

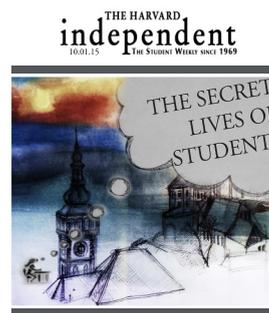
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Inside: Seeking Happiness, the Latest Apps, and Poetry

# 10.01.2015

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*The Indy* can't believe  
it's already October.

Cover design by Anna Papp

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## “How was your day, Harvard?”

A social media campaign for social change.

By CAROLINE GENTILE

### “How was your day?”

It’s such a simple question, but sophomore Taylor Ladd saw the importance in asking it. This fall, she launched a social media campaign, called “How was your day, Harvard?” to encourage more people to ask the question.

Mental health has recently been at the forefront of issues at Harvard, especially in light of the tragic suicide of sophomore Luke Tang at the beginning of this school year and the recent release of the sexual assault survey results. Whether it’s helping students who are dealing with depression, anxiety, or trauma, many have asked if Harvard is doing enough to support students who are struggling with their mental health. Some support already exists on campus. Forty to fifty percent of Harvard students have sought mental health services at Harvard University Health Services at least once. In addition to mental health services at UHS, Room 13 gives students an alternate avenue for seeking help. Another student-run group, Student Mental Health Liaisons (SMHL) seeks to publicize where students can seek help on campus.

Still, despite these resources for Harvard students, Ladd did not seek help when she was depressed. “There are many resources for mental health at Harvard,” she admits. “However, when I was depressed last year, I didn’t use any of them. I couldn’t figure out how to make an appointment with a therapist at UHS, and I didn’t want to go to Room 13 and risk running into someone I knew. The only thing that eventually made me feel better was talking to others who felt like I did, who also felt inadequate in a community as competitive as Harvard.”

“My goal is to create awareness for the issue of mental health on Harvard’s campus,” Ladd writes on Facebook. “I want social media to become a tool that can support those who struggle with mental health, rather than something that perpetuates negative feelings. I want anyone that is feeling badly about themselves, their grades, or their social

lives to know I’ve been there too, and so has everyone. Pictures on social media do not properly encapsulate a life, with its natural ups and downs, excitements and disappointments, and you should never measure yourself to the standard of a profile picture.”

Since its launch on September 16th, “How was your day, Harvard?” has received 858 likes on its Facebook page and countless personal posts. Harvard students have used the page to share the stories of their solitary struggles with depression at Harvard; through this online forum they hope to remove the stigma that often comes with talking about mental health.

At first, I have to admit, something about this movement really didn’t sit right with me. That people were sharing the details of their darkest moments on a public platform like the internet seemed more like an attention-seeking behavior than one that brings about social change. Was this really the best way to de-stigmatize mental health, or was it just a ploy to rack up likes?

I read through the posts on the page, each followed by “#howwasyourdayharvard #peoplebeforepsets #tellmeaboutyourdayatharvard.” Each story was so deeply personal. After the first few that I read, I felt the same way that I feel when somebody on Facebook posts a (very flattering) picture of themselves with a recently deceased grandparent, and then proceeds to get 100 likes. The idea was good, but it seemed like a cry for attention.

But, with mental health, I think that’s the point. Mental health demands attention, and social media is the means by which people attract attention in this generation. I realized that I had the initial reaction that I did likely because I am a product of a society that stigmatizes mental health issues to the point that sharing stories about them seems more selfish than selfless.

Reading the posts on the “How was

your day, Harvard?” Facebook page, I felt as though I had been given a glimpse into the lives of others. I was now privy to their inner struggles, and it was eye opening. People I knew—people with whom I was friends or perhaps just acquaintances—who seemed perfectly happy, had struggled with mental health issues.

Not all of them had been clinically depressed, per se, but all had feelings of inadequacy or overwhelming anxiety as a result of being in an environment in which everyone attempts to project a shiny, perfect version of themselves.

While Harvard does offer a multitude of services for students to seek help with mental health issues, none of these services address our problematic environment.

The “How was your day, Harvard?” movement encourages people to ask about, listen to, and share their struggles, along with their successes, with the hope that students who are battling inner demons will not feel alone.

Ladd’s movement puts the responsibility on us to not only candidly share our stories, but to also ask and to care about others. The #peoplebeforepsets at the end of each post reminds the reader how we become so consumed with our work, that we forget to check in on our friends.

The “How was your day, Harvard?” movement reminds us that how we interact with each other determines the sort of community in which we live. We live in a community where struggling with mental health issues is common, and that means that we have to talk about them more. Obviously, each of us wants to be a part of a vibrant, welcoming, mentally healthy community. To get there, though, it all starts with each of us asking each other questions as simple as “How was your day?” and actually caring about each other’s answers.

*Caroline Gentile '17 (cgentile@college.harvard.edu) is a neurobiology concentrator in Kirkland House who really needs to get off Facebook and actually be a productive member of society.*

## Pressure from 1.4 Billion People

A look at the rigors of the Chinese education system.

By SOPHIE WANG

As China has increasingly become a world power, it sometimes surprises me how little people actually know about what's going on there. Of the many conversations I've had in Annenberg, I've learned that many know that Facebook is blocked in China, but few seem to think that China would have its own social media platforms. Air pollution, another hot topic, when brought up, elicits more smirks than signs of empathy. "China is polluting the world!" is a phrase spoken with no sympathy, no understanding of how the very real consequences this problem creates in the very country that causes it. To demand some pathos, I throw out statistics like: "breathing the air in Beijing for a day is the equivalent of smoking 40 cigarettes," or "on the worst days in Beijing when the PM2.5 exceeds the max of 500 and shoots up to 1000, the visibility on the roads is no more than 2 to 5 meters." If the conversation has proceeded thus far, I am already satisfied. If anything, it is a sign that people care and might want to hear more. All of this is to say that in this article I proceed with one issue I am relatively well versed in: the education system in China.

I like to talk about my experiences in one of the well known "art prep schools" in China if whomever I'm talking to seems like an artist of some sort. "Have you heard that there are such things as standardized test prep for drawing, the kind



you have for SATs and APs?" I ask. "Cheating is rampant too. Just like you might scribble the definitions of a few SAT words on the margins of your desk before the test, students write down 'Left 1, light brown, left 2, light yellow etc.' on their palettes to make sure the colors they use to draw an apple are 'correct.'"

On other occasions, I give my take on the notorious college entrance exam and the Chinese education system. My sister, who is in fourth grade, is taking Olympic Math two times a week, and she already knows her x's and y's. Her best friend in class, who is 10 and has never been abroad, speaks English without an accent and can sing Ke\$ha's "Tik Tok" while improv-

ing the tune on the piano. However talented these kids are, they will have to drop these activities during middle school or high school—that's when everyone gives up most other things, for the college entrance exam, which we call "Gaokao," the one thing that will determine the trajectory of their lives.

Before I flew to Boston, my cousin, who's my age, told me about her 12th grade Gaokao experience in China. "I would wake up at 6:00 to study and eat breakfast. My mom would drop me off at school at 7:00 for morning recital and classes would begin at 7:20. We had four classes in the morning, each 40 minutes, with 10-minute intervals in between.

*continued on pg. 5*

## Pressure from 1.4 Billion People

continued from pg. 4

By SOPHIE WANG

“My sister, who is in fourth grade, is taking Olympic Math two times a week, and she already knows her x’s and y’s. Her best friend in class, who is 10 and has never been abroad, speaks English without an accent and can sing Ke\$ha’s ‘Tik Tok’ while improvising the tune on the piano.”

As soon as class ended, students would swarm in front of the teacher with questions. So there really weren’t any breaks other than the two P.E. classes we had each week, which in the end, weren’t really breaks anymore because we had to run laps the whole 40 minutes in preparation for the senior year unified P.E. test. We then had lunch period for an hour and a half, but most of my classmates skipped lunch to line up in the teacher’s office for questions. We had four more classes in the afternoon, which consisted of doing multiple mock tests. These were graded immediately after, with rankings posted on the corridors before evening self-study period, which began at 6:00pm and ended at 9:00pm. I would run out of class as soon as the last bell rang, and my mom would pick me up and drive me home. I usually eat a little snack and then study until 1:30am. During the second semester, I realized I needed more sleep to study

efficiently so I started sleeping at 1:00am.” This daily schedule of hers, when told to students here at Harvard, often stirs intense emotional responses that run the gamut from pity to disbelief to horror, reactions that are almost too serious for Annenberg. People don’t know how to respond to something so foreign and out of touch. As an act of guidance, I gently remind them that yes, this was indeed the reality for my cousin, and is still the reality for millions in China. For someone who knows no other system, my cousin says she is really thankful for the experience (“It was an once in a life time opportunity!”) and learned a lot from this process. She said the Gaokao taught her that the only way to succeed in an incredibly competitive environment is, paradoxically, to refrain from comparing yourself to others all the time. Despite the rigid and repetitive schedule, and the narrowness in vision it generates, the Gaokao trained her to be able to withstand enormous pressure and stress. In the recent years, the Gaokao has been evolving. The newly revised version demands less rote memorization (what the Chinese education

system is infamous for) and more critical thinking with a global perspective. In order to score high on the Gaokao, and quite possibly in life, students now need to know that they aren’t just citizens of China, but citizens of the world.

People here talk about thinking critically all the time, but how often do people respond critically when I tell them about real things happening to real people? Has it ever crossed people’s minds that there are 1.4 billion people in China and only one Peking University and one Tsinghua University, both of which are ranked far behind “the Ivies” globally? In America, the population is far lower than in China, yet all the best Universities in the world congregate here. With less resources and more people, it comes as no surprise that students in China have to work extra hard to get into equally good schools. Yet, discussion often comes to an end because people do not know how to respond or talk effectively about what is happening globally. Harvard is, first and foremost, an American University, but it is also a global name, college, and resource. Only if students start realizing that Harvard is one of the best universities in the world, will we go on to be truly great leaders.

*Sophie Wang’19 (sophiewang01@college.harvard.edu) hopes students will take a greater interest in issues affecting China.*

## Reconstructing the Final Clubs

A response to The Crimson's 'Don't Dismantle the Final Clubs.'

By SHAQUILLA HARRIGAN

Dear Mr. Dong,

I hope this letter may serve as some reading material as you continue to sojourn in your favorite armchair within the Fly. I'm writing to you because I have a few points I'd like to make in response to your article in The Crimson earlier this week where you pleaded that Harvard shouldn't dismantle the final clubs because "there is an important social role for final clubs at Harvard." While I appreciate your attempts to salvage your glory days and preserve an institution that has benefited you greatly as both an undergraduate and graduate, your arguments are weak at best and continuously try to compare apples to oranges.

I do admit that the dismantling of the final clubs isn't the only (or even correct) solution to Harvard's severely lacking social scene. Nor does it necessarily solve all of the problems Dean Khurana and his colleagues say it will. However, I find some of the points you make in your plea to be a gross underestimation and even a misrepresentation of the implications final clubs have on campus.

First of all, you cannot, under any circumstances, compare the 'exclusiveness' of cultural and gender-identity organizations on campus to the exclusivity of final clubs. How you can even think to compare organizations that sprouted out of the need for traditionally marginalized students to come together in order to make Harvard more hospitable for them to final clubs, bastions of traditionally white male privilege, is beyond me. Especially when you list the exclusiveness of BGLTQ organizations on campus that accepts people from all gender-identities whereas final clubs operate on a binary that reifies traditional presentations of gender. Additionally, none of the organizations you mentioned ("There is the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (I was a member), the

Black Students Association to name a few. The Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Hindu students all have their affinity groups. The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students have a group.") have memberships that are closed to individuals who are not invited to punch. Members do not even have to have the same identity of the group in question; they just have to be allies. These organizations also do not have the same ability to control space or access resources as the final clubs.

You also argue that students who are invited to punch have to prove their worth by competing on "social merit." While I can see schmoozing as a talent, I don't think the social merit you speak of has a lot to do with speaking skills. It is more about who one knows and how one will fit in with current membership, which can inevitably mean continuing to let in people who will espouse and carry out the same limited social values of previous members. "Social merit" cannot be put into the same context as comping a newspaper, auditioning for a show, or trying out for a team.

A theme I notice as I read your supplication on behalf of the final clubs is that you continuously compare the male final clubs to other organizations on campus. And boy are these comparisons a stretch. You wrote that other single-gender groups like fraternities and sororities (which also aren't recognized student organizations) are on the rise at Harvard and therefore final clubs shouldn't bear the brunt of Dean Khurana's ire. However, none of those organizations control as much social capital as the final clubs, specifically the male final clubs. In addition, the final clubs are not accountable to anyone except each club's graduate board, and I guess occasionally the Cambridge Police Department when they decide to act instead of look on the brick mansions with disdain. Fraternities and Sororities are accountable to national PanHellenic boards.

This notion of controlling space brings

me to the one opinion you make in your article with which I agree. "The administration maintains that House life should be sufficient social life for its students. But while that is a good starting point, Harvard should be all about providing many options to students." A tiny subplot to the epic narrative of Khurana's sweeping changes to the final clubs is the fact that the college is trying to build community for students by creating more house common spaces. However, the administration should be trying to make more student common spaces. Final clubs have the power and appeal because the students control and own the space. If the control of space on campus was disaggregated, more students would be able to have their own parties and take ownership of their social scene. The overwhelmingly privileged members of final clubs shouldn't be an oligarchy of space at Harvard.

In closing, I think that final clubs shouldn't necessarily be dismantled, rather than be made more irrelevant to the student population. I think college administrators should do more than use the final clubs as the sole example of everything that is f\*cked up about Harvard (but I will admit there are a lot messed up things about the clubs). This is not to discredit the experiences people have and continue to have (positive or negative), but instead to think of what Harvard could and should look like a more equitable social scene.

Mr. Dong, you may not even read this letter, but if you do, I hope that you at least see reasons people want to see the end of final clubs.

Sincerely,

Shaquilla

*Shaquilla Harrigan'16 (sharrigan01@college.harvard.edu) has a whole lot more to say on this issue but not enough space in this paper.*

## Ex-Phoenix Alumnus on a Mission

Dr. Tim McCarthy spills beans on club workings as he crusades against assault on campus.

By ADITYA AGRAWAL

The door to Tim McCarthy 93's cloistered Quincy office proclaims itself, in rainbow colors, a "safe zone." Yet, the man himself had long been a participant, a proponent, and a living emblem, in fact, of spaces that were anything but safe. And on a sunny September morning last Thursday, he had his personal reckoning: twenty-five years after graduation, McCarthy renounced his membership from the Phoenix S.K. Club in a widely publicized address delivered at Memorial Church.

McCarthy was riven by the contradictions that had come to define him. He directs the Sexuality, Gender and Human Rights program at the Kennedy School, and is a trained feminist. Students and colleagues found it hard to reconcile his mission on campus with his involvement in a club built on exclusivity, elitism, and male privilege. Conversations took on tinted tones, glances shifted, and attitudes changed.

The tipping point came when Harvard released the results of the campus-wide Sexual Conduct Survey this past Monday. The administration chose to suppress the precise figures for how final clubs were contributing to sexual assault on campus but the clues were clear: the numbers were bad. Bad enough to get a administration hamstrung by years of apathy and inertia to wake up and take notice; to put, in the Crimson's words, the 8 all-male Final Clubs "on notice."

McCarthy's dilemma was years in the making. He dropped out of the punch process sophomore year only to

join the club his junior fall. Even after he graduated, he says he went back to the club "only as a young alum," and only on occasions such as the Harvard-Yale game or Commencement when "other alums were in town." He declares defensively that he hasn't been back in "many years" and has never donated to the club.

He has no qualms in admitting that he gained from his Phoenix membership, both during and after his time at Harvard. He always had a place to crash, a place to "take [his] friends to" and party every weekend. If anything, he quite "enjoyed" the access to the physical space and the social privilege the club afforded him. Upon graduation, the perks continued in more subtle ways.

"While at grad school in New York, I gained access to parties I would never have been invited to through friends at the Phoenix; wealthy acquaintances at the Phoenix picked up the tab at dinners," McCarthy says.

While the Phoenix did not open any doors for him as in the world of academia, he has "no doubt" he would have benefitted immensely off his club network had he opted for finance, consulting, or other entrepreneurial



undertakings.

But the halcyon days of free dinners and exclusive parties are well past him: the dilemma is resolved. The sagging wire is taut once more. And now McCarthy has his own agenda.

He hopes to use his public presence on campus to provoke an open discussion on everything that is wrong with Final Clubs and Harvard's social scene. What then is his vision for these clubs –would he dismantle them?

Not quite. But he wants to "provoke a reckoning" within these clubs of their role in supporting sexual violence and inequality on campus. He wants to change the way they "constitute their membership" with a more transparent punch process that is open to all genders and backgrounds. "The day for unaccountable, single-sex clubs is over," says McCarthy.

*continued on pg. 8*

*Photo courtesy of scholar.harvard.edu*

## Ex-Phoenix Alumnus on a Mission

continued from pg. 7

By ADITYA AGRAWAL

McCarthy, who has been on both sides of the table as a punch and a 'puncher,' says the process is anything but equitable. "When we make decisions, we do not discuss their social merits. We talk about how cool the guy is—how he is on my sporting team, or how he went to my school," he explains.

This admission resonates with widely entrenched suspicions that the punch process is designed to work against undergraduates who did not attend prestigious high schools or hail from low income communities; undergraduates who, in other words, do not mirror the traditional demographics of the clubs. "From getting punched to getting in, there is a toxic self-selection at work," McCarthy asserts.

Opponents of final club regulation

have argued that the exclusivity of these social clubs mirrors the exclusivity of religious groups or sporting teams on campus. To McCarthy, the lines are clear: final clubs, unlike the latter, are unaccountable to the administration. "These clubs luxuriate in the privilege of not being held accountable by Harvard," he says.

The 153 year-old Spee Club's decision to go co-ed may have seemed to herald a new era, but McCarthy stays unimpressed. Allowing a handful of women into what has historically been an all-male bastion would pave way for "neither equality or safety."

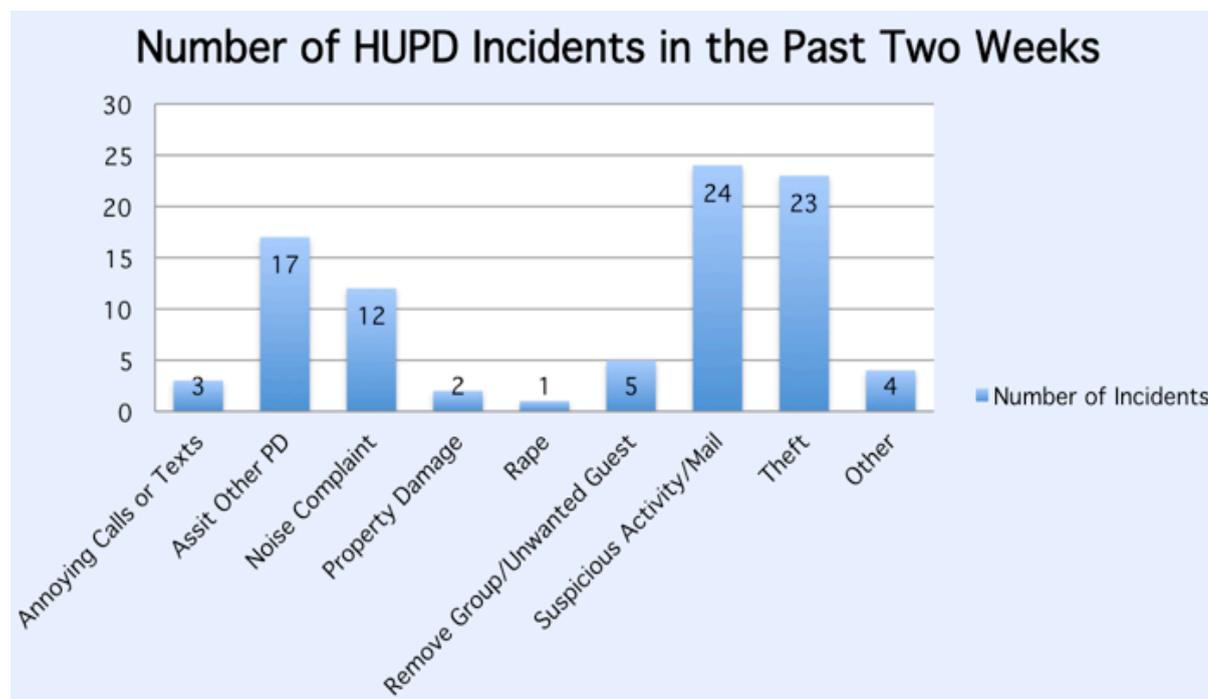
Dean Rakesh Khurana sat in the front row at Memorial Church as McCarthy delivered his address and embraced the Phoenix-renouncee as he walked away from the lectern. Khurana has been unrelenting in his

dealings with the clubs, arguing that no option is "off the table." McCarthy, who claims to have been contacted by a "wide range of people" after his address went public on the Crimson website, declined to confirm if these included President Faust, Dean Khurana, or their merry band of officials.

But the hug could have symbolized the beginning of what may prove to be a potent partnership in the struggle against sexual assault and exclusivity at America's oldest university.

*Aditya Agrawal '17 (adityaagrawal@college.harvard.edu) would support Dean Khurana for a 2020 Presidential nomination.*

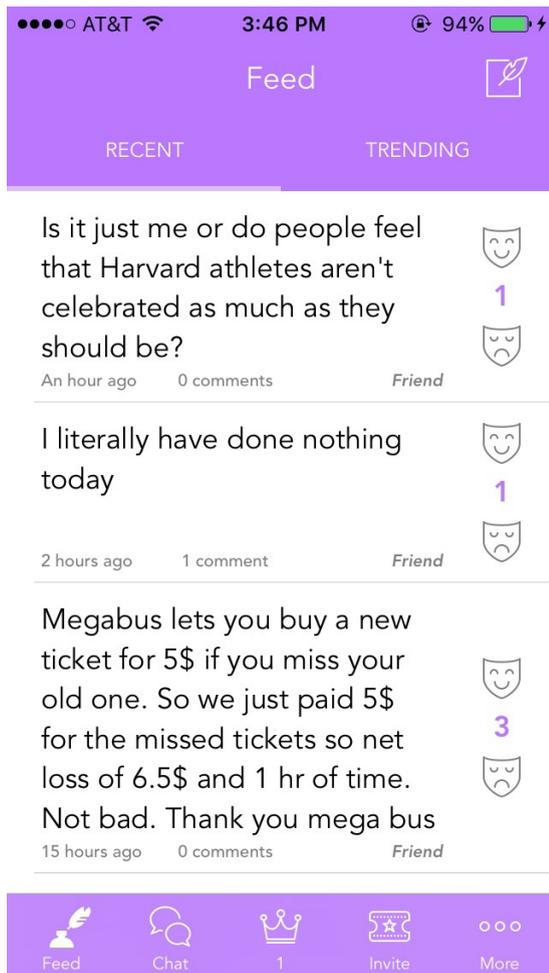
This chart was created using data from HUPD's online public police log. The graph covers the time period from 9/17/15 to 9/26/15. The "other" section indicates incidents in the categories of "fire," "field investigation," "motor vehicle accident," and "threat." These incidents were grouped together because they occurred only once and were not considered crimes that put the undergraduate population in immediate danger.



## College Life On The Go: Harvard's Mobile Applications

### A burgeoning field and its place on Harvard College's campus.

By DANIEL UM



Akshar Bonu '17, who launched his iPhone app Masquerade on September 1st, says he was "pleasantly surprised" by the overall campus receptiveness to the app. However, he is not the only Harvard undergrad to find app success.

With its low cost and high profits, mobile app development is fast evolving as an appealing option for college-aged entrepreneurs. At Harvard, many students across all years are hard at work, developing applications for community members on campus. With the rapid evolution of Silicon Valley and the "start-up" as central fixtures in our collective imaginations, many have argued that institutions like MIT and Stanford, with their emphasis on tech entrepreneurship, are all set to be the educational Meccas of the 21st century. It is only appropriate that Harvard is following suit and students are leading the charge.

Masquerade allows you to chat anonymously with people on campus. After chatting for indefinite periods of time, the application allows you to reveal your identity. This platform could serve many purposes,

including dating where instead of physical appearance as the initial appeal, one's personality can shine as users share funny stories, news, and experiences.

In addition to Bonu, the Masquerade team consists of Elliot Safo'17, growth team lead, Jason Dong'17 and John Stubbs'17, members of the growth team, and Mark Yao'16, development lead. Before the launch, Bonu and his team advertised with a booth set up at the activities fair and disseminated fliers during CS50's and EC10's first lectures. Although numbers remain confidential, Team Masquerade is optimistic about its future. "We have been thrilled by the app's engagement and reach—from Massachusetts to Texas and everywhere in between. The feed is full of banter and revelation," says Bonu.

Bonu is pleasantly surprised by the campus receptiveness to Masquerade saying that students have been "very enthusiastic" about the app. Claire Spackman'19 says that the application is an "innovative and entertaining way" to get to meet new people as "it is likely that you share some common interests with your match-up." Nate Hiatt'19 also thinks that the app is an "interesting concept." However, he says he won't frequent the application until more of the Harvard student body is hooked.

Interestingly, this is not the first time Bonu has launched an iPhone app. In spring of his freshman year, he launched Instanomz, a student-run food delivery service that provided late-night fast food from Felipe's, Pinocchio's, and Shake Shack to freshmen living in Elm and Ivy Yards. Unfortunately, Instanomz ceased operation after an unresolvable conflict with Harvard administrators and Harvard Student Agencies (HSA). There was a breakdown of negotiations with Harvard Student Agencies and administrators said that the app must partner with HSA in order to operate on campus. Team Masquerade has not

interfaced much with the administration yet, but the app's entire online platform has given administration little reason to intervene.

Another upcoming student-developed application is "Drizl." Founder Ryan Fortin'16 and head of development Mitchell Foster'17 describe the app as "a piggy bank with a math degree." It is a mobile budgeting application designed to help one manage loose change from debit or credit cards. Fortin says it is "similar" to Bank of America's "Keep the Change" program, but is optimized for Harvard students. With Drizl, "loose change from transactions will be put into a user's app."

The inspiration for the application came from a conversation between Fortin and his mother, who believes college students are too "loosey goosey" with their money. She asserts that spontaneous purchases and subscription-based products are the biggest obstacles college students face when budgeting. The app is targeted at all young adults in order to help them budget and manage their money.

Fortin said that in recent years, Harvard has become a great place to launch projects and ventures. He is currently enrolled in a startup class that is offered in the engineering sciences department and has consulted with numerous professors regarding his idea. Bonu has also taken the course.

Fortin sees Harvard allowing him to receive credit for the class as indicative of how "dedicated" the administration is to improving startup culture. Furthermore, he feels that students "seem very interested and excited when presented with startup ideas," putting the startup culture in the 02138 in a "pretty good place."

*Daniel Um'19 (danielum@college.harvard.edu) hopes to have his own app start-up in the near future.*

## An Evening with Salman Rushdie

The Indy reports on the world famous author's recent visit to Harvard.

By PULKIT AGARWAL

Standing before a church gathering and asking people to “treat religion with the contempt it deserves” is not everyone’s cup of tea. Unless, of course, you are Salman Rushdie.

Last Monday, Cantabrigians had the chance to spend an evening with the Booker-Prize winning author, as he read excerpts from his new book, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*.

Rushdie makes for a highly contentious figure in the part of the world from which I hail. It is rare to meet an educated Indian who takes to Rushdie’s work with little heed.

Some take a particular dislike of him as he is not one to hold back on his opinion, regardless of how offensive it may seem to others. Others still, worship him for his unflinching honesty in pointing out the illogical, irrational, and superficial. In light of the Charlie Hebdo massacre last year in Paris, for instance, Rushdie had accused institutionalized religion of being nothing but a “medieval form of unreason,” one that deserves “our fearless disrespect.” It is statements such as these that give us a glimpse of what constitutes Rushdie’s legacy (one of which I’m sure he is proud!).

His demeanor throughout the event was par excellence. When introduced as having been born a Shia Muslim in Mumbai, he had no hesitation in correcting the speaker on the spot. “Nope. Sunni. Sunni Muslim,” he said with a smile. You can trust Rushdie to express himself freely and break the false sense of propriety at the very outset. It gave listeners a sigh of relief and a gentle breather right at the beginning, most of them already finding themselves at the edge of their seats—including yours truly.

He then went on to read in an awe-inspiring style to an audience listening in utter admiration. Many in the church that evening would tell you that they wished Rushdie had

read them the entire book. No reader’s voice can ever be as captivating. No one’s pauses are as perfectly timed and understanding quite is as profound as Rushdie’s was that



evening.

“It was almost as beautiful an experience as a parent reading a bedtime story to their child,” said Elias Tuomaala’19, a freshman who bought a ticket to this event on his third day at Harvard.

As the reading drew to a close, eager fans lined up to ask him questions. The pitches came fast, interesting and unforgiving—while one person asked him about the Iranian death fatwa that hangs over his head, others asked him about his fascination with

humor. Rushdie’s replies were as pithy as ever.

Was there a basis to Ayatollah Khomeini’s threat to him? “Fact is, I don’t care. If someone wants me dead, I’m not going to ask them if there is a basis for that,” he said with complete candor.

And of his love for humor, he said that he hated books that weren’t funny, which—given his ability to include a funny note in all his works—is entirely unsurprising. “It has got me into trouble,” he admitted to a laughing audience, “but it’s worth the risk!”

His depiction of magical realism coupled with his unfailing ability to stay in the news has earned him renown across the world. While Rushdie attended the other Cambridge (what he quipped to be “the real Cambridge, the university that is 900 years old”), last Monday confirmed that there is no dearth of his fans in any corner of the world.

He once famously said of his home country, “No people whose word for ‘yesterday’ is the same as their word for ‘tomorrow’ can be said to have a firm grip on the time.” And while it is unfortunate that an Indian fan of Rushdie’s has to travel halfway across the world to catch a glimpse of the maestro, I hope there is a brighter tomorrow ahead wherein the Rushdies of the world can enter any country they wish without having fundamentalists cry foul.

But, as of now, the search for that tomorrow beckons.

*Pulkit Agarwal '19 (pulkitagarwal@college.harvard.edu) is now a proud owner of a signed copy of 'Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights'.*

*Photo Courtesy of Pulkit Agarwal*

# Moonlit Poetry

The Indy reviews Speak Out Loud's 'Celestial Open Mic.'

By AUDREY EFFENBERGER

A semicircle of cold faces, cold toes, and cold fingers. A cold night across the concrete of the Science Center observatory. Faces shadowed by rear floodlights, faces lit by the waxing moon and a single smartphone screen. A voice. A mic. A quiet murmuring of snaps, rising against the stillness.

Spoken word is a powerful thing. From formal speech and rhetoric to song, theater, and simple dialogue, the capacity to communicate and connect through sound resonates throughout our culture. Harvard Speak Out Loud (SOL) knows this well. SOL provides safe spaces—no judgment is passed and no names leave—for student poets to read their favorite work throughout the year. With the help of the Student Astronomers at Harvard-Radcliffe (STAGR), SOL hosted a “Celestial Open Mic” event on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. First-years and seniors alike stood with their backs to the Boston skyline reading original works as well as favorite pieces from books, smartphones, and personal journals. Among the pieces of astrologic equipment scattered across the roof, their audience cupped hot chocolate and listened with awe. I settled myself against one of the steel beams of the Science Center facade to watch.

Distinct from pure poetry, spoken word is an art form with its own rules. Half word-smithing, half performance, the aesthetics of each poem is brought to life in the execution; each word grows in sound and sight and feeling. Some poets stutter; some stumble, some shake. Some pause to laugh with their audiences

at a particularly absurd line before driving forcefully into the next. A few gesture, point out their heart or put out their hands or pull down the stars. One even stomps with his words. The poet is alive, and the poem lives through the poet, breathing and growing in every moment with its audience. A line break becomes a caught breath. A cascade of assonance tumbles faster and faster from the poet's tongue. One speaker reads an excerpt from her short story, and the prose becomes magical, too.

Beyond the beauty of raw artistic connection between poet and listener, open mic makes room for difficult topics. The first poet of the night tackles body image, listing the ways in which an eating disorder once cocooned over her. Another gives a powerful performance on bodily integrity, weaving powerful metaphors of dogs and wolves and light and red. From queer desire to racism, from fist-bumping a hook-up to saying “goodbye, grandma” one last time, the artists who speak share a truly wide and diverse range of thoughts, experiences, and feelings.

This is the gift of the safe space; its freedom brings poets out and audiences closer because we can choose to let out the things that make us think. It can be so hard to present one's thoughts so openly, particularly in a place as storied and established in the American academic firmament as Harvard. Eye contact—human contact—is difficult to find or create in day-to-day contexts here, let alone such personal performances. It's easy to pull away from oth-

ers and doubt oneself silently. But the support of the SOL community encourages writers to embrace their vulnerability. If a poet prefaces their work by saying they've just written it, the board members cheer “New shit!” If a poet presents a piece from months or years ago, they cheer, “Old shit!” Yet it is always a friendly cheer, and the snaps, cheers, applause, and heartfelt comments enthusiastically offered to every poet ultimately affirm: Your thoughts are valid and important to me. You are important. In that moment, everyone belongs there.

At the very end of the night, on the too-bright canvas of my phone, I put into words some thoughts and shakily take the makeshift stage. Fingertips numb around the mic, shivering with nerves and cold, I speak.

Spoken word is a powerful and terrifying thing. The artist is actively forging the relationship between the art form and its audience, and it's hard to create a connection so personal without flinching. It's hard to hear one's own thoughts so frankly at first, and to be heard by so many. Yet every poet leaves with relief in their heart.

A voice, a mic, a word. It resonates. It frees.

*Audrey Effenberger '19 (effenberger@college.harvard.edu) is working on speaking a little louder.*

## Splendor on the Grass

Field notes from Harvard-Brown.

By JESS CLAY

**B**y five o'clock, the Harvard-faithful surged down JFK Street. They came in loosely packed shuttles from the Quad and in tight-knit droves from the river houses, and at the confluence of JFK and Mt. Auburn the channels merged and streamed across the river. When they crested Anderson Bridge, some people wanted cheap sunglasses to block out the still-bright sun and the glaring river, but by the time they reached Cumnock Field they'd decided they didn't need them.

A handful of well-contained tailgates formed alongside the access road to the fields. Here, old men drank Sam Adams out of the backs of hatchbacks, looking austere in their pleated khakis and navy windbreakers and ball caps. Also nearby there were young families with small children, and you had to be careful not to swear when cutting past them. There were girlfriends in from Worcester for the weekend and girls up from Wellesley, but the telltale promise of the day lay in a group of kids wearing Boston College gear. After all, their school had a real football team, ACC and everything, and they'd even had a game earlier that afternoon. But here they were anyway, albeit a little off to the side of the main event. They must have had high hopes for Harvard-Brown. The game was Harvard-Brown—that much was sure—but the tailgate was Brown-Harvard, at least in its early stages. The visitors had come to Cambridge with a vengeance, and perhaps it was not unmerited in light of their ancient history.

It dated back to the early decades of the seventeenth century, when Cambridge was still *Newe Towne*, and the college was but a twinkle in John Harvard's distant eye. There was in Massachusetts a relatively progressive clergyman by the name of Roger Williams, who among other things disdained the King of England and suggested paying the Indians for their land. It was a strange time, for the government of Massachusetts hated liberal public policies, and they exiled Roger Williams. In due time he established himself along the Narragansett Bay, and he named his settlement after the Providence which had brought him safe thus

far. A century later, his city bore a university of its own, and it was this university which on Saturday had sent its sons and daughters back to the Bay State. By the time the stock of the Puritans arrived to pitch their tailgates, the city on a hill had been invaded by the libertines from Rhode Island.

The heirs of Roger Williams seemed worthy of their heritage. They liberally poured libations into their red plastic cups, and they consumed a liberal number of these cups, and by the looks and smells of things they had embraced a particularly progressive drug policy that bordered on libertarianism. They were conservative only in dress, but this seemed purely the result of their school's name and color. Even this rule had its exception, though, and it came in the form of a particularly addled character. He was clad in a Hawaiian shirt and uncomfortably short shorts and a bucket hat, all of them psychedelically colored so as to lend him the general appearance of a Jefferson Airplane concert poster. An anti-narcotics campaign should have photographed him for a poster of their own, and captioned it "This Is Your Ivy League Student On Drugs." He established a habit of mocking the Harvard passerby for their fashion choices, and in so doing served as a distillation of much that is wrong in this world. He made one long for the stocks and pillories and facial brandings and other public shaming that were the glory of the Massachusetts Bay colony. When he called out a Harvard man for wearing a white collar over a crimson sweatshirt, he ended his sartorial review with the phrase "That is whack, man." But at this particular moment the universe saw fit to dispense a certain measure of justice, for the Harvard man stopped in his tracks and stared at the Brown kid. "And you look like someone ate a box of Crayolas and shit them out," he said drily.

One would hope that there were a number of hostilities of this nature, for great games and great tailgates are made of such stuff. When the sight of an opponent's colors makes people see red, then Harvard will know football. There was one student who was on the receiving end of both schools' wrath. He wore a grey sweatshirt with HARVARD embla-

## Splendor on the Grass, con.

zoned across the front in brown letters. It was reminiscent of those concussion baseline tests and public art projects which feature words like “BLUE” in green letters. It was easy to see why it bothered people, and the general effect seemed to annoy the Harvard fans who were not colorblind, and upset the Brown fans who were not illiterate. However, there were also more cordial exchanges. One Brown fan wanted a beer so badly that he swore some rapidly formulated and administered oath about Harvard being vastly superior to Brown. He then mentioned that he was Brown undergrad but was now going for a Ph. D in economics here at Harvard, and what did the beer-giver think of that, and, well, actually the only reason he was wearing Brown apparel at all was because his girlfriend had told him to. At this point he was given another beer oath-free and settled down.

By now the sun was setting, and the cold beer was getting warm and the flavored vodka was finally cooling off in the evening air. The Brown crew had long since peaked, but Harvard’s own entered their zenith as they finally had the numbers and fortifications to make the tailgate their own. There was an admitted lack of games and grills, but it was probably for the best that open flames were kept apart from the teetering masses. A cacophony blasted forth from the assembled speakers of rival tailgates, and kids gyrated in the bed of a pickup truck, and people made vain attempts to find each other. Some students had come only to get free Boston Calling tickets, but had decided to stay for the free drinks. Others had come for the free drinks and had decided to stay because there ended up being more free

drinks than anticipated. For many, it was the first tailgate they had ever attended, and they were quite taken with it. But there were also a pair of juniors who had tailgated every home game last fall, and even they trilled at the sight of this one. Evidently they used the word “tailgate” very loosely, because their pregame festivities had consisted primarily of splitting a handle of cheap bourbon in a dorm room on the river, then heading over to the game. But this, this was the real McCoy. And nowhere was that more evident than on the face of a former Harvard football player. He had stopped playing before his senior year on account of concussion troubles, and Harvard-Brown marked the first game he would enjoy purely as a student and a spectator. And for him the pregame was proof enough that maybe, just maybe, the football team did matter.

At a quarter of seven the police started moving the good-timers toward the stadium and was met with general success. Some students had crisp clean tickets, but others had only their Harvard ID’s, and these were rebuffed by the security guards who told them to go over to will call. Somewhere amidst the growing din, the referee placed a whistle to his lips and the crowd buzzed as college football returned to the old warhorse of a stadium for the first time since The Game.

At halftime, Harvard was up by thirty-seven points, and by most accounts the game was over, and the home crowd forged back across the Charles and lost themselves in the night.

*Jess Clay '17 (jclay@college.harvard.edu) eagerly looks forward to more home games this season.*

### Harvard-Brown Highlights

- September 26<sup>th</sup> marked the 115<sup>th</sup> meeting of Harvard and Brown in Football
- QB Scott Hosch’16 was named the College Sports Madness Ivy League Offensive Player of the Week. Hosch closed the game with 151 passing yards.
- Harvard defeated Brown 53-27. Brown did not score until the third quarter.
- RB Paul Stanton Jr.’16 came in with 89 rushing yards.
- Harvard had zero turnovers, while forcing four out of Brown.

### Other Wins from this week

- Field Hockey versus Colgate (3-0) on 9/20/15
- Men’s Water Polo versus MIT (15-9) on 9/20/15
- Field Hockey versus Yale (2-1) on 9/26/15
- Women’s Soccer versus Penn (2-0) on 9/26/15

### Upcoming Home Games

- Men’s Tennis versus MIT on 10/2/15
- Football versus Georgetown on 10/2/15 @ 7:00PM
- Women’s Rugby versus Princeton on 10/3/15 @12:00PM
- Field Hockey versus Penn on 10/3/15 @ 12:00PM
- Women’s Volleyball versus Penn on 10/3/15 @ 5:00PM
- Men’s Soccer versus New Hampshire on 10/6/15 @ 7:00PM

## Man Down

With Siyani Chambers out, the Crimson's status remains uncertain.

By RAMTIN TALEBI

In early September, the Harvard basketball team received some devastating news: they would be losing senior point guard and co-captain Siyani Chambers to an ACL tear. Chambers will take the 2015-2016 year off both academically and athletically to recover from the injury, retaining his last year of eligibility. The Crimson, who last year shared the Ivy League title and advanced to the NCAA tournament after a playoff with Yale, will have a tough time filling the place of Chambers. Senior Agunwa Okolie agrees, “[Siyani] was our most important player.” On a team predicted on their ability to defend on one end and take care of the ball on the other (Harvard gave up only 7 turnovers compared to UNC’s 18 in their two-point season ending loss in the first round of the NCAA tournament), Chambers was at the helm of it all.

In 2014-2015, Chambers averaged 9.9 ppg, 4.3 apg. He had a team-high 34.5 minutes per game and was the Crimson’s leading free-throw shooter at 81.4%. The question now stands: who will fill the void left by Chambers?

Okolie doesn’t feel like it will be one person. “You can’t really replace Siyani because of the impact he’s had since he’s been here. It’ll be a team effort to fill his shoes.” Okolie admits, however, that the Crimson will miss Chambers on the defensive end. “We’ll lose a little bit of quickness.” Chambers averaged 1.5 SPG last season, second to only Wesley Saunders (who has since graduated), but Okolie remains hopeful that the Crimson will keep their defensive poise. “We’ve got to communicate. Obviously we’ve got to stay in shape as well. But as long as we stick to our defensive principles,

I think we should be fine.” When asked about who would assume the starting point guard position, Okolie responded, “We don’t really know yet. We haven’t really had our first official practice so the lineup is pretty unclear. Obviously, Tommy’s a point guard, but we’ll see.”

Tommy McCarthy was one of Harvard’s backcourt recruits this past year and could prove to be key in making up for Siyani’s absence. A 6-foot-1, 175-pound guard out of La Costa Canyon High School in Southern California, McCarthy averaged 19.6 ppg, 4.4 apg, 4.1 rbg, and 1.3 spg in his senior season, according to MaxPreps.com. As fate would have it, his freshman year at Harvard is shaping up to be just like Chambers’.

In 2012, starting point guard and senior Brandyn Curry announced he would be taking that year off of school, and so a young Chambers filled the spot that was left. In his first season, Chambers became one of the most pivotal players for the Crimson. He averaged 12.4 ppg and a team high 5.7 apg on his way to an Ivy League title and an incredible tournament run that saw a No. 14 Harvard upset No. 3 New Mexico. Chambers hasn’t slowed down since, being the team’s second leading scorer the past three years. When asked about the parallel between the two players, Okolie answered, “[Tommy] has the opportunity to do the same thing as Siyani and play really well. I’m looking forward to seeing how he grows.”

Nonetheless, with Chambers gone, the Crimson will be without all three top scorers and minute-getters from last year (Steve Mondou-Missi and Wesley Saunders both graduated in 2015). When asked how

he and senior captain Evan Cummins will rally the team together, Okolie affirmed, “We’re just telling them that everyone has to be ready. Upperclassmen are taking a larger leadership role. Evan, Corbin, Zena, and I have just been more vocal in the weight room and during practice. It’s going to be a tough season, but everyone has to seize the opportunity to show people what we’re made of.” Junior point guard Matt Frascilla could see increased minutes with Chambers out, as could freshmen shooting guard Corey Johnson. Sophomores Chris Egi and Andre Chatfield could have breakout years, and the Crimson might need exactly that in order to retain their Ivy League title in a conference that is as competitive as ever.

“Every Ivy League team will give you challenges. Every team does something especially well,” Okolie admits. “Each game comes down to your team and how you play on that day. We’ve just got to stay true to our system and execute.” With the caliber of conference players like reigning MVP Justin Sears’16 of Yale and reigning scoring leader and point guard Maodo Lo’16 of Columbia, the Crimson will undoubtedly have a tougher time this year getting to the NCAA tournament, especially without Chambers.

But Okolie remains steadfast looking forward, “Our goals haven’t changed. We just have to stick to our principles and focus on ourselves. If we do that, everything will take care of itself.”

*Ramtin Talebi '18 (ramtintalebi@college.harvard.edu) wishes luck to both the team in the upcoming season and Chambers in his recovery.*

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# captured and shot



by Albert Murzakhanov in London, England