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The Reflective Issue

Inside: Remembering Thomas Stemberg, Defining Identities, and Questioning the GOP

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The Indy thinks one should always take time to enjoy the little things in life.

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INDY FORUM

The Wicked Wardrobe

The thin line between appreciation and appropriation.

By PULKIT AGARWAL

My knowledge of Halloween before the previous weekend was limited to the various episodes of American Television shows that I had watched back home; it wasn't that I was particularly ignorant, but just that it is not a celebration observed in most countries in the orient. This Halloween however, I was enlightened, not only by the vibrant nature of the holiday and the jubilance it added to a now-very-tiring semester, but also by the contentious debates the theme of Halloween stirred around the nation in general, and on our campus in specific.

The holiday brought with it an overwhelming excitement to our campus, and costumes that were not only diverse but amazingly creative. My favorite one was a pun-inspired costume donned by a senior who wore a t-shirt labeled "Life" and distributed lemons to everyone he saw. While I did spend so little money on their costume, I must admit, it was quite a witty way of getting free lemonade in return! Then there was the dashing V from V for Vendetta costume worn by a freshman who was so excited by the holiday that he uploaded some fifty pictures on Facebook over the weekend. I am referring, of course, to yours truly.

The most striking feature of the holiday, however, was how it raised the discourse concerning cultural appropriation. As a first-time observer of Halloween, I had never considered the deep implications one's costumes could carry if not thought through properly. The running hashtag #MyCultu-

reIsNotACostume which took social media by storm through the weekend was a perfect example of this discourse. It was trending on both Facebook and Twitter, and called many to reflect on whether their costumes were inspired by a particular community's culture. It became increasingly clear to me that Halloween, if not celebrated in its right spirit, can turn out to be terribly offensive to certain groups of people.

The following day, I watched Bill Maher call out the "PC Police" on his HBO show Real Time for enforcing political correctness even on a day as innocuous as Halloween. But having witnessed this debate from various perspectives on our rather diverse and liberal campus, I found his argument to be outrageously inadequate, for it seemed to encourage offensive micro aggressions. It is not as if political correctness seeks to ruin the fun and frolic of the holiday, rather, wearing a respectful costume merely ensures that one is not enjoying Halloween at the expense of another's culture being reduced to a mere joke.

It is not uncommon for one to step into the nearby Garment District, a popular costume shop near Harvard, and chance upon outfits that are in some cases questionable, and in others, overtly derogatory. Right from mis-

embraced, but one I hope we learn to out-grow. The reason I feel this way, is because not only is refraining from dressing up as a particular racial or ethnic group not ruining the fun of Halloween, but also because by refraining to do so, we are protecting the holiday from its own demise.

With the ever-growing public awareness surrounding cultural appropriation and the various ills that come with it, one would only hope that Halloween will start to be celebrated for what it is, rather than an occasion to offend in order to glean approval. I hope that in the next few years, as I grow more and more accustomed to the Halloween tradition, and immerse myself deeper in the debate around cultural appropriation, I will see the day celebrated in a similar spirit across the society as it was celebrated on Harvard's campus – with much excitement, a genuine sense of community, and care for protecting the sentiments of those around us.

A little message to the likes of Bill Maher who need to understand, especially given the clout and influence their words carry, that political correctness cannot be suspended just for the sake of Halloween; if anything, respect and civility towards others should only grow in importance during times such as these. After all, we wouldn't want to see people protest our beloved holiday because of what it has become, rather than the jubilant fiesta it was always meant to be.

Pulkit Agarwal '19 (pulkitagarwal@college.harvard.edu) would welcome you visiting his Facebook Timeline and 'Like-ing' his pictures dressed as V on Halloween

INDY FORUM

Fight Night

Some reflections on the latest Republican debate.

By SEAN FRAZZETTE

The fourth Republican debate occurred on November 10, and with it, the American people once again had a chance to see candidates argue about who is the best option to take on the Democratic nominee (also known as Hillary Clinton — sorry Bernie). The major change from the prior debates was the dropping of two more candidates, Chris Christie and Mike Huckabee, from the main stage. As a result, eight major contenders remain. In order of the most recent poll numbers, they are: Ben Carson, Donald Trump, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Rand Paul, Carly Fiorina, and John Kasich.

two of the debaters — Trump and Kasich — were able to argue over the proper way to deal with undocumented immigrants. Trump took the economically, socially, and humanitarily unfeasible stance of shipping eleven million people over the border. He even praised President Eisenhower's Operation Wetback, a mass deportation on which history does not shine very brightly. Kasich would not have that, and gave one of the most impassioned responses of the night, arguing that such an idea — beyond being impossible — is a complete disregard to the families and children of law-abiding, good people who simply want to live in this country. He at intervention and then called out Trump for not even knowing the countries involved in a trade deal.

These are all important moments. This debate was an important moment, insofar as it is seen as a demonstration that, when given the opportunity, the GOP candidates have interesting, thought-out opinions on matters that affect the public.

What is more important, however, is that it doesn't seem to matter. Trump and/or Carson have kept a stranglehold on the polls since summer and no one seems to know when or if that will end.

As a self-identified libertarian, I would most likely be inclined to vote Republican

Many of the hot button issues, from immigration to health care, were touched upon and many of the candidates did what all politicians, left and right alike, do best — spin the question to make the point that they actually want to talk about. If you're Marco Rubio, it's about how your parents are immigrants who built themselves up and gave him a chance to succeed. For Donald Trump, it's about vague words like greatness and how he doesn't have time for the losers around him. For Jeb Bush, it's about how much better of a candidate he would be than Secretary Clinton. And for Ted Cruz, it's probably about anything other than the fact that he was born in Canada.

This moment was one of many throughout the night that showed two or three candidates talking earnestly about a topic that they seemed to understand and want to grapple with. There were moments when Fiorina analyzed, with poise and expertise, health care and foreign policy, showing her acumen despite being a political outsider. There were moments when Bush finally grew a spine, stood up

simply want to live in this country. He, at this moment at least, urged for the return of compassion to the American people, something that the left often accuses the right of lacking. Unfortunately, his fire and passion led to him constantly interrupting and appearing un-Presidential throughout the night.

This moment was one of many throughout the night that showed two or three candidates talking earnestly about a topic that they seemed to understand and want to grapple with. There were moments when Fiorina analyzed, with poise and expertise, health care and foreign policy, showing her acumen despite being a political outsider. There were moments when Bush finally grew a spine, stood up

in the next election, as I have in the two elections in which I have had the privilege to vote. As a self-identified libertarian, I tend to enjoy political outsiders as refreshing alternatives to the cronyism, greed, corruption, and willful ignorance of the establishment. But, as a self-identified libertarian, I could not, in good conscience, support either of those leaders as the next President. I could never wish for a President who will inhumanely tear apart families and deport eleven million law-abiding immigrants. I could never support a President who is willing to lie about admission to our noble service academy or claim that homosexuality is a choice and the proof is found in prisons.

But, despite the pandering, dodging, and spin, the debate truly did reveal many interesting points surrounding the candidates. When asked about immigration, where Rand Paul called out American in-

Continued on Page 6

Remembering Thomas Stemberg

Early *Indy* member and Staples founder passes away at 66.

By SHAQUILLA HARRIGAN

On Friday, October 23rd, the world away. Though he was not one of the and other opportunities to beat the lost one of the most astute busi- founding members, he was crucial Crimson to a story or types of cnessmen of the 21st century. Thomas in shaping the Indy and making it erage for the entertainment section.” George Stemberg ‘71, most famous the paper it is today: Harvard’s old- In true Indy spirit, Stemberg made for founding the international office est weekly newspaper that dares to sure the paper had a competitive supply retailer Staples, passed away uncover the other side of the story edge to beat the Crimson to stories at the age of 66 in his home in Chest- through in-depth analysis and inno- on then-new University President nut Hill, Massachusetts, after losing vative narrative styles. Derek Bok among other major news a two-year battle with gastric cancer. The Indy’s first president Morris events of the time. Shields also says Emerging from a tough immigrant Abram ‘71 offers a couple memories he and Abram felt secure about the childhood where he lost his father at he has of Stemberg: “Mark Shields, Indy’s future once it was in Stemberg age eleven and lived in Austria with co-founder and first publisher of berg’s hands. his mother until college, Stemberg the Independent, did many great Stemberg’s support for both Harvard has touched many lives not only at things during his tenure, but recruit- yard Men’s Basketball and the Harvard, but also around the world ing Tom Stemberg as his successor yard Independent wasn’t purely fit through his many business ventures ranked high on the list.” Abram con- nancial. He also frequented games as and philanthropic work. tinued, saying, “Entering Harvard as a member of the Friends of Harvard

Though Stemberg was a global a scholarship student with experi- Basketball and attended several In- man, his loss hit particularly close ence in another culture, Tom arrived dependent reunions. Richard Paisner to home for two seemingly differ- with a special appreciation of the op- ‘75 elaborated, “Despite his extraor- ent institutions at his alma mater: portunities in his country of choice.” dinary business success, he never Harvard Men’s Basketball and the Describing Stemberg’s work pro- forgot the Independent.” On his im- Harvard Independent. Stemberg has curing advertisements and manag- pact on current student writers, he been a longtime supporter of both ing the business board on the Indy, said, “He modeled for the students with his time, talent, and treasure. Abram said, “Tom took every pitch as important behaviors we can all hope As an undergraduate, Stemberg an exciting personal challenge. His will stay with them.” Paisner, whose played for the basketball band and drive to put the Independent on the daughter is a member of the Harvard was an early publisher for the Indy. map generated innovative ideas far cheerleading team, adds, “He resur- Even after graduation, Stemberg’s transcending those of a traditional rected Harvard basketball. Tom’s ef- support remained unwavering. He publisher.”

was an invaluable benefactor to Har- Mark Shields ‘71, the Harvard In- her (and the team) at March Mad- vard Men’s Basketball, while also be- dependent’s first publisher, spoke of ness in New Mexico.” ing the single greatest donor to the his first time meeting Stemberg: “At David Smith ‘75, a former sports Independent.

Considering the Indy was founded utes time, Tom’s business savvy was and longtime member of the gradu- in 1969, Stemberg is the first person apparent.” He added, “He was equal- ate board, also offers a few remarks from the Indy’s earliest days to pass ly passionate about seeking ‘scoops’ on the profound impact Stemberg

Continued from Page 4

Unfortunately, there seems to be a coalition that does wish to vote for these men. There seem to be very few people who like the idea of a relatively moderate candidate, like Kasich, who has experience in banking, as well as the congressional and gubernatorial levels. There seem to be very few people who like the idea of a strong-willed, incredibly articulate business woman, like Fiorina, who has fought cancer and, regardless of her rocky record as CEO of HP, rose from the bottom of the business chain to the very top. There seem to be very few who want the sons of immigrants, like Rubio and Cruz, who have experience in overlooking foreign policy and domestic issues in our senate.

I am not saying I support each and every opinion of these candidates. Far from that, in fact. I am saying that this election process is making me become disillusioned in American politics in general. The Democrats are seeing a one-person race, hiding behind the illusion that two others have a shot and dethroning someone whose entire career has been centered on this moment. The Republicans are seeing a race led by two people who are unequivocally unfit to hold the position of the Presidency.

Maybe this is the America that we have found ourselves in. This article is not going to end with me supporting a specific candidate for this or that. Maybe I'll write that article one day.

But for today, I will simply sigh and continue to watch this election cycle unfold. I hope that change will come and the Republican Party will see that it is digging its own grave with the support for Trump and Carson. Hope and change seemed to work for the other party, after all.

Sean Frazzette '16 (sfrazzette@college.harvard.edu) likes writing sports more than thinking unhappy thoughts.

Remembering Thomas Stemberg, cont.

had on the paper. Two largest grant the Indy affair with Harvard Tom Stembergs come has ever received." How basketball," he reminis- to his mind, "the one I did Stemberg respond to cenced, "It was my hon- read about in the media the request? He followed or to have worked with and the one I saw via through, of course, and Tom. He will forever be the Indy." He continues, even rallied his contem- a part of our program." "The media Stemberg poraries to give through Stemberg's life is was a hard-charging a matching program. marked not only by his entrepreneurial titan, In addition to the immeasurable business founder of businesses, Indy, Stemberg's enor- savvy through having friend of the rich and mous generosity also succeeded at many ven- powerful. Then there benefited the Harvard tures, but also his life is was the Indy Stemberg, Men's Basketball team. marked by an immense who radiated goodwill, a Coach Tommy Amaker propensity for gener- vaguely disheveled and and his successors will osity and simply being shy but cheerful broth- always be the 'Thomas present for the things erly or avuncular fel- G. Stemberg '71 Family that mattered to him. low who always looked Endowed Coach for Har- His legacy may contin- at you half-sideways, vard Men's Basketball. ue to live on Forbes lists as if tuning into a Wi- Coach Amaker says, and at his many busi- Fi signal only he could "Tom's presence will be nesses, but at Harvard, pick up, but who at the missed in our program Stemberg's legacy con- same time wanted only in more ways than we tinues on through the the best." can count, but we know Men's Basketball Team

Smith recalled when that he will always be and the pages of the he was chair of the with us in spirit." Harvard Independent. graduate board and Bob Scalise, the John worked with Stemberg D. Nichols '53 Family Di- Shaquilla Harrigan '16 to make the Indy's en- rector of Athletics, also (sharrigan01@college.harvard.edu) thanks Tom Stemberg what Stemberg meant for his love for the Indy. March 2007, Katherine Chan '08, Edward Chen to the basketball team. His generosity and 'go-get-'09, and I ventured to "I remember seeing Tom ter' spirit have shaped the Tom's private-equity in the stands at men's Indy into the paper it is to-offices for a face-to- basketball games before day. face meeting where we it was fashionable, and would ask him for the I could sense his love

INDY NEWS



Over thirty years ago, Harvard students saw a need in Harvard Square for a shelter that was dedicated to providing homeless individuals with a sanctuary. This sanctuary would need to be one in which every volunteer served with compassion and was dedicated to helping guests to transition out of homelessness. Thus, the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter (HSHS) was born in the University Lutheran Church to fill this need and meet these standards. Now, in 2015, a new need has been identified. For youth of all identities aged 18-24 there has been a stark lack of available shelters and services. With this in mind and through the same compassion, intentionality, and fight for social justice, another shelter is opening in Harvard Square.

Last Friday, Cambridge's First Parish Church was filled with love, excitement, and anticipation as the Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) welcomed politicians, youth workers, and local community members to celebrate the impending opening of the Y2Y youth homeless shelter, the first student-run shelter in the nation dedicated to being a safe haven for homeless youth ages 18-24. Senator Elizabeth Warren and State Representatives Marjorie Decker and Byron Rushing were among the speakers at the event.

Approximately six hundred people ambled into the church exchanging hugs and awe over the intentionality that went into creating the shelter from gender inclusive beds to the on-

staff caseworkers. Even though all of the attendees came from various circles, everyone was connected to each other through the mutual love and appreciation for a space designed to not only be a safe haven for homeless youth, but also be a space that advocated on behalf of America's fastest growing homeless demographic.

Once people were settled in their seats, Y2Y maintenance director and co-emcee Abigail Harris '16 welcomed everyone into the church with "We believe in the power of love and the shelter is part of that love." Indeed, love is the backbone of every thought and every decision of this shelter. Felix Arroyo, Boston's Chief of Health and Safety, continued on the theme of love as he talked about how this shelter is closing borders between people before he introduced Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

Warren, known for her impassioned speeches and advocacy for increased access to affordable housing, lit up the room with her brief remarks. "We are going to create a sanctuary, a place that is safe for our youth," she said. She also touched on how the shelter will not only provide respite for the youth, but will also "advocate on behalf of those whose voices need to be heard." Calling the space, "beautiful" she touched on the love and care the Y2Y team put into smallest details of the shelter.

As she closed her remarks, Warren emphasized how this project is embedded in the local community. "But the key is what I am here to celebrate is not

'Hope is Here'

PBHA's Y2Y youth homeless shelter hosts its opening.
By SHAQUILLA HARRIGAN

something we started in Washington. It is something started locally. We can make a start right here in Cambridge." She continued, "By making a start, we make a real difference."

Harris, an art and architecture concentrator who is using her skills to help design the space, returned to the stage and talked about her own experiences with how being part of the Y2Y team made her feel at home and welcomed and that she wants those same feelings shared by guests. "People like me are able to be themselves and be at home in my body." Harris' co-emcee Kitty Zen also spoke to the shelter's personal meaning to her. Recalling her own experiences with homelessness, Zen said, "Having Y2Y would have been a nice clean sanctuary." It would have been a "stark contrast" to the other options available to homeless youth.

Zen next welcomed member of the Y2Y Young Adult Advisory Board member and youth worker Jamila Bradley to the stage to share her experiences working on the shelter. "We've created something here that feels sturdy, and stable, and whole." She talked about how the shelter's opening is "[a] moment so big and [means] so much for so many." Not only for the huge community that is physically, mentally, and emotionally putting the shelter together, but also for the thousands of potential guests.

The opening celebration of Y2Y was not only one of welcome, but it was also one of appreciation for the countless *continued on pg. 8*

'Hope is Here'

continued from pg. 7

number of people who have made the shelter possible with their time, talent, and treasure. Gene Corbin, the assistant dean for public service at Harvard, and Needham Hurst, a member of Y2Y's building committee and steering committee, teed off the presentation of awards to Y2Y's community partners and major benefactors. In reference to a brick that Zen placed during the beginning of construction, each of the awards are inscribed with the phrase "hope is here." Hurst says, "Today is really a celebration of so many different people who came together to make Y2Y possible." Awardees included general contractors for the project Skanska and Essex Newbury.

PBHA executive director Maria Dominguez Gray, PBHA president Jing Qiu '16, and staff director for Y2Y Jennifer Hao '16 rounded out the awards with a thank you to the Harvard Square Business Association for being welcoming neighbors to this shelter. Following the award, Gray touched on how Y2Y continues PBHA's long tradition of providing immediate services and advocating social justice. "For over 110 years, our students have fought to fight structural oppression with community partners." She also shared how two and half years ago Y2Y was just the dream of 2014 Harvard graduates Sarah Rosenkrantz and Sam Greenberg, but with the help of so many people, Y2Y is set to open in less than a month. "This was impossible, but someone showed up to make the impossible possible."

Feeding off of the energy in the room, formerly homeless spoken word poet

Diamond came to the stage. Diamond has been an inspiration and mentor to many of the formerly homeless members of the Y2Y Young Adult Advisory Board. She began that this project "is a long time coming."

She thanked the shelter for its ability to revive hope in the many young people whose circumstances have caused them to lose hope and courage. "Often times, when you are a young person on the street, hope is the first thing you lose." Diamond closed reminding young people who are going through homelessness that "you are beautiful and you are loved. This is only temporary."

So many hands have touched this project literally brick by brick or through donations and other forms of support. Each of these touches leaves an indelible mark on a space designed for hope to thrive and for people to be well cared for. Even the Harvard Chaplains banded together to leave their blessings on the space that is "of real permanence and beauty." The chaplains have commissioned an interfaith quality to hang from the shelter in addition to the choral benediction presented at the opening ceremony.

Later in the evening, State Representatives Byron Rushing and Marjorie Decker shared their thoughts on how the opening of this shelter is a catalyst for other political actions. Rushing, while happy that this shelter is opening, is hoping that Y2Y's advocacy efforts will one day eliminate the need for such a space. "Let me be clear...we are celebrating a space, a wonderful space. The students have put something together that we hope, we pray that does not last."

Decker, who is the state representative for Cambridge, talked about her original skepticism for the project. "Sam and Sarah, when I first met you, I thought you were nice and lovely, but I was

cynical." She shared that witnessing the dedication of Rosenkrantz and Greenberg and their Y2Y team changed her mind. Decker ended her remarks with a call to action. "It was going to require a really large village to hold this thing together," and that "It's our job to take care of each other. We will work really hard to hold ourselves accountable."

The evening closed with reflections from co-directors and co-founders of Y2Y Sarah Rosenkrantz and Sam Greenberg. Rosenkrantz and Greenberg along with a few other HSHS volunteers dreamed of a shelter that would serve the fastest growing and least resourced population of homeless individuals over two years ago. Now the pair stood in front of the crowd ready to welcome people to their dream-turned-reality that would open in less than a month. Noting the sheer amount of support Y2Y has received over the past two years, Greenberg opened with "Thank you to the many of you who have given us your resources again, again, and again."

"For so long, this mission statement has felt far off and not real. But as we look out today, with Y2Y set to open next month, never has this mission statement felt so real," Rosenkrantz adds. Both recalled the many meetings discussing seemingly minuscule details and the depths they went to include the voices of the youth who would be seeking reprieve from the streets in the shelter in all of the decisions.

While Rosenkrantz and Greenberg acknowledge the progress that they and the rest of the Y2Y team have made in getting the shelter ready to welcome guests, Greenberg reminded everyone that "The real work starts next month: twenty-two meals to serve and hundreds of dishes to wash. We'll have a sanctuary to maintain and a future to build."

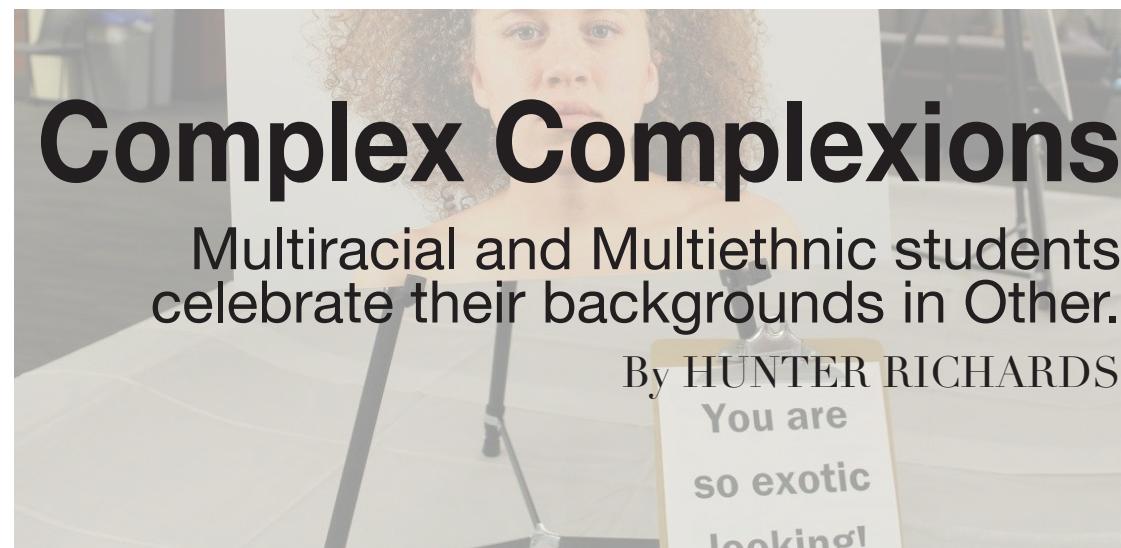
Shaquilla Harrigan '16 (sharrigan01@college.harvard.edu) is inspired by the hope and love displayed at the Y2Y opening ceremony.

'Other,' the 58-photograph gallery displayed in the SOCH, began last March when Amanda Mozea '17 developed the concept of how the perceptions of others weigh in on how multiracial individuals view their own identity. However, as her models would agree, the question of identity and what race means began long ago for Amanda.

Mozea titled her gallery "Other" to reflect the box on censuses and standardized tests that many multiracial students have become familiar, yet uncomfortable, with checking. After asking her models how the government defined their race, the responses overwhelmingly echoed the resentment of having no choice but to check off 'other' and struggling with the compromise. "I hated checking that box," explained Mozea. Underneath the portraits were quotes taken from interviews Mozea did with each model that reflected their struggles with defining and defending their identities. 'Other' asked participants how other people defined their race as well as how they defined themselves in order to bridge how identities are affected by others' perceptions.

Mozea's multi-racial identity has been an integral part of her Harvard experience and has affected how she interacts with cultural groups on campus. Remembering how someone at a cultural group's event made a comment to her about her identity, Mozea explains that she had always been confused but had never considered her multi-racial identity based solely on appearance. When confronted about how her multiracial identity shaped the way she was viewed by others in her cultural group, Mozea began considering how perceptions of race are formed and where the basis for these judgments lie.

While this may have inspired the gallery, Mozea says that it became about "looking forward rather than looking back." The goal of the gallery is to begin a discussion on campus that invites students who are multiracial and otherwise to consider how identities are formed and the ways in which they influence us. 'Other' grew out of a lack of community but has henceforth formed a new support system for Harvard



Complex Complexions

Multiracial and Multiethnic students celebrate their backgrounds in Other.

By HUNTER RICHARDS

You are
so exotic
looking!

students to express their multiracial identities with a sense of pride. However, even students who didn't relate to feeling 'othered' joined in the discussion and expanded the scope of the gallery to include the Harvard community as a whole.

Not only has Mozea's gallery received positive feedback from students, but also the UC voted to award 'Other' with Dean Khurana's Bridging and Belonging Grant, which recognizes projects uniting groups on campus that wouldn't otherwise collaborate. Many cultural groups who had previously not collaborated worked together to support 'Other,' and many models were members, and even on the board, of one or more cultural groups. After inviting cultural groups and recruiting support for the gallery to increase exposure, Mozea had many proactive members of these communities who hoped to be included as models.

Participation of these groups began discussion of how multiracial students have felt forced to compromise their identity and defend part of themselves depending on who they were around. Through the project, many models expressed feeling torn between choosing one side or another of their heritage, ultimately forcing part of their background out. The support of these previously separate cultural groups allowed for the beginning of a bridge between identities of multiracial members.

While the gallery is no longer on display in the SOCH, Quincy and Pfaho will be exhibiting some of the portraits from 'Other' in their art spaces later this year. However, Mozea and her models are hoping for multiracial cultural groups on campus to create an inviting space and to be a part of its creation. Following the gallery, Mozea was proud of the discussion among students. Multiracial students expressed more pride in their identities as well as students who weren't multiracial that have felt 'Othered.' Students who weren't multiracial but hoped to find common ground and support others by combining different experiences strengthened the support for the gallery.

While Mozea initially hoped to convince 20 models to participate, she was met with over 70 proactive individuals eager to discuss their experiences with multiracial identities. Mozea said that speaking with her models about their experiences benefited her most of all and became cathartic. "We all went through an identity crisis together," said Mozea of the group being able to gain peace of mind and find a supportive community. After struggling to find a community, Mozea and her models have inspired discussion and created a safe space for students to express their identities.

*Hunter Richards '18 (hrichards@college.harvard.edu) believes that race and culture are more than skin deep.
Photo courtesy of Amanda Mozea*

Noises Off

The Indy reviews a farce in Farkas.

By AUDREY EFFENBERGER

Noises Off

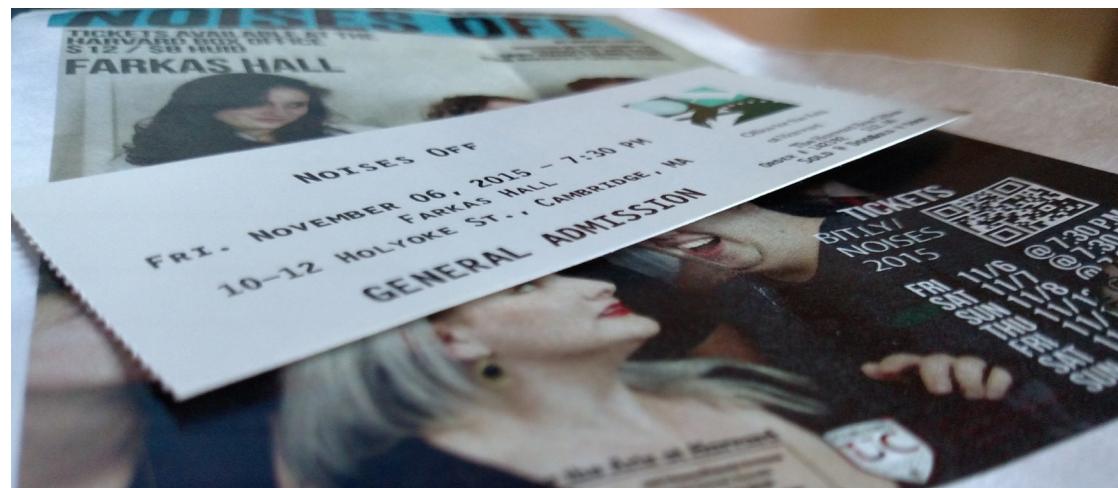
Synopsis: it's about a play.

Unabridged summary: love triangles ruin everything.

Extended details: sardines??

Noises Off is a farce made of first acts following the plight of a play-within-a-play called "Nothing On." It begins with the dress rehearsal going spectacularly wrong at one in the morning on the day of the show's first performance. Dotty, playing the housekeeper Mrs. Clackett, struggles to remember the stage directions of a plate of sardines while Garry's character struggles to remember Mrs. Clackett's name. Freddy, playing the tax-evading owner of the house, stops the rehearsal to question the motivations of his character's actions—not his financial crimes, but his decision to carry a bag of groceries from one end of the room to the other. Director Lloyd, who is first seated amongst the audience as he watches his motley crew bungle their lines and miss their cues, grows increasingly frustrated as the night goes on.

Once the actors finish the dress rehearsal of the first act, the stage falls dark, and the second act immediately begins at a matinée performance one month later. Now that the audience has a sense of the cast's madness, the shenanigans only escalate backstage, where there's nowhere to hide them. This spirit of the comedy is re-



ally captured in the play's impressive set, which is fully rotatable to include both the stage of "Nothing On" and the backstage area. While the catastrophe of the play-within-the-play has its own comedic merit, most of the hilarity comes from the noises off stage (hence its title).

The realistic struggle and strife of putting a show together is familiar to anyone who's ever been part of the cast or crew of a production. Even for someone who's never touched the theatre production with a ten-foot pole, the train-wreckage that the production becomes is so hilariously out of line that familiarity with the details becomes unnecessary. Stage manager Tim and assistant stage manager Poppy accidentally keep overriding each other's announcements over the sound system; one declares the curtain to go up in one minute, and the other immediately follows by giving the audience three minutes. Props are missing, and so are actors.

Meanwhile, Lloyd tries to orchestrate some flowers for young actress Brooke and ends up further entangled in his love triangle between Brooke and Poppy. Every time Brooke is upset, she has to lie on the floor and meditate for several minutes before she can act again. Dotty, who's mad at her romantic interest and fellow actor Garry, almost refuses to talk to him on stage and then ties his shoelaces together

halfway through the act. (He doesn't untie them, and as a result goes down a flight of stairs in a very non-traditional and painful way.) The ridiculous retaliatory antics that the actors get up to makes for some great slapstick comedy, including a long scene in which several people fight over and wield an axe.

After a fifteen-minute intermission, the farce returns to a performance on the production's last leg, when the actors are bruised, bloody, and almost unable to work with each other. Everyone's given up on knowing where the sardines should be. Everyone in the fictional cast and crew end up on stage for one hilarious reason or another, and the play crescendos to a beautifully catastrophic ad-libbing by the few actors who still have it together. The closing line sums it up: "When all around is strife and uncertainty, there's nothing like an old fashioned plate of... uh... curtain!"

(Spoiler: it's sardines.)

Noises Off will be in Farkas Hall on Thursday, November 12th, Friday, November 13th, and Saturday, November 14th at 7:30 p.m. or Sunday, November 15th at 2:00 p.m. Thursday's performance is free with an HUID.

Audrey Effenberger '19 (effenberger@college.harvard.edu) has never eaten sardines.

Photo courtesy of Audrey Effenberger

Then There Were Three

An NFL roundup for Week 9.

By DEVON HIGHAM

Following the 9th week of action in the NFL, the number of remaining undefeated teams again fell with the Denver Broncos losing to Andrew Luck and the Colts 27-24. The Broncos struggled early and were unable to pull out a victory after coming back in the second half. Manning threw two interceptions and just missed overtaking Brett Favre who holds the title of the NFL's all time passing leader. The game was an especially big win for the Colts, who snapped a three game skid and finally looked like the team they were supposed to be coming into the season. The Colts remain the leaders in the weak AFC South division and seem poised to build on that lead if they can keep the momentum from this week's win going.

Any matchup between Luck and Manning brings extra intrigue, but several factors made this game especially interesting. In this game, Manning had the potential to become the most prolific quarterback in NFL history against his former team, in his old stadium, and against his replacement. Instead it was another lackluster performance from Manning, who is in the midst of his worst season since coming to Denver. Sadly, Luck did not perform much better and has mostly regressed this season. This lack of success on the field comes as a bit of a surprise. The first two seasons following the departure of Manning and the introduction of Luck saw both of them enjoy unprecedented levels of success. Manning broke the single season records for TDs and passing yards, and Luck broke the rookie single season record for passing yards. This year has been full of struggles for the two QBs and this was the first time all season that it again looked like Luck was a worthy replacement for his future hall

of famer predecessor.

The most surprising outcome from all of the undefeated teams might have been the Carolina Panthers besting the Green Bay Packers by a score of 37-29. The score was closer than the game was, however, as the Panthers led by as much as 21 in the 4th quarter. It was the second straight loss for the Packers, who were among the group of undefeated teams before they fell to the Broncos last week. Their MVP quarterback was thoroughly outplayed by Cam Newton, who turned in an MVP performance of his own. As the only undefeated team left in the NFC, the Panthers are now in position to earn the number one seed. They have already surpassed their win total from last season when they made it into the playoffs from the horrible NFC South with a 7-8-1 record.

The Patriots handily defeated the Redskins, 27-10 and also remain undefeated. The Patriots have been largely untested this season, and seem destined to remain undefeated going into their showdown with the Broncos in a couple weeks. If Manning can find his stride, it promises to be another showdown between the two most accomplished quarterbacks currently playing, and arguably the two greatest quarterbacks of all time. Brady finally threw his first real interception of the season against the Redskins, (his first interception was a bobble by Julian Edelman that should have been caught) but was still effective. The Redskins were unable to get pressure on Brady, forcing zero sacks in the game. Early turnovers did the Redskins in, with the Patriots able to amass 14 points before the Redskins were able to get in a second play. This

was a largely unsurprising outcome though, as the Redskins have consistently performed as one of the worst teams in the league this year and have been in complete disarray over their quarterback controversies with RG3 and Kirk Cousins.

The final undefeated team, the Cincinnati Bengals, beat the Cleveland Browns on Thursday 31-10. The Bengals have been one of, if not the, biggest surprise of the season so far. They have blown away what was supposed to be one of the most competitive divisions in football this year, the AFC North. Part of their immense lead comes by virtue of Ben Roethlisberger's inability to stay healthy and uninjured (he appeared to have injured his foot against the Raiders this week), but the true source of their success has been the triumph of Andy Dalton. He has had 18 touchdowns to only 4 interceptions and has emerged as a true leader for the team. After this season, Dalton no longer carries the dreaded distinction of "game manager," a pseudonym for a bad quarterback on a good team. Instead, he's winning games on his own. The real question, however, is how the Bengals will fare in the playoffs. They've made it every year since Dalton has entered the league, but have never made it past the first round. They might best that result simply by earning a first round bye, but whether or not they can find success when the games matter most will dictate how the league views this team.

Devon Higham '17 (devonhigham@college.harvard.edu) only roots for teams that can't be beat.

captured and shot



by Audrey Effenberger