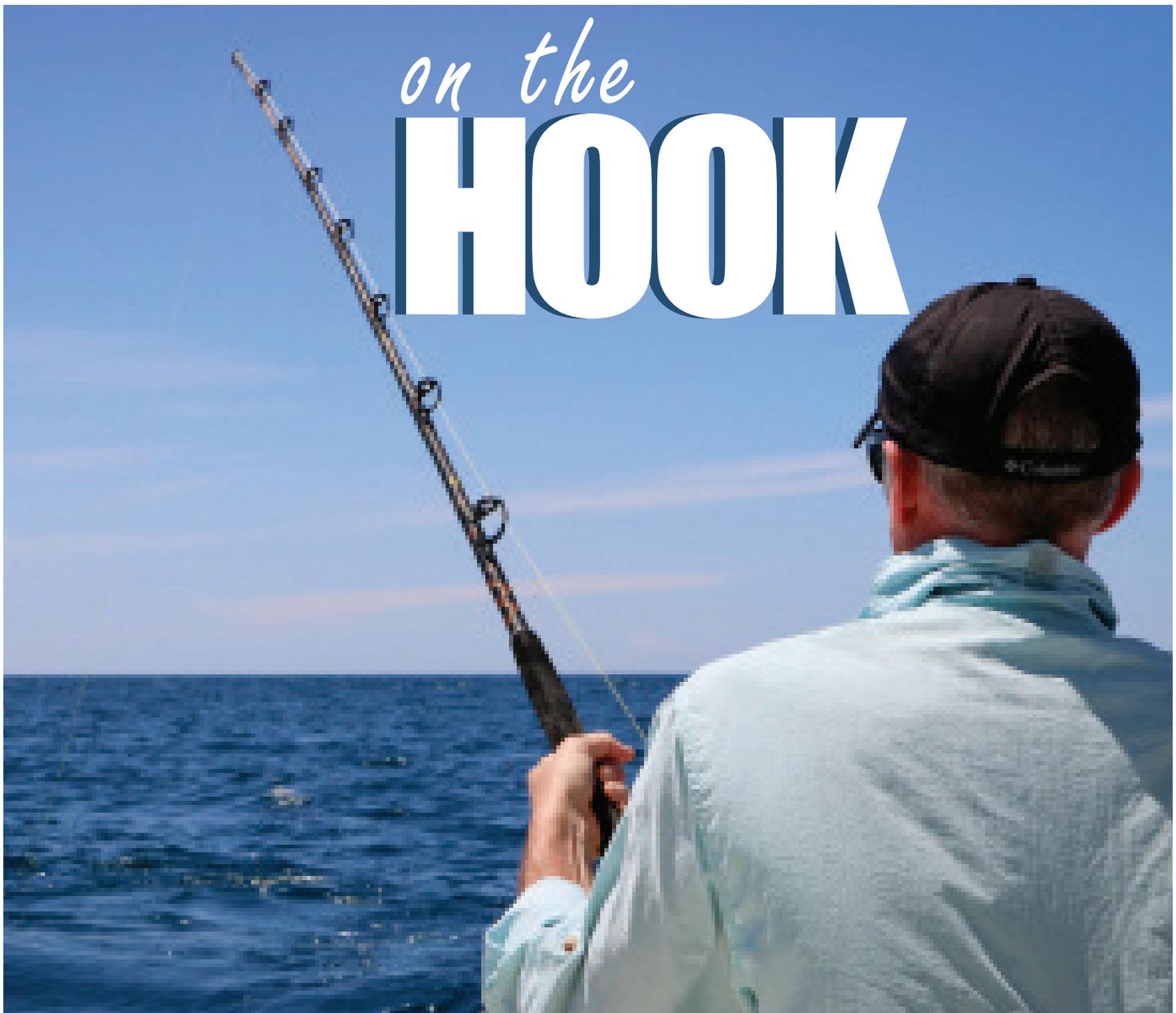


THE HARVARD
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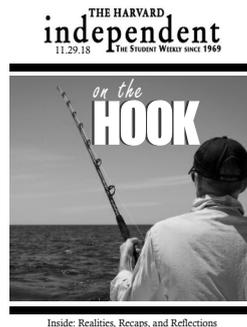


Inside: Realities, Recaps, and Reflections

The Harvard Independent

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The Indy is holding people accountable!

Cover design by Isabelle Blair '21

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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 End is Near!...

For Shopping Week

By JILLY CRONIN

As the end of the semester approaches, many students begin to reflect on the past three months and wonder whether it has lived up to their expectations. One of the many aspects of our experiences on which students begin to reflect are the courses – especially since Monday, when the school announced that Q had officially opened. When reflecting on courses, students often compare their actual experience and enjoyment of the class to what they had expected when enrolling in the course at the end of Shopping Week. And, to the disappointment of most students, this may be the last semester in which an examination of the “transformative experience” that is Harvard and its courses is carried out in this way.

Since October, the administration has been discussing the possibility of ending “Shopping Week” – a Harvard tradition that allows students to “shop” courses during the first week of the semester. Students who read interesting course summaries on My.Harvard and rave reviews on the Q are able to witness first-hand the aspects of the course that cannot be captured in writing. The professor’s tone of voice, enthusiasm on the subject, and overall personality are features of a class that decide many student’s enjoyment and absorption of the material. For these reasons, the Undergraduate Council has been in communication with the administration to make known the students’ feelings on

Shopping Week and the pros and cons of getting rid of it. On November 9, 2018, Professor Bernard Nickel sent a mass email updating students on the progress of these discussions. He summarizes the student’s feelings towards shopping week in a series of bullet points. The top three sentiments he summarizes are:

- “The current system gives students a week of intellectual freedom, a chance to imagine themselves in many different ways. It is a catalyst for exploration;

- “Seeing a course in action gives very fine-grained information about a course, such as whether a student can connect to a professor, whether the course is pitched at a level appropriate to the student, and what the classroom dynamics will be like; [and,]

- “The current system gives plenty of time to look at the course catalog over break.”

Professor Nickel emphasizes in his email that the University has not made any decisions regarding shopping period nor has it “debated any concrete proposal” for a replacement. He insists that “student feedback is a critical component to this process” and that they take the opinions of students in this matter very seriously. This, though a nice sentiment, is reminiscent of the statements that the administration made in regard to getting rid of “Harvard Time” and sanctioning USGSOs. The school has gotten rid of Harvard Time (a difficult adjustment for students) and

implemented the USGSO sanctions, even though the UC released a report stating that most students were against the sanctions.

Another argument, one that is oftentimes “felt” more than stated, is that through the current period of “transformation,” Harvard is losing some of the quirks that make it unique. As one individual, interviewed by the Independent, puts it: “Things like Harvard time become more than just a 7 minute delay or extra time. It becomes a way of life, and when I think of Harvard and tell people about it, I never go ‘the classes and education are just marvelous.’ Instead, I tell them about the things that make it different from the schools they attend - things like Harvard Time and Shopping Week. Something about having the time to ponder, explore and individually choose classes speaks to the character of Harvard. It’s not easy to put this feeling into words, but as these things slowly slip away, I get worried that when I come back and visit this place, it’ll look like every other college in the country.” Such a sentiment has the potential to add a certain urgency to the already stout student body’s resistance to the loss of Shopping Week.

Jilly Cronin '21 (croninj@college.harvard.edu) loves Shopping Week and doesn't want it to be canceled.

Your Goose Is **Cooked**

It's time to publicly shame our peers

By AIDAN FITZSIMONS

Francesca Cornero '19

This article is going to ruffle some feathers.

The Ivy League Meme page is full of memes poking gentle fun at wearers of the Canada Goose jackets which are so ubiquitous at places like Harvard when it gets cold. These memes indicate a general understanding of how ridiculous this phenomenon is, yet they also normalize it. As a community, Harvard still supports the wearers of these \$1000 jackets. We talk to friends every day who wear them, and say nothing antagonistic. After all, these are our friends. We don't want to put ourselves on the line and make them feel bad. But it's time to change the culture around this issue. It can no longer be socially acceptable to wear these jackets. If we tacitly support the wearers, then we become responsible for the moral implications. What are these implications?

The choice to wear a \$1000 jacket is primarily a statement of conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous consumption is when someone purchases a commodity for the primary goal of displaying wealth through the use of that commodity. It is a way of saying "I have enough money to spend an irrational amount for a brand patch, just to indicate my excessive wealth." The simple fact is that owning a \$1000 jacket is absurd and unjustifiable. Jackets are for warmth. Anyone from a cold place like New England knows that the secret to warmth is



layers. You can be warmer in a simple outfit of three layers, wearing a \$10 shirt, \$30 light layer, and \$60 heavy layer, than you would be in a Canada Goose. If the idea of wearing layers terrifies you, then a luxurious \$150 jacket could still provide you with nearly equivalent warmth and comfort. The extra \$850 is a pure waste of money, with the only two real benefits being a) a performative

display of excess wealth and b) conforming with others who also like to display excess wealth.

It's how unspecial these jackets are here that really drives me crazy. To pay extra to conform with others in a grotesquely prodigal performance, as a flock, is almost as comic as it is tragic. And it is tragic. Every day, I see

Your Goose is Cooked, continued.

people wearing red-and-white patches worth \$1000 walk past familiar homeless faces in Harvard Square, ignoring them as best they can. This should enrage anyone who claims to care about those less privileged than themselves. The wasted \$850 of each jacket could keep at least 10 homeless people (who know how to layer) warm all winter. It's as immoral as it is inefficient, and an insane example of how inequality in America has increased immoderately. Even if the jackets weren't also connected with ethically dubious coyote trapping, they would still be unethical to wear. And you should know that I am judging you for it. I am looking down on you for your choice to waste money so thoughtlessly for conformity. It slightly lowers my esteem of you the minute we meet, because you look like just another privileged baby bird protected from the cold of the real world by a warm nest egg.

I understand that, for most Goose owners, it was the parents who bought the jacket with the worthy intention of keeping their loved ones warm. But by wearing it, the student is still supporting everything that the jacket represents.

This is also personal for your fellow students. 65% of Harvard students come from the top 15% of U.S. income, which is an increasingly wealthy and disconnected slice of the population. The upper and upper-middle classes increasingly hoard

educational and economic opportunity at the expense of those below, and Harvard is a primary place where this stratification is evident. For those students who are from more average or underprivileged backgrounds, the Harvard social life is full of constant, inescapable reminders of the cultural dominance of this wealthy cohort. It's broadcast in how people talk, how they spend their breaks, how often they eat in the Square, what they did in high school, and what they wear. Class discourse in America is famously obfuscatory, due to our historic worship of wealth and stories of success. It's not talked about honestly in the public sphere. This allows bubbles of ignorance to develop, so that students whose parents make 6 figures can claim to be "middle class" with a straight face (the median household income is under \$60,000). The increasing disconnect of Harvard students from socioeconomic reality has negative consequences as we go on to take important roles in the real world, and allows privileged students to continue blithely reifying unfair power structures for personal gain rather than using their privileges to help improve the lives of others. Harvard betrays Dexter Gate every time that it allows consulting and finance firms to poach half of our brightest young minds in service of wealth, and this is not unconnected to our acceptance of Canada Goose.

I am going to start putting my social self on the line and shame my friends. Of course,

I'm ignorant of the even more expensive jackets out there owned by the super-rich, who are also quite prominent at Harvard. These don't have the flashy logos that are so indicative of aspirational, conformist bourgeois culture, and so I won't know to shame you when I see you, sadly. But I do know the Goose logo, and what it represents, so I'll start there, and I hope you all join me. Social pressure is the only way that cultures really change, and we are all responsible.

You should know that I still love you, no matter what. When I call you out, it's because I want to help you. If you own a Canada Goose, that doesn't mean you're a bad person in any essential way. But every time you wear it, you are making a morally wrong choice, plain and simple. Ignorance is understandable, but not something to be preserved. Make a choice to do better, and I will be so proud of you. If you have a Canada Goose, sell it. Buy a cheaper, equivalent jacket. You'll have a ton of money left over. Buy yourself something nice, with utility not derived from hierarchy over others. Maybe give half of the difference to Alistair outside of the Harvard Book Store. It would literally change his life.

Aidan Fitzsimons '20 (aidan_fitzsimons@college.harvard.edu) eagerly awaits your angry emails

An Open Letter to Writers of Textbooks

By MICHAEL KIELSTRA

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have just finished your most recent book, and found it to be just the thing for me. The text was clear, the examples were useful, and it was required reading for my course, so there was that as well. There was just one problem.

Do you see what I did there? That's what it feels like when you're reading along, following the logic, and then, right after the final point is made, it just stops. The argument might be finished, but, from a reader's perspective, it's incredibly jarring just to have a last sentence, a last theorem, a last quote from the text you're analyzing, and then nothing.

Which brings me to what my problem is. Your book had no conclusion. You went right up to the end of what you were saying.

I bet you were expecting me to say "and then you just stopped". I did it again! There was no need to say that you just stopped after you finished saying whatever it was you were saying. It was clear from the context, so I didn't bother to put it in, because apparently that's how we all write these days.

Seriously, though, next time, please give me some kind of soft wrapping-up, at least a paragraph. Give me some way for me to pat myself on the back, congratulate myself for finishing the book, and properly decide how

I felt about it. Let me pause and ponder the greater implications of what I've just read, rather than just thinking "Oh, I guess that's where it finishes then". Give me at least a closing sentence or two, please!

The purpose of a good conclusion is twofold. First, it tells me where what I've read should sit, relative to everything else I know. This is where one concluding line I actually saw once, "To a mathematics devotee, their mind is a solitaire game in search for the first step to climb the rainbow", falls down.1 (Well, it falls down in a lot of ways, but this is the biggie.) If the author had just written "Great, now you know more about what my paper was about; go forth and do research," I would have had the chance to step back and say "What else do I know about this? Where else have I seen information that has a bearing on it?" A conclusion is meant to be an invitation to take stock of what you have and work out where you go from here.

Second, a conclusion gives me some emotional closure. Call me old-fashioned, but I like my textbooks to be readable as well as erudite. If *Pride and Prejudice* ended just after Elizabeth rejected Mr. Darcy, that would be no good. You have to draw the story arc all the way to the end, and then make sure the reader knows the end has come. Even if the end has, indeed, arrived, I won't be satisfied until you tell me. Without a conclusion, there's always the nagging feeling that the guy who sold me

the book ripped the last few pages out while he was bagging it. Rationally, I know I've got everything I'll ever get from your book. Non-rationally (not irrationally), I don't, and I never will, because you have no conclusion.

It doesn't have to be long or fancy. I don't need or want pages and pages extra. You're quite right: much of the book should be devoted to important, concrete ideas. That's why I bought it, after all. It's perfectly possible to have a very satisfactory conclusion in even a paragraph.

Check this one out:

I mean no disrespect to any part of the text of your book as it stands. I just feel it would be strengthened by the addition of a little bit at the end, allowing me to both intellectually and subconsciously better understand how your book works as a unified whole within a larger field. This strengthens both your text and my understanding at the same time. I look forward to seeing your later works, most of which, I am sure, will now be perfectly concluded in exactly the correct style.

Kindest regards,

Michael Kielstra

Michael Kielstra '22 (pmkielstra@college.harvard.edu) eagerly awaits the new era of textbooks with satisfactory conclusions.

Classes I Wish I Could Shop

Some musings on the things Harvard Professors

By ALAYA AYALA

The week after Thanksgiving is often the week when all hell starts to break loose for Harvard college students. Suddenly every essay is due, final projects are in the works, and Reading Period is just around the corner. Procrastinating is probably one of the main causes of stress during this time. Unfortunately however, that doesn't stop me from doing it.

During one of these fits of procrastination, I decided to start looking at classes that I could shop for next year. I found myself increasingly dissatisfied with the classes available for next term, and for that reason, I have compiled a list of classes that I wish Harvard would offer.

1. How to be a better friend

I think one of the things I never really grasped growing up was how to balance my social life with my academic responsibilities. Being at Harvard for a year unfortunately has yet to enlighten me on the subject. I have to wonder if I could learn to be a better friend if my grade were on the line.

I imagine a class like this would teach me a lot of really useful skills. Maybe I'd learn how to prioritize my relationships with other people over my readings on

some occasions. Perhaps I would learn how to be a better listener, or even learn how to offer constructive advice. I might even hope to learn how to pursue this "fun" that I hear people mention every once in a while. With the threat of finals lurking on the horizon, I certainly don't recall what the word even means, let alone how to actually integrate it into my life.

2. How to talk to your family after you haven't seen them for three months

I think it may be safe to say that after the awkwardness that comes with Thanksgiving and having to explain your choice of concentration to skeptical family members at home, some may be weary to do so again without further instruction on the matter. I am among that group, for my awkwardness seems to know no bounds. If there were a course at Harvard instructing us on small talk around the holiday dinner table, I dare say that many would leap at the opportunity to educate themselves.

Perhaps this course would teach us how to safely navigate through tense political conversations. Maybe we would learn the finer details of constructing a good joke to break any awkward silences. If we're lucky, we might even learn how

to keep up a conversation through the desire to run away and eat our holiday dinners alone and in peace. If Harvard were to offer a class like this, I would most certainly consider shopping it, and, if I were so lucky as to be permitted to lottery in, I may even take it.

3. How to get a job

Now, I know the Office of Career services and several other groups and departments on campus host many wonderfully instructive workshops on this matter, however, when faced with choosing between going to one of these or indulging in some Netflix binge watching and studying for classes, I often find myself choosing to not go to these workshops. If my GPA were at stake, I'm sure I'd be much more persuaded to enroll in one of these classes. If I'm lucky, I may even get a job out of it, just imagine!

I'd think that a course like this would provide me with tons of important resources and skills that I would need on my job quest. I'd be very interested in perhaps learning how to write a cover letter that doesn't sound like I copy and pasted large chunks of it from my college essay. Maybe we'd learn how to tailor

Classes I Wish I Could Shop, continued.

a resume to a specific job, or even how to upload that resume to various job seeking platforms such as LinkedIn or the Crimson Careers website! If we're truly lucky, the course may even teach us how to overcome our tendencies to be incoherent and nervous during job interviews. I'm sure if this course were offered as a gen-ed, it would very quickly fall into the favored "gem" category that so many Harvard students appreciate.

4. How to date

Now, this topic may be sensitive for some, but in my opinion it's absolutely necessary for some people to receive some enlightenment on the topic. Again, this includes myself, naturally. I feel that a class that teaches one the finer points of online dating, navigating a first date, and maintaining a healthy relationship with someone would be invaluable to Harvard Students.

For my own part, I would hope that the class would teach us how to plan dates. Event planning on such a small scale would really force us to pay attention to detail and scheduling, and would surely prove a very useful skill to have later in life. I'd also hope that the class would teach us how to transition from inevitable small talk to deeper conversation topics

without offending our dates. It may even be useful for us to receive instruction on how to give our partners gifts, since this action can often be fraught with peril if we haven't been dating our partners for very long. This class, if the syllabus is planned correctly, could prove to be one of the most popular ones on campus if Harvard were to offer it.

5. How to file taxes and do other adult things

I'm sure I'm not alone when I say that filing my taxes during my freshman year at Harvard was an absolute nightmare to do on my own. What with the confusion of having to wait for all of my part-time jobs to send me my W-2s, having to gather my sensitive documents, and having to choose a platform with which to file my taxes, I was an absolute wreck. I'm pretty sure even today that I drastically messed up during the process, however, there's no taking it back now.

If Harvard had offered a class on this subject last year, or even offered it this coming term, I would jump on it in a heartbeat. Nothing is more disconcerting than finding yourself lost among your parents' tax documents while trying to navigate through FAFSA and the CSS profile. And what of applying for credit cards and car loans? Surely a class like this would be able to walk us through

even the most hazardous aspects of building our credit scores. Imagine if they taught us how to begin to navigate the stock market! I can't imagine that there'd be anyone who wasn't even a little interested in an Adulting 101 course that could bolster our GPAs while teaching us how to not irrevocably destroy our budding finances.

Alaya Ayala '21 (Alaya_ayala@college.harvard.edu) is looking forward to this term ending so she can shop new classes next term.

A Collection of Poetry

Untitled Poem

By JOSE ESPINEL

So many nights
I'd branded myself Mycenaean
And wondered in silence
Whether Helen might visit my dreams If I walked down Allenby Street
And continued into the sea.

I swore I'd stay there,
Devoting my days on Elba
To studying the taxonomy of stones And other enlightened arts
Of great men who never bathed
Until with labored certainty I'd say: This is grey.

And so much toil would make me a rational man.
And rational men do not weep at her memory.
And rational men find beauty in numbers and stones.

But if a letter from Josephine Spoke of her living –
By some miracle returned to Paris, I'd be a rational man,
Abandon the stones,
Forgive myself.

MMXVIII

By REMEDY RYAN

the song says
“modernity has failed us”
and we bang our heads
in agreement
what else can save us
narcissistic loners
in the underbelly of empire
yearning for love

In the Rain

By ABIGAIL KOERNER

It's raining always when I'm with you
And not because I'm feeling blue
It's raining raining
And I can't see
I squint my eyes - there's you and me
Singing and dancing
Kissing in the rain
I said my favorite place was solitude
But that was insane!
Insane like puddles splashing
Water drip drops down my face
You are my favorite place
But my heart will still race
Love the chase

INDY SPORTS

In Case You Never Made it...

A recap of the Harvard-Yale Game

By GRAHAM WALTER

Harvard's late rise in the Game this year reminded many of the late comeback made 50 years ago in 1968 to tie the score. The historical significance of that game is one many at Harvard take for granted, but it was no doubt the main event going on for all of Cambridge back in the day. Between Vietnam, the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and the unrest from Yale admitting their first class of women, the nationally ranked Yale team and the undefeated Harvard had plenty of distractions outside the field.

The Game took place at Fenway Park with the team sharing a sideline up against the Green Monster. This was the first time The Game was held off campus since 1894 in Hampden Park. At Fenway, the Harvard student section was stuck beyond the Pesky Pole, all out in right field. As the clock hit zero, it was at that section where the Crimson celebrated after its highest scoring game in the Game's 143 year history.

Tom Stewart, starting quarterback for Harvard, threw for 312 yards and three touchdowns. The Crimson also ran an additional 266 yards. Before this year, Yale had beaten Harvard in back to back games, so the upperclassman on the team wanted this win for payback.

Both students and players were initially upset about the game taking place off-campus. In the weeks leading up to the game, players feared that there would not be support, and the seniors especially wanted to play at their own Stadium. The game was sold out, and plenty of students took buses over to the game. When the players

got to walk around Fenway Park, however, it was an exciting experience that they could rally behind.

The game was close until the final quarter. Tony Reno, the Yale head coach, expressed his thoughts on the game, saying that the Bulldogs just "weren't able to continue to match points." Harvard scored 17 points in the fourth, even after Stewart came out of the game with a right hip injury. Jake Smith came in the next play and handed it off to Devin Darrington to score a 16-yard touchdown on the next play.

Darrington ran for 91 yards and two touchdowns. He would have had another, but he was penalized for wagging his finger at the Yale defenders after a 27-yard score in the fourth, causing the touchdown to be voided and giving the Crimson a 15 yard penalty. Tyler Adams ran for 125 yards including a 62-yard touchdown in the second quarter that started shifting the momentum in Harvard's favor.

Harvard's defense showed up to play. Yale

was down 21-14 midway through the game when O'Connor, Yale's quarterback, passed the ball to Klubnik for a long gain. He was taken down at the 2-yard line. On second down, Harvard tackled Dudek in the backfield and brought Yale back to the 8-yard line. The next play, O'Connor passed to Dudek for a gain of 5 where he was immediately brought down by Harvard. Targeting was called on Harvard, however, and Ogsbury was ejected from the game. The two teams, sharing the same sideline, began to shout at each other until the coaches intervened.

Early in the fourth, the band played Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" and from that point on, Harvard took it away. This game concluded the season for both Harvard and Yale. Harvard finishes the season 6-4 and 3rd in the Ivy League.

Graham Walter '21 (grahamwalter@college.harvard.edu) is grateful for his remaining years at Harvard and the chance to see the game return to his home stadium.



Isabelle Blair '21

INDY SPORTS

What's Really at Stake

Sports in the digital age

By TUSHAR DWIVEDI

In the modern day era, sports events oftentimes incite a wide variety of journalistic pieces, ranging from ESPN's live, explicitly factual injury and score updates to reactions and commentary both in and post-game on major media outlets. Simultaneously, social media provides an open and widespread outlet for any individual to entertain others while gathering and spreading information. This exchange of information, however, is oftentimes immediate and reactionary, appealing to those who want to comment on events that happen live, and contains little proof or verification. Speculation, gossip, misinformation and prediction are rampant across platforms such as Twitter during sporting events.

A typical example would be a sports injury. In the case of Kerryon Johnson, an NFL Running Back from the Detroit Lions who injured his leg mid-game, Twitter was alive with discussion mere seconds after the injury occurred. While the discussion may have sparked happiness or sadness within the reader, the core satisfaction was derived from reading instant news. As with all sports injuries, for the true information, an individual would wait for the post-game interview and the subsequent ESPN or Yahoo Sports article to provide the final, accurate statement. Such outlets, therefore, distinguish themselves from social media by providing a level of certainty and therefore carrying a level of responsibility to readers.

Issues of injury, however, are highly distinct from in-game situations that call into

question an individual's reputation. During this Harvard-Yale game, Devin Darrington, a Harvard Sophomore Running Back, was shown on video wagging his finger at a Yale defender as he decelerated towards the right pylon. The consequence was a media frenzy, with headlines such as "Harvard RB Gives Middle Finger to Yale Defender on TD" from CBS Sports. The fact that this was a rivalry game only fueled the fire for such headlines.

Darrington went on to score 2 more TD's and received social redemption once a Harvard student published a picture proving that it was his *index finger* and not his middle finger that was raised. Publications such as Deadspin, which had originally reported on the raised middle finger, went on to publish retractions and corrections. More interesting, however, is exploring the nature of why the potential raised finger was so inflammatory across a number of media outlets and social media platforms.

After studying numerous Twitter posts, sports articles, and comments on sports articles, there emerged a few clear, common ideas that seemed to persist through commentary. The first was simply the fact that this was a rivalry game, one of many that would occur in late November; this immediately adds intensity to any potentially villainous act. A second reason, however, is significantly more interesting; there was something inherently special about *ivy league* conflict and drama during the game. As Deadspin put it in their retraction, "with nothing but juicy Ivy League beef on the

brain, I joined in the frenzy and quickly blogged the clip." Comments on the article supported this idea, either condemning Harvard and Yale graduates for their entitlement or claiming that only the Yale individuals were true gentlemen. Given the public perception of Harvard and Yale students, any hint of inappropriate behavior is quick to gather negative attention, highlighting the microscope these and similar institutions around the country exist under.

The fairness of the above can be debated to no end; the potential damage that can be caused is endless. If it were not for the timely release of the photograph proving Darrington's innocence, the only remnant of the debacle would be the sophomore's word against a mountain of media and social media discussion. This, combined with the fact that most individuals hold published articles as truth as well as the immediate-gratification nature of modern news, forces newspapers and journalists to ponder how to best balance the need for accuracy, speed, differentiated content, and views. We at the Independent are grateful for the resolution of Darrington's case, and hope this moment serves as a necessary reminder of the human stakes at hand with every article published.

Tushar Dwivedi '20 (tushar_dwivedi@college.harvard.edu) wants everyone to remember the person behind the athlete.

the independent



“Catch & Release”

By ISABELLE BLAIR