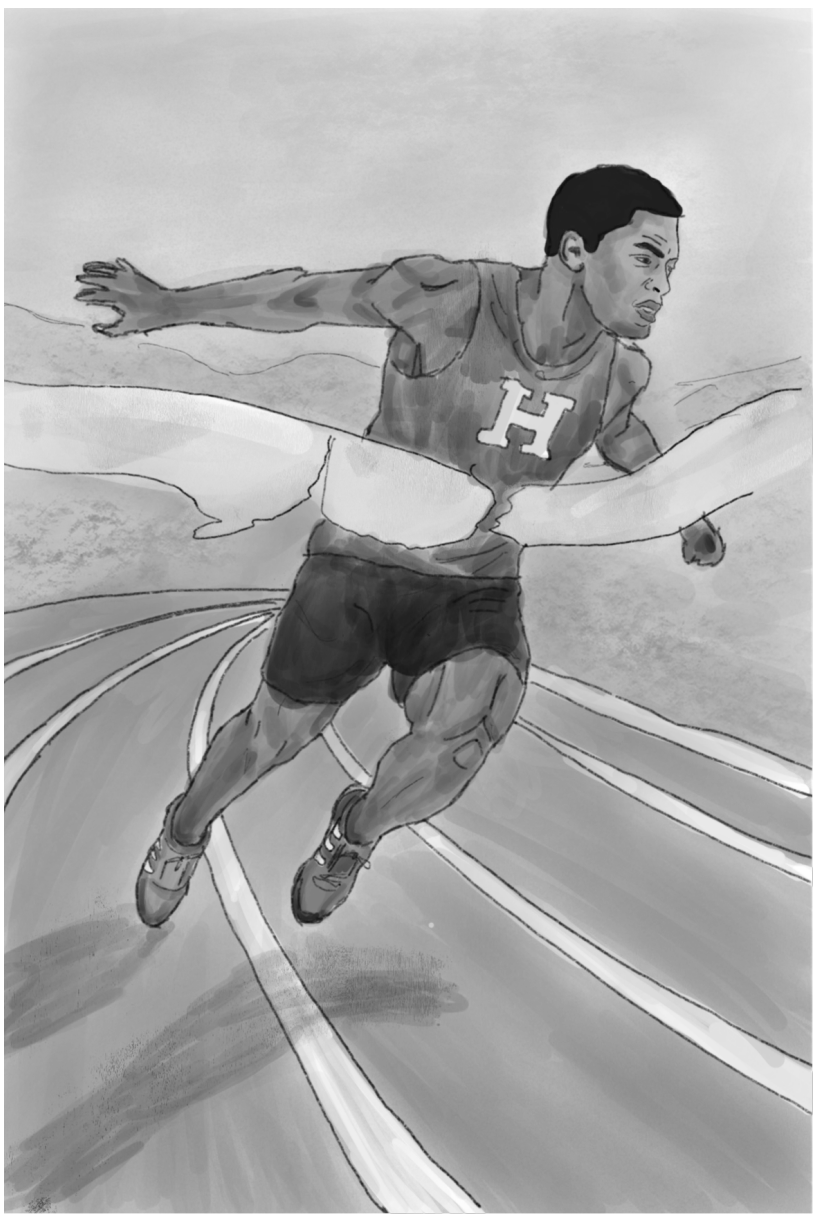
Despite all Turner and the rest of the track team have accomplished, their season is only halfway done, with the outdoor season set to begin on Mar. 19. Although the indoor portion has proven successful for Harvard, there's definitely eagerness to move outdoors and continue their success. "I'm looking forward to continuing where I'm at now and where I'm leaving off for indoor going into outdoor," said Turner.

Though it is far off, the team already has its eyes set on bigger and better things. "I want to do well, go to Nationals, run fast, and have an actual outdoor season because it's been so long," Turner admitted.

Turner's story is a very unique one within the Harvard athletics department. It's incredibly difficult to rebound after setbacks in sports, especially in the collegiate environment. Often, it can feel like athletes have such a short window to prove themselves. Turner has taken that challenge head-on, quickly proving himself in his first competitive season for Harvard.

There's a lot to learn when looking at Turner's story. It's easy to feel behind at Harvard—athlete or not. The competitive nature of the campus environment often feels overwhelming. In that atmosphere, many Harvard students find it difficult to stay on track. Internal comparisons can be detrimental to one's mindset. It's difficult to silence the voice that insists everyone around you is doing so much more.

Turner's path to track and field success certainly isn't a traditional one. But, exactly because of its peculiarity, it can teach so much about accepting a late start; that it's never too late to make your mark on Harvard, or the world.



**Asher Meron '29 (ashermeron@college.harvard.edu) is comping the "Independent."**

**Graphic by Trischelle Afihene '27**

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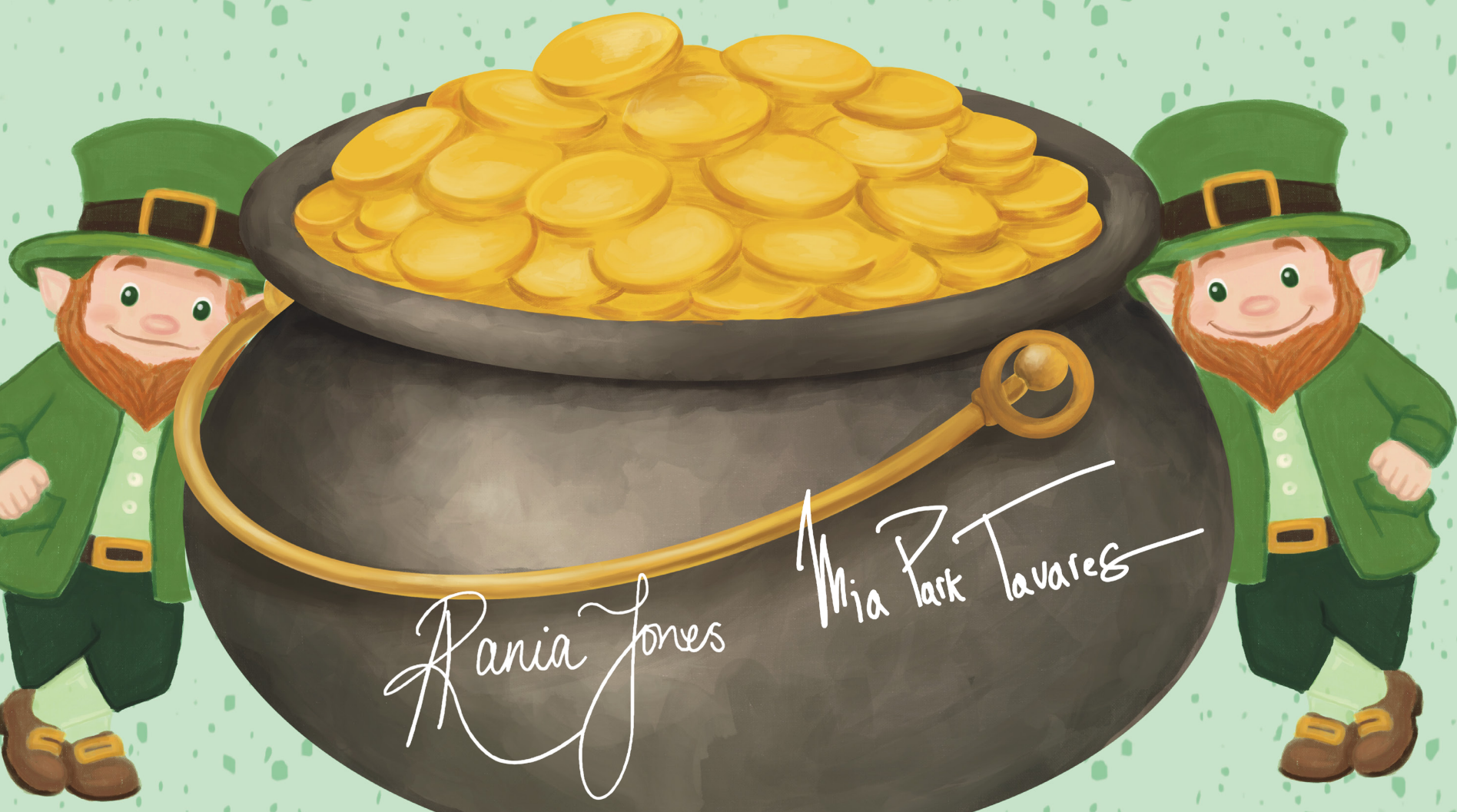

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