

THE HARVARD  
**independent**  
10.05.17 THE STUDENT WEEKLY SINCE 1969

the Oktoberfest issue

A photograph of autumn foliage with yellow and orange leaves against a dark background. The leaves are densely packed and have a warm, golden-brown hue, suggesting they are illuminated by a light source, possibly a fire or a lamp, creating a cozy and festive atmosphere. The background is a solid dark color, making the vibrant colors of the leaves stand out.

Inside: Pinoys, Parties, and Poems.

# 10.05.2017

## Vol. XLVIV, No. 5

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*The Indy parades.*

Cover photo by  
Francesca Cornero '19.

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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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The Harvard Independent is published weekly during the academic year, except during vacations, by The Harvard Independent, Inc., Student Organization Center at Hilles, Box 201, 59 Shepard Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

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## Proud to Be Pinoy

Reflections on Filipino American History Month.

By SEGAN HELLE

“I don’t think that I’ve ever met a Filipino before.”

It was the first week of my freshman year. The chaos of move-in period had just begun to settle down and our parents had said their last goodbyes, leaving us in our room, sticky with the heat of a dying summer. My roommates and I were going through introductions, asking about each other’s backgrounds and sussing out who it was we would be living with for the next year.

“Well, I knew you were half some sort of Asian, but I wasn’t sure exactly what.”

I am used to explaining myself. My father is a white man and my mother is a first-generation Filipina-American. I do not quite look like either of them, landing me in solid ethnically-ambiguous territory. However, I am not used to living in an area in which my identity is not common.

I grew up in San Diego, California. San Diego County holds one of the largest Filipino communities in the United States, where Filipinos make up nearly half of the entire Asian-American population and are the largest Asian ethnic group. California itself is a hotspot for Filipino immigrants and families. According to the Pew Research Center, there are almost four million Filipinos currently living within the United States. Of those four million, roughly 45% of Filipino Americans live within California. Compared to my hometown, Boston’s Filipino population is miniscule. However, it was not until I moved away from the West Coast that I began to really learn about Filipino-American history.

In California, it was easy to take my culture for granted. Most of my friends were Filipino, so there was not a lot of purpose to ask each

other questions about our histories. We ate lumpia and pancit together at parties. We sang karaoke late at night with our aunties. We already knew the stories of how our families came here through the navy or through nursing or medical work. Some of us had spent some of their earliest years on the islands. Others were second or third generation, like me, whose knowledge of the islands came from the stories of our parents or grandparents and whose families had intermarried or assimilated to American life.

It was not until I began getting questions from my friends on the east coast about Filipino-American heritage that I realized that I did not know much about the history. Even growing up in an area where many of my classmates and teachers had some Filipino blood in them, our stories were excluded from the lesson plans. The only time I remember a history book even acknowledging the existence of the Philippines is during a short section on the Philippine-American War. Despite the fact that Filipinos make up one of the largest Asian cultural groups in the United States, we are largely left out of the American narrative.

This month is Filipino American History Month (FAHM). According to the Filipino-American National History Society, FAHM was established by Congress in 2009. It is meant to remember the stories of Filipino-Americans since our first documented existence dating back to October 18, 1587, when the “Iuzones indios” were taken to northern California by Spanish colonists. It is meant to remember the lives lost to American imperialists during the occupation of the Philippines — of those whose villages were burned down during the Philippine-American War. It is meant to pay homage to the first large groups of Filipinos to immigrate to the United States, the pensionados, who traveled in order to attend school in the early twentieth century.



When You Laughed: A painting by Lucy Helle of her mother, a Filipina immigrant, laughing alongside distant family members.  
Segan Helle '21

This is the time we remember Filipino laborers, who worked in Alaskan canning factories, Hawaiian sugarcane fields, and Californian farms. We remember Larry Itliong, who set the foundations for the 1965 Farmworker Movement and mobilized Filipino workers, but was forgotten by history books.

This is the time I think about my grandparents’ stories. I think about how my Lolo used to tell me tales about street-boxing and fishing in the waters of Rapu-Rapu and how he left his family behind to join the Navy and find a life in the United States — how his life fits into the larger narrative of a Filipino community built in San Diego by families who used the military as a ticket to escape. I think about my Lola, who told me that she had always wanted to fly in an airplane and had finally gotten the chance when she immigrated.

I think about my aunt and my uncle and about my family on the island that I still have not met. I think about my mom, and her paintings of our distant relatives on the shores of the Pacific an ocean away. I think about how the people in those paintings have my mom’s smile and how they are far but still familiar.

Segan Helle (shelle@college.harvard.edu) would love to be eating lumpia right now.

# INDY FORUM

## Is Senioritis Contagious, and Is That Why My Throat Is Sore?

My Neck, My Back,  
My Hand-Foot-Mouth  
Disease.

By HUNTER RICHARDS

There's nothing more disrespectful than being tested for the "Kissing Disease" when you haven't kissed anyone in a while. Having my UHS doctor tell me that the likely culprit of my sore throat and headache lasting more than two weeks was mononucleosis hit me harder than any handful of ibuprofen I had begun regularly shoveling into my mouth could. The best ways to prevent yourself from getting mono are to get plenty of sleep, eat a healthy diet, and practice good hygiene. Ironically, this is the same list as the top three hardest things to do as a college student, especially while thesising.

While I was cleared of mono a business day later when the lab results had been run, a mono scare really makes you start reevaluating everything. It was a grueling weekend wondering how I was going to make it through the semester nearly having a stroke attempting not to cough during class out of fear of interrupting the professor for the fourth time that hour before Harvard time was even up. In my suite, you can barely pick up on the cozy scent of warm cinnamon apples from our knock-off Glade plug-in over the harsh smell of Clorox wipes, hand sanitizer, and potent ginger tea. If it had been anything but senior year, I might've bought an actual box of Kleenex but why walk to CVS when there's a giant pyramid of perfectly fine TP down the hall with which to blow your nose?

Although my roommate hasn't been pre-med since sophomore year (much like nearly every other pre-med friend I met as a freshman), I still turn to her for medical advice before dragging my failing body to UHS. Only

The only action  
I've been getting  
was when I kissed  
my social life  
good-bye.

a severe pounding headache can inspire me to visit Pound Hall. Perhaps it's a typical Harvard sentiment to resist being a follower but I hated the thought of having caught one of the trending viruses on campus. I still remember those dark days when the Harvard Inn was a more exclusive place than any USGO, but instead of having a trust fund you had mumps. Even though I had been sick for a couple of weeks, I still dreaded the confirmation that my fever was higher than the capacity of my lecture hall.

The only action I've been getting was when I kissed my social life good-bye, along with my energy, time, and motivation, after turning in my thesis proposal. I thought that signing on as a bona fide SWUG meant I was safe from getting sick, especially not with something as comical as mono. Mono is something wild freshman sweating on a crowded dance floor while grinding up against a stranger they just made out with catch, not tired seniors who

haven't even sat next to anyone but their roommates in the dining hall for at least two weeks.

When you get mono the first semester on campus, it's a rite of passage. When you get it as a thesising senior, it's a scarlet letter disguised as a pile of signed UHS stationary excusing you from missing section. Roommates hide in their rooms to escape germs, classmates take the seat farther away from you after they see you cough into your elbow, professors nod along as you ask for an extension so they can escape looking at your undereye circles. Anyone who causes me to catch another virus is going to catch these hands.

Getting sick senior year is a game-changer. While I may have thought I was really taking the reins on my life, that didn't really happen until I had to squish all my responsibilities and socializing into a 10 hour day to account for the 14 hours I need to sleep and lay in bed. Senior year is realizing that a class I wasn't enthusiastic about and didn't enjoy putting energy into isn't worth it. Taking the time to rest and recover is more important than struggling to not collapse during lab, or vomit on your TF in section, or fall asleep during your Gen Ed lecture and waking up to an advanced level engineering course that takes place in the same room. As much as I joke about self-care, coming to terms with my own limitations and abilities with respect to my health is something I prioritize especially during spells of illness amidst pressing deadlines and responsibilities.

Taking time for myself with the little time that I have left at Harvard is important to me.

Hunter Richards (hrichards@college.harvard.edu) is looking forward to being able to breathe through her left nostril again.

## Cruella, Cruella DeVos?

Thoughts on truth,  
discourse, and  
the Secretary  
of Education's  
Harvard visit.

By MALCOLM REID

It comes as little secret that Secretary Betsy DeVos was coldly received at Harvard this past week, and a sizable portion of Harvard's population dismiss Secretary DeVos as a "white supremacist." But is this a fair assessment? Does she really go around making coats from the pelts of her victim, or is there more to the story?

The benefit of having had Secretary DeVos here, aside from learning from a prominent figure in education and government, is that those with a preconceived notion of her had an opportunity to hear from her first-hand as to where she stands. And hopefully this article can shed some light on that, and more.

Secretary DeVos framed her discussion with a quote from JFK, in which he said, "Every time that we try to lift a problem from our own shoulders, and shift that problem to the hands of the government, to the same extent we are sacrificing the liberties of our people." And it became clear that this was an accurate way to frame how she viewed the situation, as she continually stressed parental rights in deciding which schools is best for their children so that they might thrive in that environment. To elaborate on this, she utilized the universal

adage of "one man's food is another man's poison." She then decried unionists who, instead of focusing on the student, focus on the system, she dismissed lotteries, and she emphatically proclaimed school choice as her badge of honor in supporting the student.

The controversy lies in the belief that she despises normal public schools, and that she supposedly has a vendetta against minorities. The second appears to be libel that proliferated, and I'm uncertain of whether its founded in anything, based on her policy positions. Surely no evidence for it was brought forth by the protestors. The first I think is a legitimate concern and steps should be taken with regards to protecting those schools; she pointed out that being for school choice does not mean she is against public schools, and she believes the system fails too many students as is so they should have the chance of self-determination. She also made the point that we as Harvard students chose our university, so it seems odd to deny school choice to others and criticize her for it. An angry "that's different" rose from the crowd, but is it? I shall force no perspective on the ever-indulgent reader here, but pausing to actively consider her point is encouraged.

Now, you have to imagine that as she is saying all this, stray fists rise into the air, and various students planted here or there stood up with indignant posters, and occasionally – on one floor or another – banners unfold and grim-faced student activists put out their fist. And to accompany these stony expressions? Hearts that were regrettably hardened to "the other side." Indeed, if many had their way, not only would we have a somewhat flustered speaker being protested, but she and any who think like her would be barred from campus, and indeed from speaking at all.

It's disconcerting that on college campuses there seems to be this fetishization of the idea of a fascist state where the government tells you exactly how to live and what to say, and at the end of the day you go home to hear about your glorious leader on a late-night talk show. And all too often someone lets it slip in that they're fine with that, as those 'other people' are evil, disgusting, deplorable, ignorant, racist, and so on. And so we stopped listening. In truth, our students would have taken away relatively little actual knowledge on education policy, but perhaps that's ok.



The audience in attendance at the  
JFK Jr. Forum. *Malcolm Reid '21*

Perhaps what we should see this as is an opportunity for self-reflection and re-evaluation. No one seems to think that the Right is – and forgive me for this – alright. But the purpose of higher education has always been to encourage discourse and to learn from others, so I fear we risk rendering our entire education null and void. Do we want to allow ourselves to get to a point where all who voice an opinion different to be put to death like Socrates for 'corrupt ideas'? Mills writes in *On Liberty* that "the only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject, is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion."

Is this not the very substance of Harvard? *Veritas*. It is more than what is printed on the waffles, it's a lifestyle, and one we should all embrace. Once, the third book on our logo lay face down to represent what we cannot know. But now all three are up, and it is a poignant statement on what we think we know: everything. Nay, you know nothing Jon Snow. But if we recklessly proclaim ourselves masters of knowledge and reject other opinions, what's to separate us from the savages, the barbarians, and Yale students? A disturbing thought. But we are hardly doomed to such a cruel state, as long as we wake ourselves up, and listen, so that we might take *veritas* from the pages of the marketing material and instil it into our minds, and our hearts. And I have faith in us. Don't you?

Malcolm Reid (mjreid@college.harvard.edu) tries to continue to listen, discuss, and look hopefully forward.

# Oktoberfest

The Why's, When's, and Where's.

BY ALAYA AYALA

Last weekend marked the close of Munich's annual Oktoberfest celebration, with the closing events taking place on October 3rd. That doesn't mean the fun is over however, as Massachusetts has its own Oktoberfest celebrations coming later in October.

So what is Oktoberfest, exactly?

Known as the largest beer festival in the world, Oktoberfest has its origins in the German city of Munich. In 1810, Crown Prince Ludwig married his bride, Therese on October 12 and invited the citizens of Munich to celebrate the happy day. At the time, there was more food than alcohol at the fair, and it was focused more on the celebration of a marriage than of drinking. At the close of that first fair they held a horse race in the presence of the newlyweds, and there marked the beginning of a new tradition. The next year they hosted another horse race and included an agricultural fair. At this second event, there were small booths set up serving beer to the thirsty fair-goers. As the years passed, Oktoberfest became more about the beer than the horse races and agricultural shows, which were eventually replaced with carousels, swings, musical performances, art, and other forms of entertainment. Today the festival lasts 16 days and is attended by more than 6 million people who drink close to 7 million liters of beer at the festival each year!

Oktoberfest Munich is so widely popular that other parts of the world with large German populations host their own Oktoberfest celebrations. The next four largest Oktoberfest celebrations take place in Brazil, Canada, the United States, and China, respectively. Here in Massachusetts the largest Oktoberfest celebration takes place in Amherst.

According to [Oktoberfestma.com](http://Oktoberfestma.com), the first Oktoberfest Massachusetts took place in 2015 "as a direct response to controversial events that gave the town of Amherst a black eye." That first event was widely popular with people in the area, with close to 1,400 people attending to revel in the art, music, food, and beer that the festival provided. In 2016 Oktoberfest Massachusetts paired up with Samuel Adams to host close to 1,800 people in Amherst and expanded to Boston as well. This year, the festival is set up to be even bigger with a capacity of 2000 people. Proceeds from the event are set to create college funds for low-income families in the area.

Tickets can be bought for the Oktoberfest Massachusetts celebration in Amherst now at [www.oktoberfestma.com/tickets](http://www.oktoberfestma.com/tickets). The VIP tickets are already sold out, and the General Admission tickets are on their way to being sold out as well. The event will take place on Oktober, pardon me, October 14th.

There will be other Oktoberfest Massachusetts events in other cities in Massachusetts, including Boston, but the dates for those haven't been posted yet.

If you can't wait till then to get your Oktoberfest celebrating done, have no fear, there will be an Oktoberfest celebration in Harvard Square this year as well! The event is set to start on Sunday October 8th and end on the 9th. It is the 39th celebration, and it's set up to be the best yet, with international food, six beer gardens, sidewalk sales, live music, and, of course, the HONK! parade.



Other Oktoberfest celebrations in Boston will be occurring throughout the month as well, with many of them only a short ride on the T away.

If seafood and beer are two of your favorite things, the Harpoon Brewery is pairing up with Summer Shack for "...an amazing beer & seafood dinner - Oktoberfest style!" This will be taking place on October 4th from 6 to 9PM.

And if Harvard has your competitive edge on the hunt for glory and world domination, you may find some at the Samuel Adams OktoberFest Stein Hoisting Competitions. There will be three in Boston: one at Pour House on October 5th, one at Warehouse Bar and Grille on the 7th, and one at Whiskey's Pub on the 12th.

Always remember that many Oktoberfest celebrations have rules in place to keep everyone safe. For many of these events you must be 21 or older to attend. Some have severely limited or no parking in order to encourage attendees to use public transportation and minimize the risk of car accidents and the like, and as corny as it sounds, the best way to enjoy yourself at an Oktoberfest event is to enjoy it safely.

Alaya Ayala ([alaya\\_ayala@college.harvard.edu](mailto:alaya_ayala@college.harvard.edu)) wishes everyone (21 and older) a Happy Oktoberfest.

## My Oompah on Oktoberfest Activities

A sampling of Cambridge's Oktoberfest festivities.

By CLAIRE PARK

Oktoberfest officially starts when the lord mayor taps the first keg and announces, "O' zapft is!" or "It's tapped!" So how will you celebrate Oktoberfest?

Spectating while you're out and about in the Square:

Harvard Square will be hosting its 39th Annual Oktoberfest celebration, and its 12th Annual HONK! Parade this Sunday, October 8th, from 12-6pm. HONK! Bands are activist street bands; they are comprised of all volunteers, are ambulatory, improvisational, and colorfully rowdy. The longest running HONK! Parade has taken place in Somerville's Davis Square every October since 2006, but has inspired HONK! Festivals nation-wide and in Brazil and Australia. This HONK! Parade will feature two all-women groups from Brazil and Seattle. Come through to dance in the street, sample international foods and bites from your favorite Harvard Square vendors, and browse vintage crafts!



Spectating with Purpose:

The Longy School of Music is hosting Oktoberfest: The Wall on Saturday, October 28th. The concert will reflect on the cultural divisions the Berlin Wall engendered from its establishment in 1961 to its demolition in 1989. It will feature music written in that era as well as personal reflections from people who lived through that time. Tickets are free, but cost \$20 for access to a pre-concert reception and \$35 for cabaret-style orchestra seating and food:

[www.eventbrite.com/e/oktoberfest-the-wall-tickets-37760397365](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/oktoberfest-the-wall-tickets-37760397365)

Cooking: Formaggio Kitchen in Cambridge is offering a cooking class on Beer, Cheese and Cuisine. Their cheese connoisseurs plan to pair the most delectably eclectic cheeses with Oktoberfest staples: Schweinshaxe (roasted ham hock), Semmelknödel (bread dumplings), and pretzels. The class will run for 1.5-2 hours; spots are for purchase:

[www.eventbrite.com/o/formaggio-kitchen-817264081](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/formaggio-kitchen-817264081)

Finally, Dining:

Harvard Square's Oktoberfest will feature 6 beer gardens (which originated in Munich and are outdoor areas where local food and drink are served at shared tables) hosted by such venues as The Beat Brasserie (whose Beer Hall which will feature a live Oompah band and traditional Bavarian food), Charlie's Kitchen, The Hourly Oyster House, and John Harvard's Brew House. Grendel's Den will serve German-themed fare throughout the Street Fair, and will kick off its 15th Annual Keg Tapping and Toast at 7pm.

Somerville's Olde Magoun's Oktoberfest Season is in full-swing; the more epicurean revelers should be sure to check out its selection of 28 taps, national and imported craft beer, and New England's (supposedly) best cask ale.

Claire Park (claire\_park@college.harvard.edu) most tempted by Formaggio's cheese offerings, will not celebrate with beer.



## Building a Community

An interview with the Class of 2018 First Senior Class Marshal: Berkeley Brown.

By JILLY CRONIN

The Indy sat down with the First Senior Class Marshal, Berkeley Brown '18, to discuss her plans for the Senior Class and her role in bringing it together.

JC: What are the responsibilities of the senior class marshal and the rest of the senior class committee?

BB: There are several sub-committees within the senior class committee. There's the Social Committee, the Reflections Committee, the Class Day Committee, and a Merchandise Committee. These committees are a representation of everything that we encounter. The responsibilities of the Senior Class Committee are organizing senior week events like organizing senior bars and senior outings, finding speakers for Commencement, and creating really fun but also reflective events for the class of 2017 in our final semester. I have been talking to marshals from the past four years about what they did and what was successful and what wasn't successful. It depends on what we feel will resonate most with our class. We want to find a good balance of high-energy events and more reflective events.

JC: Are there jobs specific the First Class Marshal? Do you work with the Second Class Marshal as the point-people for the rest of the committee?

BB: Precisely. We, Wyatt and I [the Second Class Marshal], oversee the rest of the committee. We will meet with the treasurer and secretary weekly, the other sub-committees weekly, the gift marshals

weekly, and the program marshals weekly, so it is mostly keeping tabs on everything that is going on and making sure that everything is getting done. But First and Second Class Marshal are pretty equal. We are a team.

JC: What are your responsibilities after graduation?

BB: Our responsibilities after graduation are to be involved in reunion planning and coming back for Commencement and Convocation ceremonies. I don't know if we have to come back every year but we are always a touch point for the class.

JC: Why did you decide to run for Class Marshal?

BB: It felt very natural - something that I would be very excited about because I have done a lot of similar work in past years. I was on the First Year Social Committee my freshman year; on the UC my freshman, sophomore, and junior years; CEB sophomore year; and I have been involved in the Harvard Alumni Association Board of Directors since sophomore year. A lot of my work has been around building class community and thinking intentionally about what community building strategies or events really bring people together. I think that after freshman year people get kind of divided among the houses and into their groups. And seeing how impactful class-wide events were freshman year I just had a passion for this class cohesiveness that class committees can create. I really wanted to give back to the class my

senior year in a substantive way and also continue to be involved in Harvard long term. I knew that Harvard would be a community that I wanted to have and contribute to and this seemed like a cool way to do it.

JC: Do you think that it is easier for seniors, rather than underclassmen, to bond as a class and get them to really enjoy the time that they have left because it is your last year?

BB: Freshman year has natural mechanisms that allow for freshman bonding like you're in Annenberg, you live in the freshmen dorms, you play freshmen IMs - everything is very freshman centered - so I think that, in a way, people definitely feel more class belonging freshman year than they do sophomore or junior year. I think it might be easier senior week [for seniors to bond], but I think leading up to that we have to be really intentional about making sure that people are bonding beyond their blocking groups and their clubs and bonding with the broader community. But I definitely think that people would be more open to it and excited about class community this year because we are graduating.

JC: What do you specifically want to bring to your role of Class Marshal?

BB: I really want to make it fun for everyone who is in the class committee. I want everyone to take ownership of their work and be excited about it because I think that no committee is effective if they are not excited about it and don't believe in the work. As a PAF, I am used to making people reflect on their time here and think about what has been important. I want to bring that to this role. I want to ground

Marshal Interview,  
continued.

every discussion in belonging. I want to think about inclusive events and what is meaningful to each person on the senior class committee. So I really want [working on the senior class committee] to be a transformative experience. I want it to be really efficient and really productive and I want everyone to feel like they have discovered something new about themselves through this process – I probably will, too – and it to be personally meaningful as well as meaningful to the wider community.

JC: Final thoughts?

BB: I'm really excited! I'm excited to get going and get the ball rolling and meet with the rest of the committee! It's such an interesting structure because tonight I'm going to meet the people that I'm going to work with for the rest of my life. I am just really excited to get to work and I am really honored and humble and thankful to be in this role!

Jilly Cronin (croninj@college.harvard.edu) wishes Berkeley and the rest of the Senior Class Committee the best of luck in their final year at Harvard.

# speech therapy

A Harvard poet's process and passions.

By CAROLINE CRONIN

Mo '18 is a senior at Harvard this year. While working on a thesis in History and Literature and exploring options for possible post-graduate endeavors, Mo is also publishing a book – a book of poetry that is. This project, which entails much more than the complex adventure that is writing itself, has taken Mo on a journey of realizing, struggling, and healing.

Mo stated that, “I have been writing poetry since maybe my senior year of high school. And it sort of began out of a desire and a need to make space for myself to process and to think about what was happening in my life and in the world. In college I began performing and writing in the spoken word community. And that was really important in finding my voice and being comfortable speaking in front of other people.” This comfort with a new voice led to an abundance of expression for Mo. They said, “I really didn't have time to organize my work but I wrote a lot of poetry in the last three years and I realized at the end of junior year [that] a lot of it centered on historical trauma – Korean history – but also my family history and how those two are connected. A lot of it centered on queerness; a lot of it centered on mental health; and a lot of it centered on language itself, poems about speaking, writing poems and performing poems. And that was the ‘oh’ moment for me. The motif that ties together my writing in the last few years is that I have been using writing to heal and to empower other people. And

that is how I got the title *Speech Therapy*.”

For Mo, empowering and healing is a central part of the personal experience in writing. But they also hope to influence readers in more ways than one. According to Mo, “The writing process is a way of understanding yourself in relation to the world. The hope is that when someone reads my work it is awesome if they can understand me better. But, ideally, I think its even better when someone says ‘Your poem made me want to write again,’ or, ‘Your poem made me want to think about these things.’ Poetry can be an intensely personal voice and because of that it can also be one in which you understand the political through the personal.”

Mo's political work here is what they see as a solution to living in two worlds. Mo, in their time at Harvard and over the summers, has been focusing separately on art and on service. *Speech Therapy* is the culmination of living in these two worlds and finding a place for them to intersect in, “a book about my own trauma to help others.” This helping of others is accomplished through the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK) at which Mo worked over this past summer. All of the proceeds of *Speech Therapy* will go to ATASK. Here in the Boston area, ATASK works to “serve clients on an empowerment model. The model being understanding that

# INDY ARTS

## Speech Therapy, continued.

survivors are always operating under the shame of their trauma and how they dealt with their trauma. But those things are things their body did to survive and adapt. This was healing for me because I am also a domestic violence survivor.”

This process of healing is also essential to the development of the book. According to Mo, the hardest part of writing the book was organizing the poems. After a while of struggling with the decision, Mo decided the most natural transgression is, “realizing, struggling, and healing.” Mo explains, “Part One is about discovering your voice, Part Two is struggling with writing, and the Part Three is a celebration of survival and finally bridging the person you were in that situation with the person you are now.” The journey that Mo has been on is shared by others in many ways.

And Mo encourages fellow poets and fellow survivors to realize that, “your past self has wisdom that you do not expect.”

From deciding to publish in May to buying an ISBN and creating cover art, Mo’s process has brought them closer to their own passions and closer to the healing of others. Undoubtedly, Mo and *Speech Therapy* will serve to do the same and more for others.

*Speech Therapy: Draft One* is already online for free. This second, edited, and self-published book will be coming out in November. Find it and more details about contributing to ATASK online.

Caroline Cronin (ccronin01@college.harvard.edu) is moved by Mo’s passion and commitment to art and service.

# All American Madness

By ABIGAIL KOERNER

I woke up Sunday morning with a smile on my face. Sweet sounds of sweet music that reminded me of home twinkled past my ears. I hoped for time to shower and have a meal. I got in my car and drove towards daily activities- a normal day in my normal life. Driving felt cathartic. I had one foot on the gas and one to do nothing but balance my body on the seat as I turned the wheel, hit reverse, parked the car, stopped.

I swung the door open and got myself up. I was at the grocery store buying milk, cheese, eggs, necessities. I felt like buying beer for the evening: a case for friends. It rolled down the conveyor belt towards the cashier who rang it up and asked how I wanted to pay. I paid.

The end of the summer seems to feel like it lasts forever. Yet, come October is when it must come to end. With bittersweet energy and cowboy boots on my feet, I went to my happy place. I swayed and smiled to the sweet sounds of music that I loved. A night sky so

deep and dark created the illusion that this was the place to be and there was nowhere else to go. My normal life felt so extraordinary. A live show surrounded me with intent to entertain.

The strum of the guitar was like hearing a smile and the crowd drew closer as we danced. It felt like someone slowed down time. Slow motion sentence to death when a bullet hit me in the chest. Over the sounds of screams, my voice rose. My pitch claimed space in the air like every voice which climbed higher to create harmonies of pain. Our cries haunt those who lived through them.

Tears flowed down my cheeks, dripped down my chin, and fell to the floor or onto my shirt. In that moment, I felt the weight of every person departed from our Earth. My soul rose and with each dying breath, my chest fell.

Familiar country tunes echoed every shot fired – all American madness. But life was no longer a sweet, sweet song. Gunfire mistaken for fireworks sparkled in the night sky. Las Vegas was a bright place before, but at that

moment it was shining. Spaces that were empty of the flash of combusting gunpowder were painted by blood. Pools of blood weighed down bodies pinned down by bullets.

I would have died there in that place if I had been there.

On Monday morning, I woke up with a smile on my face. My soul was present on Earth, accompanied by my body and my mind. I got myself up with time for a meal and a shower. I got up and got on with my normal day. It went on as poor souls rose and their bodies were swept up. Blood was washed away and tears were dried though the pain of loss would never leave. Cowboy boots and concert tees floated away in the direction of somebody’s heaven. It was all American madness and yet another tragedy.

Abigail Koerner (ajkoerner@college.harvard.edu) writes short fiction, but not always while questioning gun control legislation in America.

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# INDY ARTS



**W**hen you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?

“I work in a lab in the psychology department with african grey parrots on learning and cognition.”

“What does that have to do with what you wanted to be when you grew up?”

“It has nothing to do with what I wanted to be!”

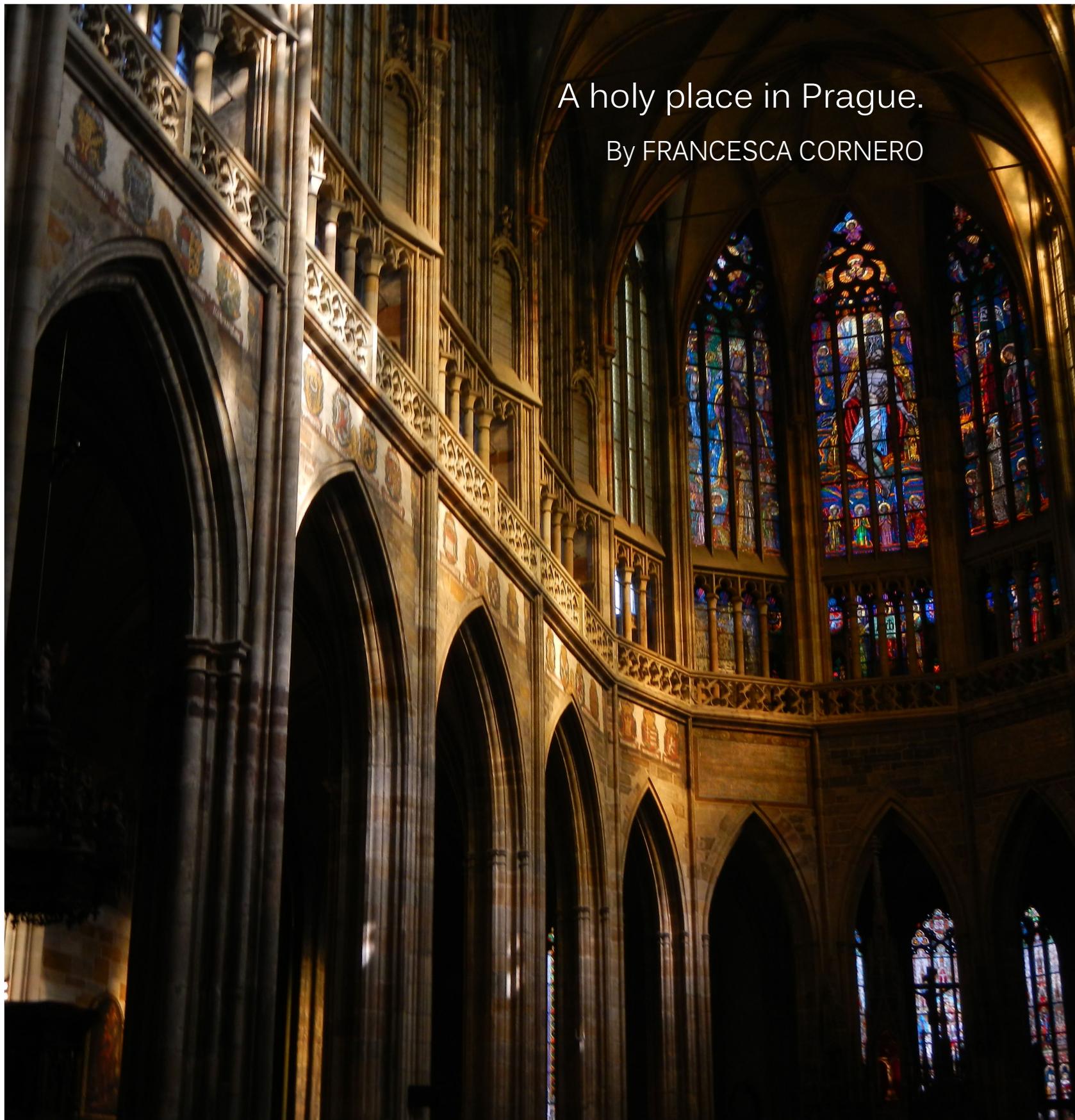
– Kianna Goldsberry '18

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