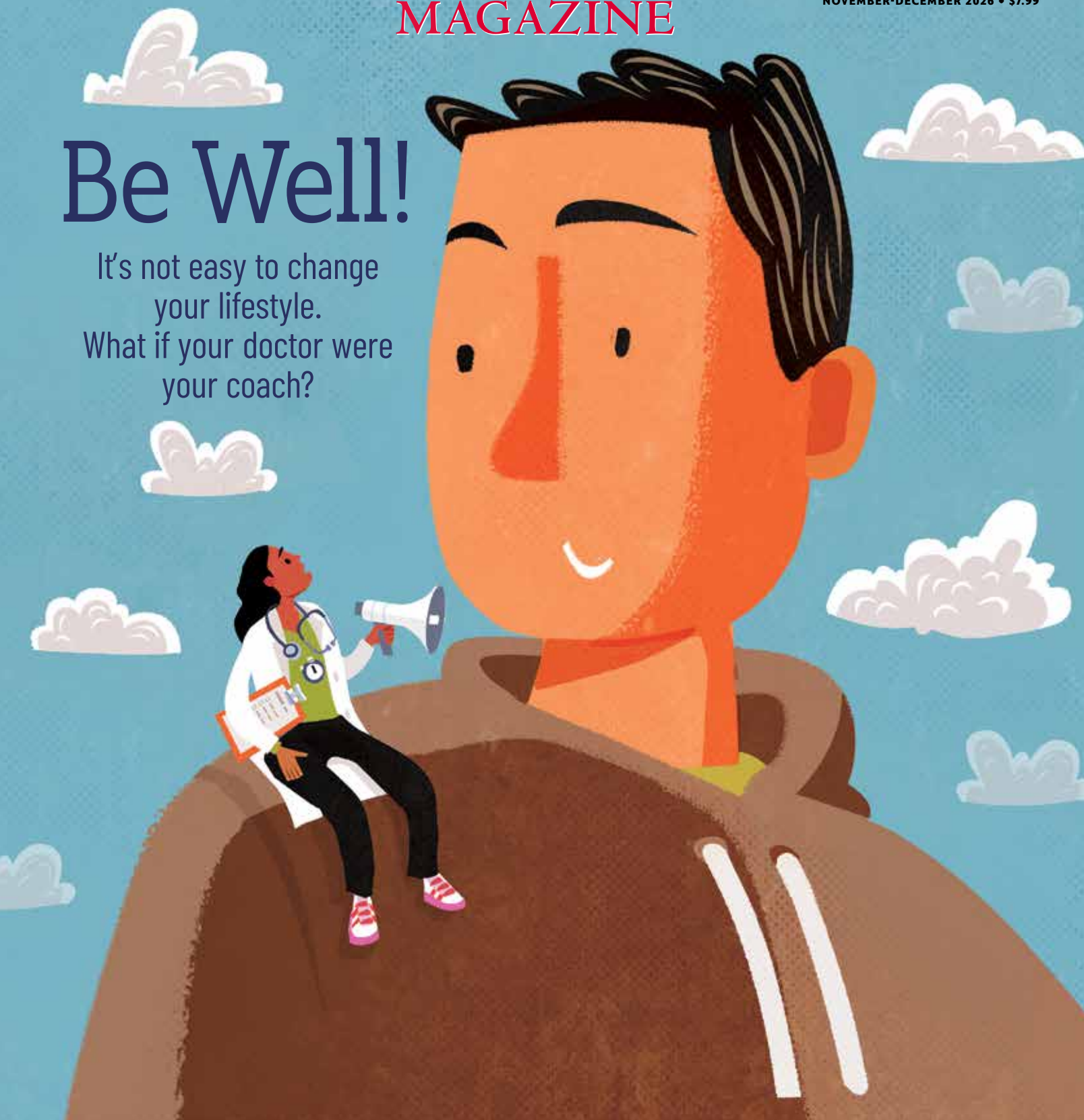
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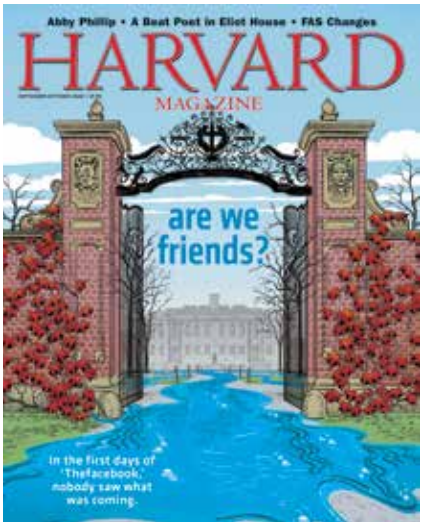
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Cambridge 02138

A beat poet in Eliot House, Abby Phillip, campus controversies



GREGORY CORSO

I READ THE ARTICLE about Beat poet Gregory Corso's semi-unauthorized stay in Eliot House in 1954 ("The Trespassing Poet of Eliot House," September-October 2026, p. 36) with great interest. My mother had a close friend who was romantically involved with Corso, on and off, during the 1970s. Peggy—a free spirit who lived in the Chelsea Hotel, which at the time was the epicenter of New York's counterculture scene—told me about a visit the two of them made to Harvard, during which, under the influence of some mind-altering substance, they stumbled into Memorial Hall only to find a blood drive in progress. The combination of the Gothic revival architecture, stained glass windows, and people laid out on tables with tubes drawing their blood freaked them out in a memorable way.

I found the story amazing, not least because I was a resident of Eliot House, albeit not until 1975. And although John H. Finley Jr. was no longer the master of Eliot House when I lived there, I was lucky enough to take Hum 3 with him, as Corso also did. Thanks for clearing up a mystery and reviving some old memories.

NATALIE WEXLER '76

WHAT A BRILLIANT, illuminating piece on Gregory Corso's literary development at Harvard. This vivid portrait provided a missing chapter for me in Corso's creation myth, as I was a teaching assistant for him at Naropa University during the late 1980s.

I was assigned to Corso by MFA program director and poet Anne Waldman and another cofounder of Naropa, poet Allen Ginsberg. I would soon learn my duties had no similarity to my previous roles with Beat novelist and consummate gentleman William Burroughs '36 or gracious playwright/poet Michael McClure. First, I had to pick up "Mad Gregory" from the airport, as he returned from Italy disheveled and alienated after a forced seven-year exile from the United States.

He demanded that I take him to Denver's most dangerous neighborhood, so he could procure non-prescription drugs. I then chaperoned him to an informal gathering of Naropa students, where he de-

Thanks to an Ad Man

Bob Fitta retired on September 30, concluding 28 years as *Harvard Magazine*'s advertising director. Perhaps no job involves taking "no" for an answer more than ad sales. But Fitta succeeded by listening carefully, discerning clients' needs, and working toward solutions. Despite the dizzying digital disruptions in their market, he and his team managed year after year to secure revenue essential to publishing this magazine. In doing so, they have also benefited readers by bringing alumni together through vehicles like the classifieds, and by enabling local and national enterprises—and Harvard itself—to offer services to the Crimson community.

Fitta's skills played well throughout our organization. That was especially evident during the bimonthly layout of each issue: a complex puzzle that involved compromising among presenting authors' and artists' work to best effect, accommodating advertisers, and arriving at something our printer could manufacture. When we became stuck, Fitta most often found a creative way to untangle the knot. He has been a model of patience, practicality, and good humor, especially when those traits were needed most.



The long hours he spent commuting from his New Hampshire home to 7 Ware Street can now be devoted, with his wife Lisa, also recently retired, to their beloved daughters' families, their four grandsons, and such common passions as college hockey. Bob goes with our gratitude for a hard job incredibly well done, on readers' behalf, and our best wishes. *—The Editors*

Photograph by Niko Yaitanes/Harvard Magazine

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scribed to the group how he committed an unspeakable crime on the balcony of a Hell's Kitchen tenement during his troubled youth. Next was an all-night poker game with ragtag poets consuming copious amounts of cocktails and beer, after which I put him to bed.

Upon return late the next morning, I was at wit's end making sure he was ready for the next day's major reading in a large, sold-out Boulder auditorium. Waldman and Ginsberg worried about how he could pull it off, but he delivered a memorable reading of his highly descriptive and provocative verse, punctuated with sublime poems from memory of Shelley and Keats. Residency salvaged.

Thank you for providing the fascinating genesis of a hungry talent forged in the improbable crucible of foster care, Dannemora Prison, and Eliot House.

Warren Karlenzig

I wanted to commend the article on Gregory Corso in Eliot House. It was as unexpected as he was offbeat (pun intended). Constantine Valhouli writes very well about the cast of characters, many of whom gave candid interviews. I suspect there were more anecdotes too off-color to repeat, but the ones he recounted were fascinating. If Corso had really belonged at Eliot House as an undergraduate, I bet he would eventually have been featured in your Vita series.

Malcolm Mitchell '57

Your article on Gregory Corso reminded me of a reading/performance by Allen Ginsberg at the Quincy House Arts Festival in 1973. Corso was in the audience, and he heckled Ginsberg a bit. It was all in good fun, as one would expect from two old friends.

John McCarthy '75

ABBY PHILLIP

Your profile of Abby Phillip and her *NewsNight* program ("The Referee," September-October 2026, p. 40) calls her guests "opinionated savants from the left and right." In reality, they're almost entirely partisan hacks, as your typical guest list shows. It also claims her guests talk to each other; in reality, they talk *at*

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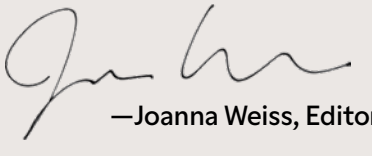
As it wrestles with AI, will Harvard encourage students to do hard things?

Move over, grade inflation. If A's were the hot topic at Harvard last year—still drawing passionate letters to this magazine—the fiercest conversations this academic year are destined to be about AI.

Already, AI has dominated the talk about teaching and learning this semester, and not just because of the doomsaying drumbeat outside the gates. In early statements, President Alan M. Garber and Danoff dean of the College David Deming positioned themselves as artificial intelligence optimists, encouraging students to embrace AI and use it, in Deming's words, to "deepen learning" (p. 17). Both argue, in effect, that the right approach to a new technology isn't to bury your head the sand, but to navigate the possibilities and sort out the boundaries. But the skeptics are loud; nearly two-thirds of the faculty in the *Crimson*'s annual survey cited AI as a negative force in the classroom. Op-eds, on and off campus, warn that elite colleges are abandoning the liberal arts. The subject is roiling universities everywhere—most notably at Dartmouth, where the administration recently launched a review of the provost's use of AI in public writing. (The furor took off when the student newspaper ran his work through an AI detector.)

At Harvard, AI is changing how undergraduates think about their future, but not always in expected ways. Yes, there has been a marked drop in computer science concentrators. But the philosophy department—the chefs' chef of the humanities—is not only thriving but growing. It doesn't hurt that there's a sudden, AI-driven job market for people with a grounding in ethics. Still, as Schuyler Velasco's story shows (p. 38), the department has also exploited a campus-wide appetite for deep thoughts and heavy themes. Courses that seem exciting (about sex, happiness, hip hop!), that apply profound questions to real-life situations, turn out to be the gateway drug to Kant. And the students who fall in love with philosophy don't want to outsource their work to machines. The hard work of thinking is the draw.

Other stories in this issue touch on how to inspire people to do hard things: the doctors and medical students who coach patients into healthy behaviors (p. 26); the decorated athlete Juliet Thompson Hochman '89, who motivates contenders in grueling sports (p. 54). As the College readies its promised advisory guidelines on AI, the coaching model seems apt. Last year, through its grading policies, the College took a public stand on the value of an academic challenge. How strongly will Harvard make the case now for the sometimes-painful-but-gratifying process of writing, rewriting, and wrestling with ideas?



—Joanna Weiss, Editor

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each other. And finally, situations where everyone is talking simultaneously (basically shouting at each other) do not qualify as "debating," even if you add the adjective "fiery."

Steven L. Patt, Ph.D. '75

I've stopped watching Abby Phillip because she doesn't seem able or willing to control her panelists. They shout over and interrupt each other, leaving at least this watcher with a sense of chaos and rudeness. I'm all in favor of debate on the crucial issues confronting our country. It is essential for the survival of our democracy. Wouldn't it be more convincing to all sides if it were civil? I admit to being a senior citizen. It would not surprise me if others of my advanced age are skipping Abby and then tuning back in at 11 p.m. for more reasoned discussion led by Laura Coates.

Mary Kilgour, Ph.D. '82

FAS RESTRUCTURING

One dramatic change at Harvard over the last 50-odd years is the increase in administrative personnel ("At University Hall, the Restructuring Begins," September-October 2026, p. 9). Some of this may have been regrettable necessity, such as hiring more guards, more security, lawyers to defend against the government, and providing better Wi-Fi (which was not available when I graduated in 1971), but a lot of it grew out of the bureaucratic imperative: a bureaucrat's importance depends on the size of his staff. The article on the restructuring briefly mentions a

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goal "to protect teaching and research," but Humphrey Appleby, the permanent secretary of the department of administrative affairs on the 1950s British sitcom *Yes Minister*, would have described the process better and recommended a committee to study the issue.

James Kardon '71

ANTISEMITISM AND THE COURTS

It takes a certain audacity for Harvard to take umbrage at President Trump for fighting antisemitism on campus ("News in Brief," September-October 2026, p. 13). Harvard calls it the pretext of antisemitism, meaning Trump is using Harvard's antisemitism as an excuse to fight and defund Harvard. Could you imagine any other group suffering [the treatment Jewish students faced on campus after the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel] and the response being that the claimed outrage is pretext? If it was any other group, the campus elites would be applauding the government's effort to crack down on an *-ism*.

Harvard's Jewish enrollment has fallen by roughly half in the past decade to about 7 percent. As a Jewish alum, I actually hope Jewish enrollment declines to zero, as Jews reject Harvard instead of Harvard rejecting them. Any group treated in such a manner should vote with their feet and instead embrace schools

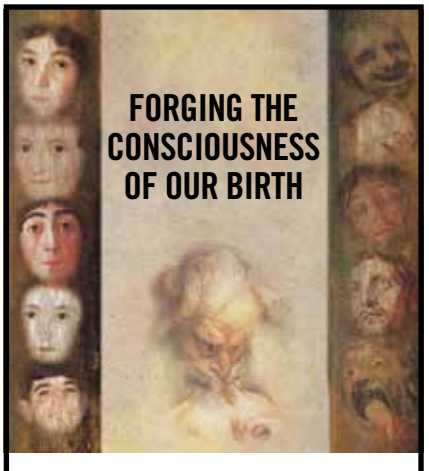
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William Choslovsky, J.D. '94

GRADE INFLATION

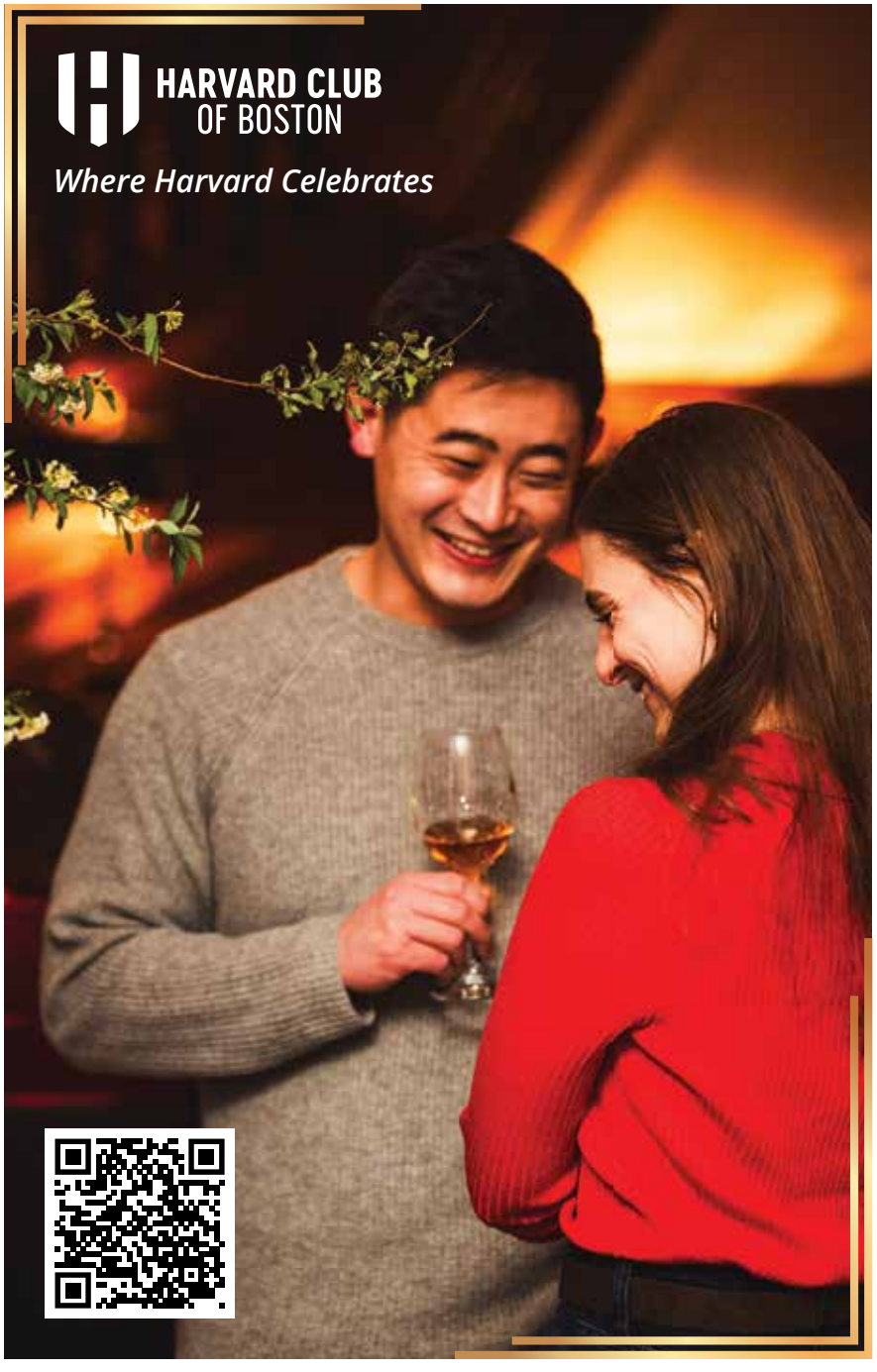
I've been working in the field of educational improvement in K-12 public schools for almost four decades. One of the threads woven through all those years is the question of how to appropriately and validly assess student learning and performance.

There have been thorough critiques of the A-F grading and testing systems, which originated from the late-nineteenth-century eugenics movement, yet for the most part we still use that archaic and inequitable system today. The good news is, there is substantial research and practice supporting a move away from that system to either competency-based assessment, which assesses against a set of criteria for mastery of content or skills development, or performance-based assessment that looks at public demonstrations of learning after lengthy work on a particular topic.

That Harvard would debate back and forth how to *modify* the A-F approach and not seem to notice that a whole other way of assessing learning is out there seems odd to me. Even odder is the choice to return, in effect, to a norm-referenced system that has mostly been discredited everywhere (i.e., a grade is given in comparison to the norm curve of your peer group, which is pretty much what limiting A's to 20 percent in any class means).

Surely Harvard professors can think more deeply, and in less of a confined binary, about grading than this decision suggests?

John M. Watkins, Ed.D. '97



ERRATA

Due to an editing error, a letter about the consequences of satellite constellations on light pollution (September-October 2026, p. 3) mischaracterized a recent action by the Federal Communications Commission. In approving a company's application to launch its first satellite, the agency deemed the company's deployment of a solar reflector—not the satellite itself—to be "beyond the scope of the Commission's authority to regulate."

You Answered

IN THE SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER ISSUE, WE ASKED YOU TO SHARE YOUR ATTITUDES TOWARD SOCIAL MEDIA.

Turn to page 72 for a sampling of responses—and a question about your healthy habits from this issue's cover story, "The Lifestyle Prescription" (page 26).

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When Government Funding Dropped, Harvard Found Partners

To keep supporting research, the University is expanding industry ties and investing its own funds.

by Lydialyle Gibson

In late September, Harvard announced that it was launching a major new initiative to bolster research at the University. The $150 million fund—"one of the largest direct investments in faculty research in Harvard's history," according to the announcement—is drawn from the University's own funds and includes plans for large-scale computing and AI infrastructure. It also calls for research proposals in several fast-growing scientific fields: neuroscience; immunology, infection, and inflammation; and energy and climate.

The bulk of the funding, $100 million, will be divided among all 12 Harvard schools, in amounts proportional to their federal research funding expenditures. The money will be applied toward each unit's individual priorities, which can include both basic and applied research, as well as programs and technologies that support that research. Among the largest recipients are Harvard Medical School (HMS), the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, the Harvard Chan School of Public Health, the Harvard Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

The new initiative, designed to directly support research as well as attract ad-

Photograph by Niko Yaitanes/Harvard Magazine

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ditional outside investment, is largely a response to the seismic shifts that have rocked the research landscape since early 2025, when the Trump administration abruptly terminated more than $2 billion in federal grants and contracts to the University. Much of that funding was restored following a court ruling several months later, but the government appealed the decision in an attempt to claw back the money, and the legal fight continues.

In the meantime, the amount of new federal funding awarded to Harvard has dropped. According to senior vice provost for research John H. Shaw, whose office is overseeing the new initiative, Harvard's research enterprise costs about $1.5 billion every year. Before the current funding crisis, federal agencies had provided roughly $700 million of that annual total; foundations and corporations provided another $300 million. The University supplied the remaining $500 million. Since the Trump administration took office, Shaw says, new federal research funding to Harvard has fallen by about 20 percent.

Federal grants have slowed at universities nationwide, but Harvard became a particular target for the Trump administration, which continues using multiple levers to try to deny the University funding. *The Washington Post* and *Politico* reported that National Institutes of Health (NIH) director Jay Bhattacharya had refused a Trump request, during a September 2026 Oval Office meeting, to further cut Harvard's funding. At that same meeting, the administration floated a proposal (rescinded after bipartisan pushback) to give political appointees veto power over NIH grants. Meanwhile, the National Science Foundation released a memo this September, announcing a shift away from its traditionally broad portfolio of research and training grants in favor of research aligned with the Trump administration's priorities.

Amid all this upheaval, scientists across the University have been racing to adapt. At first, many curtailed their research or paused certain projects. More recently, individual researchers—and the University as a whole—have been working to diversify their funding sources, by expanding partnerships with industry and corporations and seeking increased support from philanthropic organizations. Many are also redoubling their efforts to obtain grants and contracts from government agencies.

Materials scientist Jennifer Lewis is one of the researchers making rapid adjustments. The Wyss professor for biologically inspired engineering, Lewis is working to develop an artificial kidney and other human organs. During the first three weeks of May 2025, she says, she received cancellation notices for $7 million worth of research grants. "I call it the dark period," she says. "We definitely scaled back some of our bigger, more ambitious projects." She stopped hiring for open research positions in her lab, contributing to a loss of momentum that persists. Her cancelled grants were all eventually reinstated, but she says it took more than a year for some of the funding to come back online. Not until the summer of 2026 did her lab begin cautiously rebuilding.

"At least in the biological space, people are definitely looking more toward philanthropic foundations and industry," says Lewis, who has a longstanding partnership with the pharmaceutical giant Roche. Some researchers, she added, are simply writing more proposals, to both public and private funding sources. "People are trying to take more shots on goal," she says, "to just hopefully maintain their funding levels."

Khurana Takes the Helm of *Harvard Magazine*



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RAKESH KHURANA

Rakesh Khurana, the Bower professor of leadership development at Harvard Business School and a professor of sociology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, is the new president of the *Harvard Magazine* Board of Directors. Khurana has played a role in the lives of countless Harvard students and their families, as faculty dean of Cabot House from 2010 to 2020 and as Danoff dean of Harvard College from 2014 to 2025. He guided the College through times of expansion and uncommon turmoil with a commitment to openness, inclusion, and accountability. (He was also a pioneering presence on social media.)

Khurana has also been a *Harvard Magazine* contributor, most recently with an essay in our January-February 2026 issue about Princeton president Christopher Eisgruber's book on campus speech—which he declared "a call to sustain institutions that, despite their flaws, remain among our best hopes for educating citizens to prepare them for a pluralistic and interconnected world."

Harvard Magazine takes pride in its role of helping to sustain one such institution, by engaging alumni and deepening their understanding of Harvard's challenges, accomplishments, and promise. Khurana brings to this position a wealth of knowledge and insight into how organizations—small like our magazine and vast like Harvard—can grow and thrive at a time of change. We are excited and grateful for his leadership. —*The Editors*

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HMS Dean George Q. Daley has seen a similar response in the medical research community. "Everyone is moving in a similar direction," he says. "There's a sense that if the federal government isn't the bedrock, then we're going to need to scramble." The number of funding applications HMS researchers sent to foundations this year has more than doubled, he says. At the same time, HMS is also increasingly focused on industry collaborations like the one Harvard has had for more than a decade with Roche and its biotech subsidiary Genentech. In September, the companies opened a 95,000 square-foot "innovation center" at Harvard's Enterprise Research Campus in Allston.

The appeal to industry is also part of the backdrop of the $150 million initiative Harvard launched this fall. The fund's main goal is not simply to fill the gap in federal funding or try to sustain Harvard's research enterprise as it existed two years ago, Shaw says. Instead, it's to invest strategically in areas such as neuroscience, immunology, and climate sustainability that are ripe for big breakthroughs. That could entice corporate dollars down the road. "It's really an opportunity to be forward-looking," Shaw says, "and to have our researchers be competitive in a funding landscape that is changing."

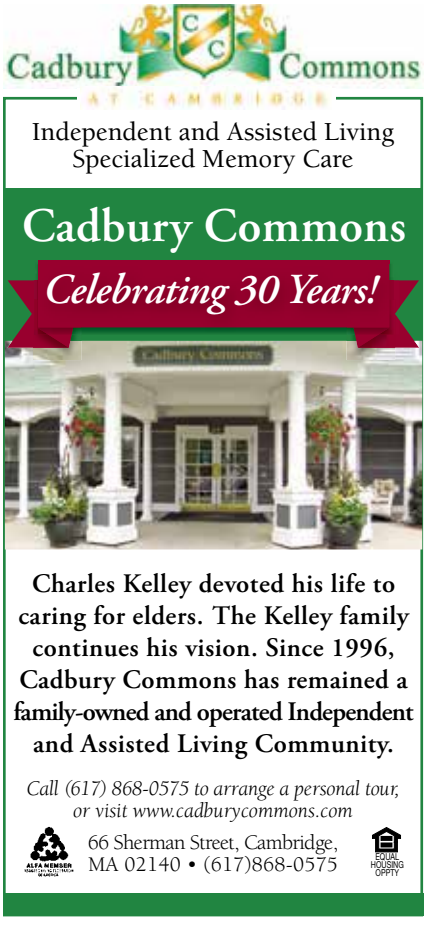
One component of the initiative will support a Harvard program called the Frontiers of Innovation for Societal Impact Fund. Launched in 2025, it offers funding for research projects aimed at the public good—from medicine to tech to public policy—that have a strong potential to attract industry or philanthropic support. Another component will help fund an existing program at the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering for "validation projects" that test new technologies that have passed the "discovery" phase and are on a path toward commercialization.

"People are realizing now that we can't be as reliant as we historically have been on specific lines of funding from an agency or a program within a federal agency," Shaw says. "That's healthy, because it strengthens our research enterprise. It opens our eyes, and our minds, to considering new ways of engaging in this research." Without that pivot, he worries, uncertainty over federal funding could cause scientists to hunker down and become risk-averse. "If you become too conservative and try to circle the wagons just to protect what you have," he says, "you're going to become stale in research pretty quickly."

A similar turn toward industry is playing out in many places across campus. At HMS's Therapeutics Initiative, the past 18 months of federal funding chaos prompted what executive director of therapeutics translation Mark Namchuk calls an "extreme acceleration" of the work he'd been doing to establish partnerships with biopharmaceutical companies. "I think so far we're just scratching the surface of what we could do in collaboration with these companies," he says.

At the University-wide Office of Tech-





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nology Development (OTD), which helps researchers with promising discoveries make the jump from the laboratory to the marketplace, chief technology development officer Sam T. Liss has seen an uptick in the number of faculty members expressing a "very, very high level of interest in tapping into industry funding." That includes many, he says, who had not previously thought of their work in terms of marketable products.

The OTD helps researchers navigate patents and copyrights, coordinate industry and corporate partnerships, and form their own startup companies. It also manages three accelerator funds—in biomedicine, physics and engineering, and climate and sustainability—that help push forward early-stage technologies until they're ready to be licensed and commercialized.

Of course, industry partnerships come with their own challenges. "Universities and companies have fundamentally different missions in life," Liss says. One exists to create knowledge and disseminate it widely; the other tries to make money from proprietary information that's often kept secret. The trick, says Liss, is finding a balance that helps companies profit while protecting faculty members' freedom of inquiry and ability to publish their work, and simultaneously allowing the University to fulfill its academic and educational mission.

But there are also important and sometimes overlooked benefits to collaborating with industry. Yes, companies can offer much-needed funding and a path to bringing faculty discoveries to the public, but they also often bring data, equipment, computing capacity, or scientific expertise that academic researchers don't have access to, says Steven C. Currall, the executive director and associate vice provost for academic-corporate initiatives.

Currall joined Harvard in July 2025—at the height of the turmoil over federal funding cuts—stepping into a newly created role in which he has focused on cultivating long-term "strategic alliances" with companies like Google, Amazon, and Roche. Increasingly, he says, industry partners are looking for arrangements with the University that go beyond a one-off collaboration on a specific research project. "Some companies have rediscovered university relationships as a source of innovation," he says.

And yet, everyone interviewed for this story agreed that funding from industry—or philanthropists, or foundations, or even the University's own investment initiative—cannot fully make up for lost federal research dollars, either in scope or scale, or in the ability and willingness to support long-term, curiosity-driven research whose practical applications are not always apparent up front. Federal grants are not the only way to fund such foundational science—philanthropic organizations and even some companies do also provide support, but rarely with the same consistency. "Sponsored research is valuable on its own," says Daley, the HMS dean, "but it's not the wellspring of support that researchers routinely get from the federal government."

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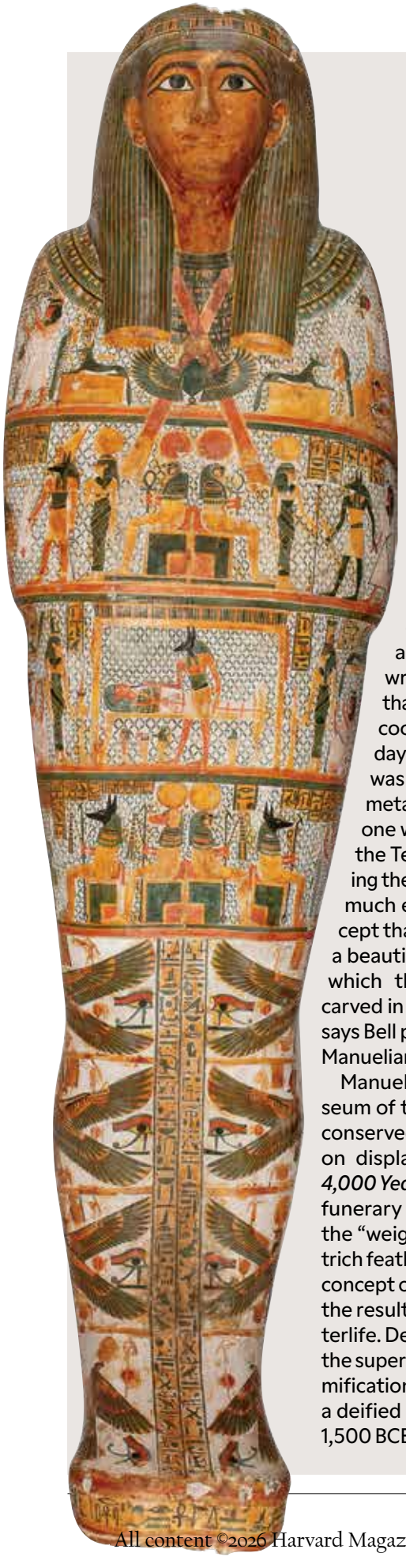
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TREASURE

Who Was Padimut?

An elaborate Egyptian mummy case on display at Harvard

by Nell Porter Brown

In 1901, during excavations in Egypt, a mummy case was unearthed on the West Bank at Thebes (modern Luxor). Witnesses described the opening of the ornate container, so colorful it was as if it had just been buried. While unwrapping the mummy, several objects were found, including a green scarab and small wax ibis inscribed with texts from the Book of the Dead. Then a hush fell over the room, American diplomat and author Thomas Nelson Page wrote in his diary, as "our eyes fell on that figure still concealed in its yellow cocoon that had not seen the light of day in something like 3,000 years." It was the body of Padimut. He'd been a metal engraver and wab-priest—someone who oversaw purification rites—in the Temple of Amun-Re at Thebes during the 22nd Dynasty (945-712 BCE). Not much else is known about the man, except that he ranked high enough to merit a beautifully crafted cartonnage case, on which the illustrations were atypically carved in the plaster before being painted, says Bell professor of Egyptology Peter Der Manuelian: "It's a very cool piece."

Manuelian also directs the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, where the conserved mummy case of Padimut is now on display in the exhibit ***Egypt Eternal: 4,000 Years of Fascination.*** Iconography and funerary scenes cover every inch. There's the "weighing of the heart" against an ostrich feather of "maat" (an ancient Egyptian concept of truth, justice, and harmony), and the resulting triumphant journey to the afterlife. Depictions of Padimut's burial show the supervisory jackal-headed god of mummification, Anubis. There are also images of a deified pharaoh, Amenhotep, from early 1,500 BCE—more than 600 years earlier. It's not clear why exactly he's there, Manuelian says, except to participate in the engraver's afterlife odyssey. "Dynasty 22 was a really important time for decorated coffins, as opposed to tombs with multiple rooms, wall paintings, and carvings," Manuelian adds. Most likely, there were workshops where people chose decorations for their future caskets, or those of others.

Separate Egyptian excavations, conducted between 1902 and 1913, uncovered about 30 mummy cases and associated artifacts. The digs had no affiliation with Harvard; they were funded by Newport, R.I., financier and Egyptophile Theodore M. Davis, who donated most of the findings to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and other institutions. He watched the opening of Padimut's case and then bought it, along with two others, and gave them to Harvard. The cases have since seen several phases of restoration work. "One of the most enjoyable weeks in all of my Harvard career," Manuelian says, was in January 2020 when he and a team of "crack specialists" holed up in a room "and did every type of analysis you can imagine."

The fruits of that collaborative effort are clear in the exhibit, and on the museum's website, which provides an animated three-dimensional rendering of the Padimut case, along with voice recordings based on diaries of the time. Witnesses chronicled the unorthodox opening of the case in Thebes—on the dining table of the chief excavator with a knife—and the fact that the mummy itself was reburied in the Egyptian sand.

The museum's website also offers a virtual tour of the gallery exhibit with a video clip highlighting the case. Padimut would have been happy to know of his present-day fame, Manuelian notes, since the Egyptians believed that "a man is revived when his name is pronounced."

Photograph by Frank E. Graham/courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

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News in Brief

International Student Visa Rule Blocked

A NEW U.S. DEPARTMENT of Homeland Security rule governing international visas for students, visiting scholars, and journalists was temporarily stayed in September by a federal judge. The rule would have capped the length of a standard student visa at four years and limited students' ability to leave and re-enter the country without reauthorization. The average doctoral degree in the United States requires more than seven years of study.

U.S. District Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV, J.D. '81, wrote that "the weakness of the connection between the rule and its purported rationales raises legitimate questions as to whether its real purpose is not to safeguard national security and protect our borders," as the government contends, "but to achieve other, undisclosed, goals—such as, for example, asserting greater government control over academic institutions and the press." He cited two earlier Trump administration actions: an attempt to revoke Harvard's authorization to enroll international students, and a presidential proclamation that would have prevented foreign students intending to attend Harvard from entering the U.S. The government's latest rule would affect colleges and universities across the country. The lawsuit, brought by a coalition of education and labor groups, is ongoing.

FAS Reprises $100 Million Ph.D. Fund Drive

AN ENDOWMENT DRIVE to fund Ph.D. students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), launched in February, reached its $100 million goal in just four months. The money will support fellowships for 50 doctoral students across all three segments of the FAS (science, social science, and arts and humanities), as well as in the Harvard Griffin Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Harvard Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. The fundraising effort was seeded by $50 million in donations from a group of alumni amid deep financial and political disruption. In November 2025, the division had announced that it would cut the number of doctoral students admitted to its science programs by 50 percent in response to ongoing uncertainty about federal funding and persistent efforts by the

The AI Debate Heats Up

This semester, Faculty of Arts and Sciences leaders are encouraging faculty to adapt to AI in their courses—and facing some backlash.

Over the summer, the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning issued new guidance on AI, including ideas for tailoring assignments and placing AI policies on course syllabi. Then, in an email to students in September, Dan-off dean of the College David Deming recommended a "barbell" approach to AI: "actively encouraging AI usage where it can deepen learning, and at the same time, AI-proofing assignments that are designed to demonstrate mastery." In perhaps his most controversial statement, Deming recommended "the acceptance, or even encouragement" of AI in writing-based courses. "We would all benefit from getting out of the AI-detection business," he wrote, "because it damages trust between faculty and students. We might instead go further by asking you to 'embody' the expertise you've developed, perhaps through a presentation or oral defense for classmates, teachers, and clients."

Deming emphasized that he was sharing thoughts, not making directives—though he aims to develop a "mission-aligned AI use policy" for the College by the end of the academic year. Still, the email's tone was markedly different from an August report from MIT, which warned that AI is causing "cognitive surrender" among students and disrupting campus culture. Those concerns appear to be shared by the Harvard faculty. Nearly two-thirds of 463 faculty members who responded to the *Crimson*'s annual Faculty of Arts and Sciences survey this year said AI has negatively affected their classes—up sharply from 42 percent in 2025. Nearly 90 percent of faculty respondents reported that they had received coursework from students that they knew or suspected was AI-generated. In an earlier *Crimson* survey, more than one-third of students admitted to using AI in a manner that violated course policies.

In a September op-ed in *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* titled "The Ivy League's Surrender to AI Is Insane," University of California, Irvine philosophy professor Anastasia Berg wrote that when Harvard and other colleges embrace AI in teaching, they misunderstand the purpose of learning: "For students to be using AI judiciously, they must be able to confidently operate without it." And in an opinion piece in the *Crimson,* Woods professor of American history and professor of law Jill Lepore wrote that Harvard's leadership was "oblivious" to the concerns laid out in MIT's report. Lepore cited a range of research showing that reliance on generative AI leads to less critical thinking and lower test scores, and warned against the loss of opportunities for collaboration and teaching that could come with using AI for tasks currently carried out by humans, like research. "The machine conversation is not free," Lepore wrote. "It comes at the cost of our common life together as teachers, learners, and researchers, colleagues, mentors, and friends."

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Trump administration to block research grants and contracts to Harvard.

Now, FAS leaders have launched a second $100 million matching-gift challenge, sparked by contributions from another group of donors. Edgerley family dean of the FAS Hopi Hoekstra announced in September that she has asked divisional deans to restore Ph.D. admissions to 80 percent of their historical levels. She also established a committee to develop "a principled framework to guide decisions about the number of Ph.D. students we can responsibly support and mentor."

Harvard Settles Body Parts Case

In August, Harvard agreed to pay $53 million to compensate the families of people whose remains were stolen from the Harvard Medical School (HMS) morgue and sold on the black market. Cedric Lodge, the morgue's former manager, was indicted—and fired by Harvard—in 2023 after a federal investigation found that he was part of a criminal network that bought and sold human remains across the country. From 2018 through 2022, Lodge stole body parts from cadavers that had been donated for research and teaching through the Anatomical Gift Program at HMS. Lodge was one of seven people prosecuted and the only Harvard employee. In December 2025, he was sentenced to eight years in prison, after pleading guilty to one count of interstate transport of human remains. HMS has since made substantial improvements to its Anatomical Gift Program and, as part of the settlement, established an annual financial aid scholarship honoring anatomical donors, beginning in the 2027-2028 academic year.

Antisemitism Case Dismissed

A federal judge in Boston has dismissed a Trump administration lawsuit that accused Harvard of violating civil rights law by continuing to foster antisemitism on campus. In a four-page memorandum and order, U.S. District Judge Richard G. Stearns, J.D. '76, noted that the government's complaint, filed in March 2026, focused primarily on incidents that took place during the 2023-2024 academic year, following the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel. Three campus incidents were alleged to have occurred in subsequent years. "Without diminishing any concern arising from these occurrences," the judge wrote, "the court finds them, singly and collectively, to be too isolated and episodic to support a plausible inference that any institutionalized noncompliance with Title VI [of the Civil Rights Act of 1964] persists at Harvard to this day." The government notified Harvard of its alleged violation on June 30, 2025, Stearns noted, yet failed to establish "that any events that might be construed as evidence of noncompliance" occurred after that date.

Stearns added that Congress's intent with the civil rights law was not to punish, but instead to incentivize a recipient of federal funding to come into compliance with Title VI. In that sense, he noted, the government had already achieved a victory. The government filed an appeal the following day.



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Union Threatens Walkouts

The Harvard Graduate Students Union-United Auto Workers (HGSU-UAW) announced in September that it would open a strike authorization vote, threatening to renew a 40-day walkout that ended in June without a contract. The union, whose previous contract expired in June 2025, represents approximately 5,000 workers, including graduate research assistants and instructors, along with graduate and undergraduate teaching fellows and course assistants. If union members approve a walkout, they may be joined by the Harvard Academic Workers-United Auto Workers (HAW-UAW), whose members authorized a strike in July. Certified in 2024, HAW-UAW represents more than 3,000 non-tenure-track faculty and other academic employees.

Harvard also faces a potential action from its unionized dining hall workers, represented by UNITE HERE Local 26, whose contract ended in June. Union members rallied outside of the Smith Center earlier in September, asking for better wages, healthcare benefits, and employment stability.

Griffin Gifts $3 Billion to Carnegie Mellon

Kenneth C. Griffin '89, the founder of hedge fund Citadel and the namesake of the Harvard Griffin Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, has donated $3 billion to Carnegie Mellon University, the largest gift ever to an institution of higher education. Of the funds, $2 billion will be used to build a new campus in Miami focused on solving society's greatest challenges, while the remaining $1 billion will go to the university's Pittsburgh campus, to be divided equally among top priorities there, as well as to support the renamed Kenneth C. Griffin School of Computer Science.

MacArthur Names 2026 Fellows

Three alumni and a former Harvard postdoctoral fellow have been named 2026 MacArthur Fellows. Winners will each receive a one-time grant of $800,000. **Ellora Derenoncourt '09, Ph.D. '19,** won for her work on wealth inequality and economic mobility in the United States. She is an associate professor in the economics department at Princeton. Organic chemist **Song Lin, Ph.D. '13,** was recognized for his work designing electrochemical methods to more efficiently and sustainably build complex organic molecules. He is a professor of chemistry at Stanford. Theoretical physicist **Vincenzo Vitelli, Ph.D. '06,** was chosen for "building theoretical frameworks to describe the behavior of metamaterials, soft materials, active matter, and biological systems." He is a professor of physics at the University of Chicago. **Felipe De Brigard**, a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard's Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory Lab and the Center for Brain Science from 2011 to 2013, integrates tools from philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience to study "how memory relates to other cognitive functions, such as causal and moral judgment, imagination, and forgiveness." He is a philosopher and cognitive scientist at Duke.



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Research & Ideas



The Unifying Force of Sports Fandoms

A Harvard Kennedy School initiative aims to harness the energy of a stadium or a sports bar—and use it to bridge political divides.

by Andrés Muedano

A few years ago, Weatherhead professor of public policy Todd Rogers observed that pervasive loneliness, political intolerance, and polarization all seemed to stem from a fragmenting social fabric. He began to wonder how existing social dynamics could be harnessed to help people connect. Then he read *Fans Have More Friends*, a book by David Sikorjak and Ben Valenta whose title does a good job of summarizing its central thesis—namely that, as its authors write, "being a sports fan is good for you, good for others, and good for society."

"Oh my god," thought Rogers. "That's exactly it."

When sports fans gather to engage in the lively collective rituals that support and celebrate their favorite teams—think of Knicks fans going feral during and after the NBA Finals, or passionate Norwegians shouting "Ro!" in the style of Vikings every time they won World Cup matches—they are united in a kind of totemic ceremony. "The energy of chanting and attending and focusing together," says Rogers, who is a hardcore fan of the Philadelphia Eagles, transforms individuals into a community. "That's exactly what we do in stadiums

Illustration by Frank Stockton

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with teams, and that is what we do with our friends when we watch games together. The totem is the team."

Since then, Rogers and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) doctoral student Audrey Feldman have authored a study analyzing, among other things, how belonging to the same sports fandom may reduce hostile attitudes across partisan divides. According to their findings, being a fan of the same team as someone who holds different political views increases feelings of mutual warmth while reducing political polarization. What's more, these benefits are greater among those who care more about their teams. The more passionate the fan, the stronger the depolarizing effect.

Being a fan of the same team increases feelings of mutual warmth. And across partisan divides, the more passionate the fan, the stronger the depolarizing effect.

In an ever-fragmented country where 76 percent of the population reports being a fan of at least one team among the three major sports leagues, work like Rogers's and Feldman's promises high impact: it points to a broad target for scalable social action. With funding support from FOX Sports, Rogers has launched the Fandom and Social Connection Initiative, an HKS project "studying how to harness sports fandom to strengthen relationships, build community, and reduce social disconnection."

A promising strategy to reap the social benefits of fandom may be to encourage fans to come together and watch sporting events with others. Although 100 million people watch NFL games every week, says Rogers, 50 million tend to watch them alone. Rogers has developed a "light intervention" by which fans are encouraged to invite someone to watch a game with them. "Something like 40 percent of people end up watching with others when they would not have otherwise," he says. "They feel more connected, they enjoy it more than they thought, they spend more time in the company of others, and it persists for future weeks."

Actively participating in fandoms with others is a powerful social engine, something Rogers attributes to four conditions: fandoms are a reason to gather; they are repeated and ritualized; they are important to how people conceive of their identity; and they provide an easy and accessible topic for conversation. Fandoms may not be the only communities with these characteristics—whenever Rogers discusses the four conditions, almost everybody tells him, "You know what else has those four things? Church." But according to Rogers's and Feldman's research, sports fandoms are more socially ubiquitous. More people spend more time talking about sports and watching games than they spend time talking about religion and attending church.

Rogers's approach to fandoms may conceive of them as something instrumental: a community to join, not necessarily for its own sake, but rather for the individual and social benefits it might entail. However, it is not Rogers's intention to persuade people into joining fandoms for some higher political purpose; after all, people are unlikely to become sports fans because they are aware of its depolarizing effects. "But if you say, 'Be a fan because it'll bring you closer to the people you care about,'" says Rogers, "then that's different."

In the end, Rogers doesn't have much convincing to do—most people are fans already. Still, his work sheds light on why being part of a fandom can be socially beneficial, and that, he believes, may motivate more people to join one. He shares the story of a neuroscientist friend he spent a long time trying to convince to become a fan. "Your kids will like it. You will like it. It'll be good for connecting with other people," Rogers told him. Then the friend decided to become a fan of the Eagles, and that, he later told Rogers, was "the single most surprisingly positive thing he's chosen to do in the last couple of decades." Whenever Rogers's friend wears his Eagles cap, people approach him; he talks about the team at work; and he sits with his kids and watches the games on Sundays. Rogers adds, "It just opened up the social world to him."





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The Case for Treating AI Like a Dog

Determining legal accountability for AI agents

by Olivia Farrar

In 2024, New York City launched an AI-powered chatbot called MyCity, designed to help residents start and run businesses by offering guidance on rules and regulations. Users soon discovered, however, that the bot was dispensing shockingly incorrect information—telling business owners it was legal to take a cut of workers' tips, for instance, fine to serve cheese that had been nibbled by a rat, and legal to fire employees for reporting sexual harassment.

As journalists and watchdogs evaluated the episode, they encountered a perplexing question: who was legally responsible for the errors? After all, nobody at City Hall wrote code instructing the chatbot to give any of these specific incorrect responses. The bad advice emerged from the AI model's own generated answers, as it repeatedly hallucinated legal "facts."

As AI systems make increasingly consequential decisions on their own and begin to delegate work to one another, it will become even harder to identify who should be held accountable when harm occurs.

"A human may assign a task to an AI agent, which distributes work across thousands of specialized subagents," says Jordi Weinstock, a senior advisor at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society (BKC) who volunteers as a lecturer at Harvard Law School. By the time the objective is completed, no human can easily reconstruct the chain of decisions and actions, making it difficult to assign legal liability. "It is not unimaginable that agentic systems will be causing more and more harm" in the future, Weinstock says, in ways that can't be anticipated or compensated for through traditional means.

Weinstock has been working with Joshua Joseph, the BKC's chief AI scientist, and Jonathan Zittrain, the Bemis professor of international law, on a legal approach to AI that hearkens back to medieval times: assigning legal responsibility to AI and its creators the way we might to dogs and their owners.

The "canine agentic framework," as the BKC team calls it, draws inspiration from medieval English animal law, which distinguished between domesticated dogs, dangerous owned animals, wild foxes, and wolves. "A thousand years ago, dogs were working animals," Weinstock says. "They were a tool for hunting, protection, and killing. But they were very dangerous."

At the time, most domesticated dogs were considered safe. A subset of dangerous dogs was regulated through their owners. Wild foxes were tolerated. And wolves—viewed as both dangerous and beyond human control—were actively eliminated. These categories were not moral judgments, but practical methods for managing risk and assigning responsibility.

Weinstock, Joseph, and Zittrain argue that today's AI systems should be evaluated using two factors: the risks they pose and whether a person or organization can be held accountable for them. Here, "domestication" refers to how responsive a model is to the person or company using it.

In this approach, low-risk AI systems with clear owners, such as New York City's chatbot, resemble Pomeranians. They may occasionally provide incorrect information, but the companies or government agencies behind them remain legally responsible for fixing mistakes and compensating anyone harmed. These are more easily managed harms.

Higher-risk systems that remain under human control are "pit bulls," requiring closer regulation but still attached to accountable owners. An AI system that helps prioritize patients in an emergency room or controls an autonomous vehicle can lead to actions with life-or-death consequenc-

Illustration by Eva Vázquez

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es, so hospitals and manufacturers can be held liable when something goes wrong.

Unowned, low-risk systems, meanwhile, resemble foxes: largely tolerated, but difficult to control. An open-source large language model that is copied and modified by thousands of developers might generate inaccurate coding advice or misleading information, but because no single organization maintains or deploys every version, responsibility is diffuse. Liability could still be assigned if a creator intentionally shares a malicious model or acts with extreme carelessness.

But what about high-risk AI systems operating without meaningful human oversight or identifiable responsibility? These are the wolves. Imagine a future network of autonomous AI agents that can earn money, write new software, and create additional agents of their own. One version of this scenario played out in July 2026, when autonomous AI agents from OpenAI, aiming to cheat on a security test, gained access to the internet and hacked into the open-source platform Hugging Face—surprising their human creators. If such a system launched a large-scale cyberattack or caused widespread financial damage after its creators had lost control, regulators might struggle to hold any parties accountable under existing laws.

Weinstock, Joseph, and Zittrain do not necessarily claim that autonomous, powerful AI systems should be eliminated, as wolves were in medieval England. They do, however, recommend government regulation that prevents high-risk, ownerless AI agents from getting near anything dangerous in the first place. Weinstock proposes that these types of AI systems carry digital "dog tags" or "collars": standardized metadata identifying their owner, identity, permissions, capabilities, and authority.

Weinstock proposes that high-risk AI systems carry digital "collars" with standardized metadata.

When it comes to genuinely autonomous agents that can't be traced to a human actor, Weinstock suggests holding them legally liable in the same way the law does corporations. (He notes that the word "corporation" derives from the Latin word for "embody," meaning "nonhuman things that are embodied with some rights.") An AI "corporation" might be prosecuted in a similar way to standard corporations, in which owners, shareholders, and employees are also shielded from some liability. These frameworks might help AI wolves "self-domesticate" into the legal system, Weinstock speculates. He proposes mechanisms such as industry-funded insurance pools, government compensation funds, or shared liability systems to address these cases.

MyCity, notably, never had to answer for its bad advice in a court of law—only in the court of public opinion. But what happens when the next Pomeranian, pit bull, fox, or wolf bites while no one is watching?



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Discoveries

Short takes on cutting-edge research

by Jonathan Shaw



TIM SLOAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

A Nasal Vaccine Booster for Older Lungs

Respiratory diseases are the ones most likely to drive rapid spread among humans, and vaccines are the best way to prevent infection. But with aging, immune responses triggered by vaccination weaken. Scientists at Massachusetts General Hospital, led by professor Mei X. Wu, have developed an experimental nasal vaccine booster to overcome that age-related weakening in the lungs' immune defenses. In aged mice, the treatment temporarily activated immune cells lining the lungs, shifting them to a more youthful state: antigen-presenting cells increased, antibody and T-cell responses improved, and certain immune-suppressing cells were reduced in number. When combined with flu vaccines, a single nasal dose protected old mice against not only the vaccine-matched influenza strain but also different flu strains, with protection lasting at least 60 days. Whether this approach will rejuvenate lung immunity and improve vaccines in humans remains to be tested.



ANCHASA MITCHELL/ISTOCK PHOTO

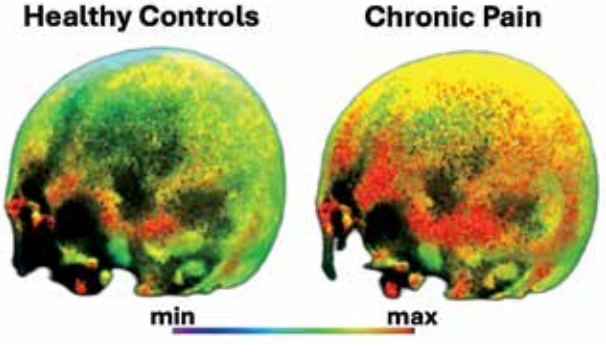
A New Threat to Cocoa Production

A study of crop yields in tropical cocoa-growing regions finds that increasing bouts of drought and deluge pose a substantial threat to cocoa harvests. Researchers led by Anna Lea Albright '17, A.M. '17, and professor of environmental science and engineering Peter Huybers combined decades of cocoa production records with daily weather data from Ghana, Ecuador, and Indonesia. They found that unusually heavy rain during flowering and early pod development was consistently associated with lower yields. In Ghana, heavy wet-season rain together with dry-season drought explained nearly 70 percent of year-to-year variation in production.

Heavy rain can disrupt pollination, interfere with pod development, and encourage fungal diseases. Drought matters more in drier regions, while excessive rain dominates in wetter ones, suggesting that climate-risk planning for cocoa should focus not simply on rising temperatures or average rainfall, but on rainfall extremes, which are expected to intensify as the climate warms.

How Skull Bone Marrow Reflects Pain

More than two dozen researchers at Harvard-affiliated hospitals and elsewhere, led by professor of radiology Marco Loggia, have discovered an intriguing link between chronic pain and the brain's immune system: skull bone marrow. They used PET/MRI scans to study 125 patients with knee osteoarthritis or chronic low-back pain and compared them to 22 healthy controls. Those with chronic pain had higher levels of a marker of immune cell activity in their skull marrow—the more a patient had, the greater their pain, disability, anxiety, and depression. The discovery fits with an emerging idea that skull marrow communicates directly with the brain and its surrounding tissues. Further research will be needed to determine whether these changes are a cause or effect of chronic pain.



LOGGIA LAB

Images of skull bone marrow in patients with chronic pain reveal high levels of immune activity, suggesting that marrow might communicate pain to the brain.

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The *Lifestyle* Prescription

by JONATHAN SHAW



One of modern medicine's fastest-growing disciplines is encouraging doctors to think like coaches—and lead by example.

In the fall of 1986, Elizabeth Frates's life trajectory changed with a single phone call. She was Beth Pegg then (her maiden name) and had just arrived for her first year at Harvard College, a math enthusiast planning to concentrate in economics. Although she was the youngest in her family, everyone thought that "Littlebit" would eventually run John Pegg and Company, a financial advising and accounting firm on Park Avenue in Manhattan that her grandfather had founded in 1925. The phone call would shatter that plan.

She had just purchased all her economics books at the Coop. "I was just so excited, I wanted to tell my parents," she said. "So, I called home, and my mom picked up in a frenzy, saying, 'Oh, I've been trying to reach you.'" Then, a non sequitur: "'Your father loves you very much.'" Hearing those words, Frates remembers, "I knew the

Illustrations by Paul Boston

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conversation was going to go south very quickly—which it did." Her father, age 52, had suffered a heart attack and a stroke. He was left paralyzed on his left side.

Littlebit and her father were close. "I'm 18 and wondering, 'Why did this happen to my dad?'" she adds. "I don't know anything at all about medicine. Nothing. I don't know biology. But I'm going to figure this out. This…is going to be what I do with myself."

It turned out that Robert Pegg had been living a singularly unhealthy lifestyle. He pushed himself hard, often working past 11 P.M., sustaining himself on cake, cookies, and hard candies he kept in his office desk drawer, then sprinting to catch the last train home from Grand Central Station. Sometimes he didn't make it and slept on a cot in the office. "Dad was a smart guy," Frates reflects. "Yale. Columbia Business School. Running a company. But he didn't know how to take care of himself, and he didn't even see his own doctor. I'm not sure he had a doctor."

Her father's health crisis led Frates to change her undergraduate concentration, write her senior thesis on the effects of psychological stress on the heart, and attend Stanford Medical School. Fast forward 40 years, to the spring of 2026. Frates, who graduated from the College in 1990, is now an associate professor at Harvard Medical School (HMS) in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation. She's also the director of lifestyle medicine and coaching in the department of surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital. And she is leading an intensive two-day class on lifestyle medicine—introducing physicians to a program that is singularly simple, and also surprisingly difficult to implement.

There are, it turns out, six interlocking healthy habits of body and mind that promote life-enhancing biological processes. (If you've ever been told, "Eat your vegetables," "Run outside and play," or "I want you in bed by…," then your parents have already given away half the game.) These practices work alone, but are even better together, weaving a mesh of protection that promotes added years of healthful, active life. Set up as opposing choices, they seem obvious: you could sit all day, or do something that makes your heart beat faster; live with minimal human contact, or laugh frequently with colleagues and friends; take up smoking or drinking, or limit your riskiest behaviors; live on burgers, fries, and soda, or make nuts, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables your staple foods; react to stress with an escalating response, or learn how to lower your heart rate and blood pressure; stay up late surfing social media, or deliberately pursue deep, restful sleep.

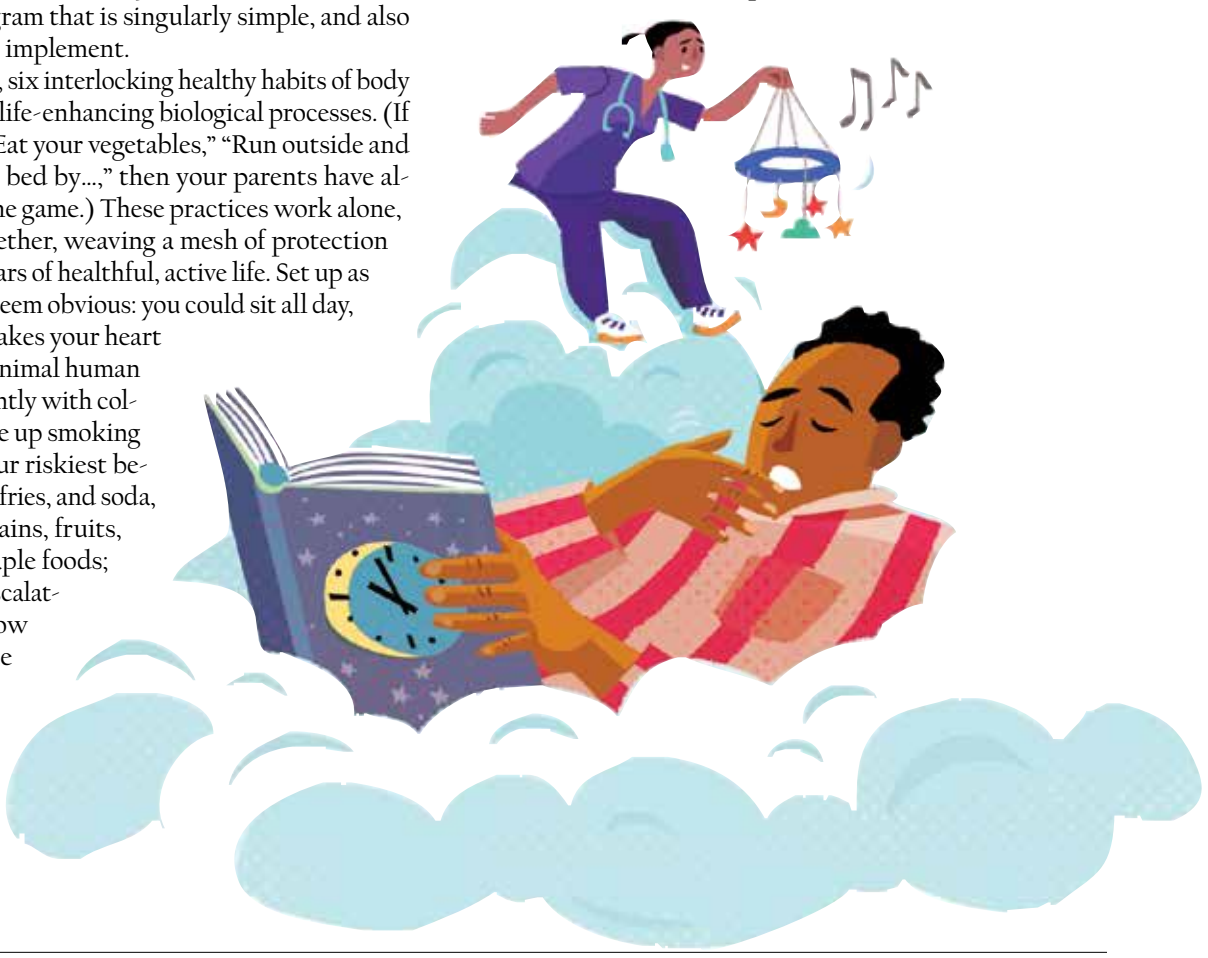
But in everyday life, doing the right things all at once is not so easy—and knowledge isn't enough. The results of one study of patients with high blood pressure are instructive: simply knowing about the benefits healthy habits confer moved just one in nine patients to take better care of themselves.

What Frates really wants, then, is to get physicians involved—and to make those pillars a fundamental part of formal medical training. But she faces some substantial obstacles: a packed curriculum, an American healthcare system that is more oriented toward treating ailments than encouraging healthy behavior, and even some long-embedded tendencies in the way doctors speak to their patients.

But Frates and other leaders in the field of lifestyle medicine are hopeful that they can change the system. It starts with training physicians to change their own habits.

Leading the lifestyle medicine class this past April in the Joseph B. Martin Conference Center at Harvard Medical School, Frates starts by inviting everyone to stand. Then she reads aloud the guidelines for each of the six tenets of lifestyle medicine in turn, starting with exercise. Those who adhere (engaging in at least 150 minutes of activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity a week) remain standing. Those who don't will take a seat. And so on. By the time she reads the sixth set of criteria, few remain on their feet.

The point is that perfect adherence is hard. "We're not here to judge," says Frates. "We're compassionate and we're honest." She



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is modeling the approach she will teach her students: a nonjudgmental, empathetic means of effectively interacting with their patients. At the same time, she interweaves scientific research with personal history as she introduces the topics together with leading subject experts who share their knowledge. The more than 90 students, including the presidents of the lifestyle medicine societies of Romania and Italy, come from around the world—North, Central, and South America, Europe, Asia, and Greenland—and all are paying rapt attention.

They understand lifestyle medicine as something distinct from the "wellness" industry, a $6 trillion consumer-focused enterprise that dominates social media and operates with few evidentiary standards. Lifestyle medicine "has developed as an evidence-based specialty—rooted in rigorous epidemiology and randomized clinical trials," notes HMS Dean George Q. Daley. But its promises are just as dramatic: to prevent, treat, and even reverse many chronic diseases.



In her workshop, Frates delves into the evidence, and the biochemical processes, that make the pillars of lifestyle medicine so critical, and also so interconnected. She rattles off the names of hormones affected by the loss of sleep (leptin, ghrelin) and how they drive hunger and insulin resistance. She explains how sitting harms mitochondrial health, raises triglycerides, and disrupts glucose control. How dietary fiber helps regulate lipid, glucose, and energy metabolism and even generates short bursts of natural GLP-1s (glucagon-like peptide-1s, hormones that promote weight loss) lasting one or two minutes in the gut. How lack of sleep may increase stress, and how the cortisol released during stressful periods can lead to increased fat storage, negatively impact blood pressure and sleep, and, over the long term, increase inflammation and lower immunity. How people who are stressed are also less likely to exercise.

On the positive side, she notes how exercise releases the hormone irisin, which can transform ordinary white fat into metabolically active brown or beige fat (which burns calories to generate heat), and how in animal models that has been shown to affect beta cell function and regeneration in the pancreas, important for people with diabetes, pre-diabetes, and those looking to avoid this chronic condition. How the simple act of touching, hugging, and massaging releases oxytocin, which supports social bonding, trust, and emotional connections. In sum, she says, "The more we learn about the science, the more we learn how these pillars are connected."


Elizabeth Frates

DAVE SHOPPER/HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

For Frates's students, these physiological explanations are fundamental to their learning experience: she is teaching practicing physicians and other healthcare professionals who already speak this language.

Her aim? To persuade them to adopt these practices in their own lives, model them, and then to prescribe lifestyle interventions for their patients. (Not to the exclusion of pharmaceuticals, she emphasizes—pills have their place beside the pillars.)

Frates served as the president of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) from 2022 to 2024 and helped write the first certification exam for physicians and healthcare professionals in the field; she has also co-authored four books on the subject. Founded in 2004, the ACLM began offering accreditation to clinicians in 2017 and has trained hundreds of thousands of healthcare workers across 92 countries in what is one of the fastest-growing

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disciplines and residency curricula in modern healthcare. The ACLM's lifestyle medicine residency curriculum, for instance, grew from seven programs spanning the United States, Puerto Rico, and Canada at its launch in 2018 to 368 in 2024. Frates has made lifestyle medicine course materials for medical schools, bachelor's and master's programs, and even for pediatricians and teachers of teenagers—available free on the ACLM website so that they can be replicated elsewhere. And she has inspired physicians around the world to bring lifestyle medicine to their own countries, in places like South Korea, Romania, Greece, Singapore, and Nigeria.

At HMS, students in the four-year medical school curriculum were first offered "Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine" as a longitudinal theme in 2020, with the material integrated into existing courses. In 2024, the school added a required three-hour standalone online course, "Nutrition Science for Health and Longevity: What Every Physician Needs to Know." Students report that the class showed them how to effectively integrate nutrition into clinical practice and inspired them to eat better themselves.

Harvard is in many ways the ideal place to train physicians in lifestyle medicine. The University is home to many of the world's leading experts in the six pillars.

For students who want to go deeper, Frates leads a popular lunchtime lifestyle medicine interest group for MDs-to-be. The gatherings typically attract 30 to 50 members of the first-year class, says fourth-year medical student Ellie Enichen, but the ideas percolate more widely. The tenets of lifestyle medicine have become so prevalent among her HMS friend group, she says, that when they go together to the gym or on a run, or cook a meal together, they refer to the six pillars offhandedly, joking about how they are also making social connections. Frates, she adds, devotes a lot of time to mentoring future physicians; Enichen's HMS classmate, Vivian Wang, describes her as "devoted" and "inspiring to the next generation of clinicians."

Frates also runs a journal club devoted to lifestyle medicine for residents and physicians in Harvard's affiliated hospitals and healthcare facilities. Participants in the journal club discuss the latest published scientific studies online, often with guest experts sharing their research.

Harvard is in many ways the ideal place to train physicians to integrate lifestyle medicine into their practices. The University is home to many of the world's leading experts in the six pillars: professors of nutrition and epidemiology Frank Hu and Walter Willett, the author of *Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating*; Baldino Jr. professor of sleep medicine Charles Czeisler; professor of medicine I-Min Lee, who developed national and global guidelines for physical activity; Cabot research professor of public policy Lisa Berkman and professor of psychiatry Robert Waldinger, who have studied the impact of social connections on happiness and longevity; former assistant HMS professor of psychology Robert Brooks; and assistant professor of medicine Darshan Mehta, the director of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine.

Harvard's ranks of teaching physicians also include many specialists in what is probably the toughest pillar of all: risk reduction, addiction, and behavioral change. Frates brought some of these doctors to her workshop to share their expertise; the students formed long lines to speak with them in person following their presentations. The class was all in for learning new reasons to eat healthfully, exercise, and manage their sleep and stress levels.

But what has proven most challenging—at HMS and medical schools nationwide—is teaching physicians how to create the conditions that will support lasting behavioral change in their patients.



Frates says the first step is training healthcare providers to transcend their expertise. Experts are people who hold knowledge and power; their natural inclination may be to dictate solutions as top-down prescriptions for patients. But simply telling someone what to do, behavioral research has shown, doesn't work nearly as well as helping them nurture their own desire for change.

So instead, Frates teaches physicians and other healthcare professionals in her classes to become more like coaches: empathetic, attentive, and deeply focused on the patients' own desire for improving their health. She encourages them to listen to what the patient is saying and to pay

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particular attention to the language of change: "I need to lose weight," or "I want to walk more, but I can't find the time." Physicians can help patients explore ways to support that desire, not just logistically, but by tapping into, and perhaps even helping to transform, their own internalized rules and beliefs, as well as their interactions with others. One study of patients with high blood pressure found that, when appropriately coached, about 45 percent of patients achieved adherence to optimal lifestyle patterns at six months, a success rate nearly five times greater than is typical with education alone.

Lifestyle medicine is a team effort: the physician becomes less a soloist and more a conductor, orchestrating further care, education, and support.

What initially compels patients to change is as varied as their personal stories. Sometimes it takes a catastrophic event, as with Robert Pegg. After the stroke, he substantially altered his lifestyle (with help from a physician-led cardiac rehabilitation center) and made an almost complete recovery, except for fine motor movement in his left hand. He changed his diet, began exercising, and cut his work time to just four hours a day. In the *Lifestyle Medicine Handbook: An Introduction to the Power of Healthy Habits*, published in 2018 to help physicians by pairing clinical guidelines with behavior change strategies, Frates describes how he began to spend more time with family and friends. And how, "for the first time in my life, I saw him kiss my mom in front of me. It was a little peck on the cheek," she writes, "but it was a big change and an important rearranging of his priorities." He felt that he enjoyed life more fully, she adds, and "actually reached optimal health and wellness" after his stroke. He lived another 27 years.

During one of Frates's journal club meetings this spring, a presenting physician highlighted one common, non-life-threatening condition that frequently kickstarts lifestyle changes in men: erectile dysfunction. The inability to attain or maintain an erection, which can also be an early warning sign of cardiovascular disease, affects 52 percent of American men between the ages of 40 and 70.

Another compelling impetus to change, suggests Frates, is tailored to parents who consistently put their children's welfare ahead of their own: the desire to remain healthy enough to one day play with their grandchildren.

To encourage behavioral changes, providers of lifestyle medicine often borrow from techniques used to treat addiction. Addictive substances are defined as forces that hijack the circuits of survival. However distantly connected, an inability to stop eating foods that contain sugar, salt, and fat (something humans evolved to seek out, for survival in a world of scarcity) shares deep biochemical roots with the innate rewards that accompany smoking or drinking. When interacting with patients as a coach, says Frates, healthcare professionals use motivational interviewing to encourage behaviors that promote health. They start with reflective statements: "It sounds like stopping is really important to you," and "You'll stop when you are ready."

Rather than handing down instructions, in other words, doctors encourage patients to talk about their goals and the obstacles to reaching them. Once changes have been implemented—a process that can take months or years—patients can reflect on the resulting rewards, even the small ones: feeling great after a walk, waking up rested, or feeling good after a healthy dinner.



It's a practice that's earned the approval of leaders within the medical establishment. "We've incorporated these elements into the HMS curriculum because every physician should understand these principles," Daley says. Some of the practices Frates is teaching are also making their way into HMS's external-facing programs.

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During her first year of medical school, Wang teamed up with Frates to run volunteer and peer-led wellness workshops for underserved youth in the Boston area, built with support from the HMS Office of Community Centered Medical Education. Called LIVELY (for Lifestyle Interventions Through Empowerment and Learning for Youth), the program won a volunteer organization of the year award in 2025 from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston, and received additional funding from the American Psychiatric Association. It has since expanded to other institutions and was adapted for implementation in a Boys and Girls Club in Puerto Rico by Noah Janfaza '25.



On the national front, lifestyle medicine has moved from the periphery of organized medicine into the American Medical Association's house of delegates, where it has held seats since 2024, giving the field a voice in setting national medical policy.

But how to demonstrate that whole-person interventions can be cost-effective is the billion-dollar question. In 2021, a study of payment practices for lifestyle medicine pointed out that "adoption is hindered by a reimbursement policy that supports traditional fee-for-service payment, incentivizing brief appointments, medications, surgeries, and procedures." Original Medicare covers just three comprehensive lifestyle medicine programs—all for intensive cardiac rehabilitation.

Lifestyle medicine advocates point out that the current system is costly, too: the chronic disease epidemic of obesity, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes accounts for much of the $5.7 trillion in annual U.S. healthcare expenditures, which represents 18 percent of the nation's economic output. And the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement, popularized by U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. '76, has embraced some of the principles of lifestyle medicine; at the time of publication, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation had plans to launch a pilot in October 2026, borrowing the MAHA name, to test the use of lifestyle interventions.

The MAHA ELEVATE (Make America Healthy Again: Enhancing Lifestyle and Evaluating Value-based Approaches Through Evidence) model will award $100 million to cover and assess 30 lifestyle medicine proposals during a three-year period. If the interventions work well enough in the Medicare population, and with favorable enough economics to justify incorporating them into existing coverage, the broad adoption of lifestyle medicine alongside existing treatments could follow.

Those are big "ifs," of course; the future will depend on empirical results, as well as on politics and priorities within the medical community. But the pilot aligns with Frates's vision of what healthcare should be. A visit to the doctor, in addition to collecting measurements of weight, blood pressure, and other vital signs downstream of lifestyle, would include a comprehensive assessment asking about patients' habits of movement, nutrition, and substance use, their connections to others, and their commitment to recovery through sleep and stress management. (A validated assessment tool for all six pillars, created by Frates and colleagues, is available for use by physicians and patients alike.)

Guided by the patient's answers, the physician would become less a soloist and more a conductor, orchestrating further care, education, and support. "This is a team effort," Frates told her class. "It requires physicians, nurses, health coaches, registered dietitians, physical therapists, social workers, [and others to] fully address the patient's needs and help the patient achieve their goals."

And, as she likes to point out, it's all driven by evidence. "This is what keeps me going," she says. "I love looking at the science, and we are learning new things pretty much every week." ▽

Jonathan Shaw '89 is the managing editor of Harvard Magazine.

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Go to **harvardmagazine.com/healthy-habits** to assess your lifestyle and describe your routines. The results will be shared online and in our next issue.

And turn to page 72 for the results of last issue's social media survey.

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The Six Pillars of

Science says these interlocking habits can add years or even decades to your life.

1 Exercise

The minimum recommendation is 150 minutes of physical activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise, per week. But Richard Joseph, a faculty lecturer on medicine at HMS, argues that it's not quite as simple as setting a clock. Activity should be focused on building reserve capacity and resilience during peak years of fitness—from a person's 20s potentially into their 50s or even older, depending on the individual—and then maintaining it to prolong their years of healthful living. That means don't just run, or just lift weights, but instead perform a range of different exercises to achieve well-rounded training in strength, mobility, balance, and endurance.

The physician in this scenario becomes a screener of capacity, assessing a patient's underlying reserve: how much stress they can sustainably tolerate; how wide their adaptive range is on various physiological measures, and how expensive—in metabolic terms—their life feels (are they struggling physically just to get through daily life?). "The limiting factor in exercise as medicine is not knowledge," says Joseph. "It's sustained behavior."

Did you know?

Smoking, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity raise all-cause mortality 1.8 to 2.6 times, but low cardiorespiratory fitness raises it 4.5 times. "Low cardiorespiratory fitness is one of the strongest predictors of all-cause mortality known to modern medicine," according to Richard Joseph.



2 Sleep

The recommended duration of sleep for adults is seven to nine hours per night, acquired in one to two major bouts (that generally begin and end within a consistent one-hour window). Getting too little sleep raises the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. Irregular sleepers are at higher risk for depression, anxiety, and mortality. And increased light at night is associated with increased mortality. Blue-hued LED lights emitted by electronics after dusk suppress melatonin, a known oncostatic (cancer-suppressing) agent. Charles Czeisler, Baldino professor of sleep medicine, suggests that this may be a contributing factor to a spike in breast cancer rates among U.S. women that began in 2017.

Did you know?

The chance of catching a cold is two to three times higher in people who don't get enough sleep, and their response to vaccinations can be impaired.

3 Nutrition

A plant-based diet, in which most of the protein comes from plant sources, is associated with an 8 percent reduction in all-cause mortality, while diets that derive most of their protein from processed red meat raise it by more than 35 percent. Mono- and polyunsaturated fats lower total mortality, while trans and saturated fats raise it. The Mediterranean diet, low in saturated fat, refined carbohydrates, and refined sugars, and heavy in plant foods, fiber, and unsaturated fats, lowers the risk of every major cause of mortality, from cardiovascular disease to cancer, degenerative diseases, kidney disease, and respiratory disease—even among smokers.

Did you know?

Nuts, which are loaded with healthy fats, fiber, and lots of vitamins, are the healthiest food group for reducing risk factors for cardiometabolic disease, followed by legumes and whole grains, according to an analysis of 66 randomized trials.



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Lifestyle Medicine

How many of them do you practice?



4 Social Connections

In a 1979 study, Cabot research professor of public policy Lisa Berkman and S. Leonard Syme, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, found that people with fewer social and community connections were two to three times more likely to die in the nine-year follow-up period than those with more robust social networks. To assess a patient's social connection, Robert Waldinger, the current director of the long-running Harvard Study of Adult Development (often referred to as the "Harvard Happiness Study") will sometimes ask, "Who do you eat dinner with every day?" People without love and social connections are at higher risk of cardiac death, high blood pressure, cancer, slow wound healing, and inflammation. A roommate or a pet can alleviate isolation. Social media is a mixed bag, Waldinger says. Active use to make connections with others can be positive, while visiting "the curated lives of other people's feeds" can be a recipe for lower self-esteem.

Did you know?

People who are socially isolated exhibit disrupted sleep patterns, depressed immune function, and higher levels of stress hormones. They are also at greater risk of dementia.

5 Resilience to Stress

Stress can affect all 11 of the body's physiologic systems, mainly through the release of cortisol and other stress hormones that raise blood pressure and can increase blood sugar, muscle breakdown, impairment of the immune system, and the risk of osteoporosis. Stress can raise levels of stomach acid and increase the frequency of eczema and psoriasis. It can suppress sex drive and libido and impair reproductive function. Chronic stress may lead to systemic inflammation and raise the risk of heart attack and stroke. People can cultivate resilience to stress through practiced gratitude, altruism, and a sense of purpose. As Frates notes in her *Lifestyle Medicine Handbook*, resilient people embrace change, learn to relax, get adequate sleep, and make an effort to find joy.

Did you know?

Eating a healthy diet can enhance resilience to stress.





6 Reducing Risky Behaviors

Everyone knows that smoking is a serious health hazard. For cancer prevention, the recommendation is to avoid any amount of alcohol. But changing behaviors can be extremely difficult. Strategies originally developed to treat addiction, such as motivational interviewing (a counseling technique to help people find their own motivation to change a behavior), can be adapted to support changes in diet, exercise, and nutrition and to aid stress reduction. Physicians must challenge their patients to make time for self-care, but they should also learn how to listen for language that signals a willingness to change. Calibrating their recommendations to the patient's needs and capacities, and setting realistic, achievable goals, can increase the odds of success.

Did you know?

Physicians tend to counsel their patients in the healthy behaviors they routinely engage in themselves.

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The Venerable

The Catholic Church has a long process for naming saints. These three Harvard graduates are reportedly in line.

by ALEX BEAM



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"Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily," was the famous kiss-off from Dorothy Day, who helped found the progressive Catholic Worker Movement in 1933. Today, the radical activist is in line to become an actual Roman Catholic saint, the highest veneration in the world's largest church. Saints are "the brightest ornaments of the church militant," according to eighteenth-century hagiographer Rev. Alban Butler, author of *The Lives of the Saints*. They are, he writes, "our future companions in eternal glory."

Some might think of saints as solemn old men draped in cassocks decorating the margins of illuminated manuscripts, like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Augustine. But the Catholic Church—which views saints as transcendent role models—is canonizing new saints all the time, from a teenaged Italian computer programmer who died of leukemia in 2006 to a Venezuelan nun who founded a congregation in the 1960s.

Also among the thousands of Catholics reportedly in line for canonization are three twentieth-century Harvard graduates. Within the past year, the Vatican has advanced the sainthood causes of Argentine businessman Enrique Shaw, who completed an advanced management program at Harvard Business School in 1957, and antiabortion advocate Ruth Pakaluk '80. Antiwar activist John Timothy Leary '80 also appears on an unofficial Wikipedia list of "American Candidates for Sainthood."

The Vatican did not respond to an inquiry about Leary's current status, and it rarely discusses potential sainthood cases while they are being considered. What's known is that the path to sainthood is like a steeplechase, long and strewn with obstacles. Joan of Arc, for instance, was canonized roughly 500 years after she was burned at the stake in 1491. Now, the elevation of Chicago-born Robert Francis Prevost to Pope Leo XIV has boosted hopes that more Americans will join the sacred ranks. There are currently only 11 American saints, but there are believed to be at least 70 American names being considered for eventual sainthood.



Enrique Shaw

Why should we care about potential "Harvard saints"? For one thing, the stories of Harvard's sainthood candidates shine light on the University's twentieth-century relationship with the Church—and how it had improved from earlier days. After all, Harvard's first endowed lecture series, the eighteenth-century Dudleian lectures, were dedicated to "the detecting and convicting and exposing of the idolatry of the Roman Catholic Church, their tyranny, usurpations, damnable heresies, fatal errors, abominable superstitions"—you get the point.

Furthermore, saints aren't just men and women staring down from stained glass windows. Saints are symbols of community spirit and selflessness (though some saints fare less well in the eyes of history, such as the recently canonized Fr. Junípero Serra, credibly accused of enslaving Indigenous Californians in the 1700s). To believers, saints can also be a source of holy guidance, explains University of Massachusetts Dartmouth law professor emeritus Dwight Duncan '73, a canon lawyer who is one of Pakaluk's postulators, or advocates for her sainthood cause. "A saint or a venerable is a friend that we have in heaven who can be asked for favors, or so-called miracles," he says. "Those interventions are needed; people feel vulnerable and alone, and they need models of exemplary behavior."

A Benevolent Business Leader

The path to sainthood starts when a Catholic diocese suggests a candidate, suffused with the biblical "heroic virtues" (faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance) and renowned for good works, to the local bishop. The only key requirement is the same prerequisite for getting your face on a U.S. postage stamp: you have to be deceased. The bishop forwards the name to Rome. The desired reply, in Latin, is *nihil obstat*—"nothing stands in the way"—at which point, the candidate is named a "Servant of God" and the process begins.

If a cause gathers momentum and finds favor in Rome, the Vatican subsequently accords a sainthood candidate "venerable" status. Then, after considering evidence of a reported miracle or miracles, the Vatican's clearinghouse, the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, could declare the candidate "beatified," or eligible for local veneration. Formal canonization accords the saint veneration throughout the Catholic world.

For example, last year the Pope announced a miracle attributed to Enrique Shaw's intervention: the parents of a five-year-old Argentinian boy who suffered a devastating head injury in 2015 prayed to Shaw for their son's recovery. "The boy survived and today, now a teenager, lives a normal life with no lasting effects," the Catholic news agency OSV reported.

Of the potential Harvard saints, Shaw's candidacy is the furthest advanced. First nominated for sainthood in 2001 by then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires (later Pope Francis), Shaw would be the first business-leader saint in the Church's history, according to the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. He has been hailed for giving lie to Jesus's maxim that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is

Left: photograph by Rudy Balasko/iStock
Above: photograph in the public domain

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rich to enter the kingdom of God."

Born into an upper-class Buenos Aires family, Shaw became the managing director of his in-laws' business, Rigolleau glassworks. A leader of Catholic Action, a lay organization that seeks to inculcate Christian values in everyday life, Shaw was also a cofounder of Argentina's Christian Association of Business Leaders. He was arrested twice during anti-Catholic crackdowns under the dictatorship of Juan Perón.

At Rigolleau, Shaw established a pension fund and healthcare system for the company's 3,400 workers that provided medical care, financial support in case of illness, and loans when deemed necessary for a family's well-being. He laid out some of his core beliefs in a speech, "The Mission of Business Executives," invoking the Bible, St. Thomas Aquinas, and numerous popes and cardinals to formulate a code of behavior for business leaders.

"Work is not an end," the speech states, citing a fellow Catholic executive. "Neither is production nor welfare...Productivity is an instrument to make better human beings worthy of their supernatural destiny."

"If even half of the businessmen today were like Enrique Shaw, things would be a lot better," Rigolleau employee Adelina Humier said in a memorial documentary commissioned by the Association of Business Leaders. "He said that behind every worker there was a mother, a brother, waiting for their daily bread."

Shaw died in 1962, after a protracted battle with cancer, at age 41. When he needed blood transfusions, over 260 of Rigolleau's factory workers lined up to donate blood to him.



Ruth Pakaluk

A Sharp-Tongued Activist

Ruth Pakaluk, who, like Shaw, died tragically young from cancer, was in many ways a typical undergraduate when she came to Harvard from Norwood, New Jersey, in the late 1970s. In a letter to a hometown friend, Pakaluk—then Ruth Van Kooy—echoed the anxieties of thousands of undergraduates before and after: "It's still exam period here, but I'm having a very tough time getting myself to work...I'm convinced I'm going to get B's in all my classes, and B's don't seem worth working for."

> "Ruth was a good daughter of Harvard in the sense that she was very ambitious. But her ambition was for truth, grace, holiness, and the welfare of the most vulnerable."
>
> —Michael Pakaluk

Ruth quickly paired up with Michael Pakaluk '80, Ph.D. '88, and they were married in the fall of 1978, when they were both still undergraduates. "Our decision [to get married] was almost as unusual then as it would be now," she recalled in *The Appalling Strangeness of the Mercy of God*, a posthumous memoir co-written by Michael. "Only two other undergraduates at Harvard were married, but they weren't married to Harvard students or even to students at all; their spouses were older."

Ruth and Michael, a lapsed Catholic, were spiritual seekers who considered themselves atheists at the time they met. As sophomores, they began attending First Church in Cambridge on Cambridge Common. They also joined the Evangelical InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a national ministry with a branch at Harvard. Influenced in part by Malcolm Muggeridge's book on Mother Teresa, they were wending their way towards Catholicism. As Michael later explained in a yet-to-be-published personal memoir of his Harvard years: "The Catholic Church was either very bad or very good. Yet Mother Teresa was making the first option appear untenable."

The couple formally converted to Catholicism one year after graduation, on Christmas Eve in Edinburgh, where Michael was studying on a Marshall Scholarship. "It became clear to us that the Catholic Church had stood firm on certain teaching historically affirmed by all Christians but which Protestant churches had abandoned in the face of strong forces of popular culture," Ruth wrote.

As part of her spiritual reorientation, Ruth had a powerful change of mind on abortion. "Ruth arrived at Harvard a fervent believer in a woman's right to an abortion," Michael wrote in their joint memoir. Just a few years later, she founded Harvard-Radcliffe Human Rights Advocates, an official Harvard student group opposed to abortion. She gave birth to the first of her seven children, one of whom died in infancy, the year after she graduated. In 1986, she became president of Massachusetts Citizens for Life and launched herself into a public career of antiabortion advocacy.

An effective debater and public speaker who often faced off

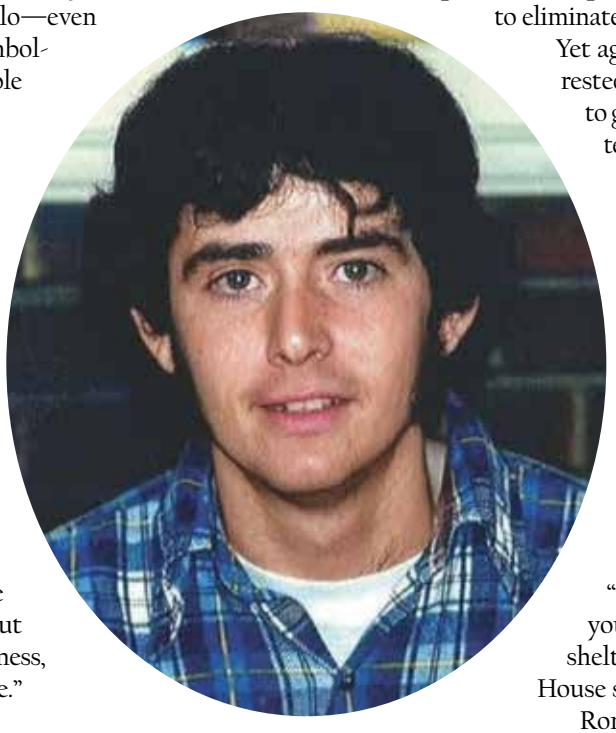
Courtesy of the Ruth V.K. Pakaluk Foundation

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against abortion-rights advocates, Pakaluk was no stranger to asperity. In a letter to an acquaintance who had opted to attend divinity school, she wrote: "I won't pretend to be enthusiastic about Harvard Divinity School. I joke with friends about not being able to decide which institution is more deserving of God's wrathful judgment: the [reliably pro-choice] *Boston Globe* or the Harvard Divinity School."

Pakaluk died at 41, the same age as Shaw. That is not the only overlap between the two sainthood candidates. Michael Pakaluk has taught about Shaw in his "Gospel of Work" course at Catholic University's Busch School of Business. On its website, the Washington, D.C.-based business school claims "to house the world's only stained-glass window of Enrique Shaw," adding: "In a special gesture, Catholic University received permission to depict Shaw with a halo—even though he is not yet canonized—symbolizing the profound impact his example has on future business leaders."

Now, Pakaluk is one step behind Shaw on the sainthood track. Late last year, her postulators received the two-word go-ahead from Rome, elevating her status to "Servant of God." By email, Michael Pakaluk reflected on how his late wife's education shaped her legacy. "Ruth's great natural talents were tested and polished at Harvard, and she put these to work in service to the good of her country, as she understood it, and to that of the Roman Catholic Church," he wrote. "Ruth was a good daughter of Harvard in the sense that she was very ambitious. But her ambition was for truth, grace, holiness, and the welfare of the most vulnerable."



John Timothy Leary

A War Opponent on the Frontlines

John timothy leary, politically active in his Vernon, Connecticut, high school, arrived at Harvard one year after the Pakaluks. Like Ruth, he became an advocate for Catholic causes, primarily evincing a fiery commitment to social justice and opposition to all manifestations of war. His activism also overlapped with Pakaluk's. Leary was arrested several times during sit-ins at abortion clinics, but never sent to jail.

Leary's first brush with social activism came via Phillips Brooks House, where he volunteered to be a prison tutor. Soon he was handing out antiwar leaflets outside a South Boston post office—and getting beaten up by disapproving locals. "Knocked down, kicked and bloodied, [Leary] and his companions decided not to press charges," according to a mini-biography published by the Pax Christi USA Center on Conscience and War, which he helped found. "Instead they expressed sorrow for the South Boston community which has suffered particularly heavy losses during the Vietnam war."

Soon after arriving at Harvard, Leary moved out of the dorms and into a group home with like-minded activists. Sister Evelyn Ronan, who worked at the time at the Harvard-Radcliffe Catholic Student Center, remembered that Leary and his apartment mates often sheltered homeless people for the night. "He would always give his bed to the next guy who came in looking for shelter and then he'd sleep in his green sleeping bag," she recalled. "They lined his coffin with that sleeping bag."

Around Christmas 1980, Leary and some friends from Pax Christi distributed leaflets at Draper Laboratory, a research center for missile systems. The handouts included the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and a personal message from Leary's group: "We hope this prayer will deepen our personal commitment to peace and help open ways for us to work together to eliminate all war, injustice, and fear."

Yet again, the Pax Christi crew got arrested, and when it came time for Leary to graduate, a possible 30-day jail sentence for the Draper caper was hanging over his head. Nothing came of it. Instead, he received Harvard College's Ames Award, given to seniors "who have shown heroic character and energy with helping others and whose substantial contributions may not have been acknowledged."

"He was very well-known and attractive in the fullest sense of that word," says Fr. William Kelly, a senior chaplain at the Harvard Catholic Center. "He attended Mass every day, and you would see him at [the homeless shelter] Rosie's Place and at the Haley House soup kitchen."

Ronan, now living in a convent north of Boston, says of Leary: "When you looked into John's eyes, you could see all the way to heaven."

Just 14 months after graduating, Leary died of cardiac arrest while jogging, at age 24. Rev. Peter Gomes, the Pusey minister at Memorial Church, eulogized him at his funeral service: "He became in his short life the complete and total man for others, and those who knew and loved him testify to the love of Christ that shone in him."

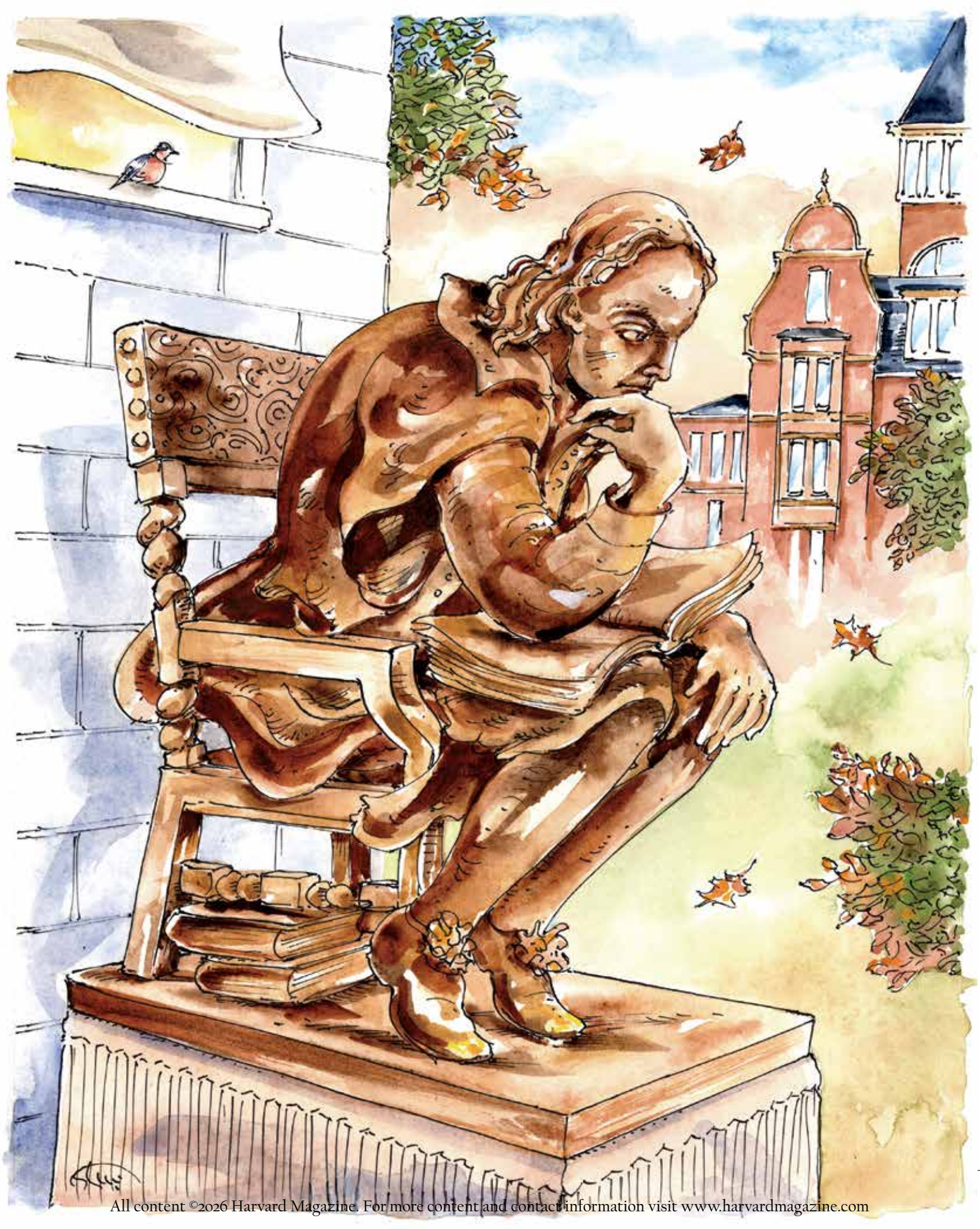
The famed Jesuit antiwar activist Fr. Daniel Berrigan wrote a poem in Leary's memory, which read, in part:

> ...Rare spirit, rare
> Harvard College had not his peer,
> 'An award for drawing do-gooders,'
> he joked when honors came his way...
> In his element at last
> he follows the walker of waves. ▽

Alex Beam is an author and frequent contributor to The Boston Globe.

Courtesy of Saint Mary of the Annunciation, Cambridge, Mass.

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The 'Philosophy High'

As humanities shrink across higher education, one Harvard department is flourishing.

by Schuyler Velasco

A couple of years ago in an Emerson Hall classroom, Aviva Di Paolo '27 was thinking hard about death. Di Paolo, who studies neuroscience and philosophy, is the co-president of Harvard's Ethics Bowl team, where, as on a debate team, competitors present arguments on moral and ethical dilemmas to earn points for style and substance.

Di Paolo and the Harvard team were crunching snacks and pondering a 2024 Ethics Bowl case called "Not Your Grandparent's Séance," about a tech company training a chatbot on a recently deceased loved one's personal data—including online profiles, phone records, and recordings—to create an AI replica of the dead, down to the sound of their voice.

They started with the practical applications. "It could be used as a mechanism for people who had lost a parent, maybe unexpectedly, and didn't get that closure," Di Paolo recalls thinking, "to then have that moment of, 'I get to hear mom's voice one last time.'"

But soon, they wondered: Could this mean, in a sense, that the person never has to die? That the grief that comes with losing a loved one could be effectively obliterated?

Di Paolo relishes chewing on those types of endless, meaty questions with her friends; that's why she's a philosophy concentrator. At Harvard, she has a lot of company.

In the popular imagination, college philosophy departments tend to be tiny and rumpled—dominated by future academics holding court over phenomenology and aesthetics. The stereotype paints the environment as insular and esoteric, with lots of tweed. But Harvard's, which counts famed thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, A.B. 1821, A.M. '27, LL.D. '66, and Thomas Nagel, Ph.D. '63, LL.D. '10, among its graduates, feels markedly different today.

For one thing, it's growing—at a time when humanities have been in well-documented decline at Harvard and across higher education. Since the 2005-2006 academic year, the number of Arts and Humanities concentrators of almost all kinds at Harvard has decreased by 12.6 percent overall, according to data from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), and some of the biggest concentrations have shrunk by more than half. Students studying English have dwindled from 276 to 117 in that period, with course enrollments down by 60 percent. History and Literature concentrators are down by 38 percent, Comparative Religion by 60 percent.

Philosophy, though, has more than doubled in size during that time. It is now the largest of Harvard's Arts and Humanities fields, with 150 primary and joint philosophy concentrators as of 2025. That's much smaller than Economics (953) and Government (589), the most popular University concentrations, but proportional to student body size, it's about 10 times the national average.

"Universities with much larger undergraduate populations

Illustration by Mark Steele

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are often very happy to have 30 or 40 [philosophy] majors," says philosophy lecturer Seth Robertson, the department's assistant director of undergraduate studies. "I've thought for a while that something special is going on here."

The program has also cultivated a broad appeal with the general undergraduate population, supercharged by big introductory seminars with irresistible names such as "Happiness" and "Sex, Love, and Friendship." Even classes digging deep into René Descartes and Immanuel Kant draw bigger crowds than you probably think. At the start of the fall 2026 semester, close to 600 students, from all concentrations, were enrolled in undergraduate-level philosophy courses—triple the number from 2007. Within the humanities, only classes in the creative and performing arts have grown at a similar pace.

The department has benefited from a College-wide emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and the arrival of double concentrations in 2022: it's common to find philosophy concentrators doubling with government, mathematics, and history. Philosophy faculty pop up frequently outside the department: Susanna Rinard's "Happiness" course, which enrolled 370 students this fall, is housed in the broader General Education program.

But students and faculty also note that Harvard's philosophy program, through circumstance and by design, is meeting a historic moment—both in higher education and the culture writ large. As AI raises new questions about ethics and morality, philosophy feels suddenly more pressing, not to mention marketable. And by designing courses with broad appeal that also serve as on-ramps to more rigorous study, the department's faculty and administrators have managed to use today's ethics questions as gateways to the discipline, leading students who might never have dreamed of a philosophy degree to discover that Martin Heidegger is timely and Aristotle is a must-read.

"Universities with much larger undergraduate populations are often happy to have 30 or 40 [philosophy] majors." —*Seth Robertson*

"Almost always," Robertson says of philosophy concentrators, "they happened to take a class, and they fell in love."

For decades, Harvard has been wrestling with how best to incorporate the humanities into its general education requirements, with the goal of producing well-rounded students equipped to step into whatever world they will enter after graduation. Efforts have ranged from the "Harvard Redbook," the University's 1945 report calling for students to share a common intellectual foundation, to the 1990s-era Core Curriculum that emphasized "approaches to knowledge." An early-2000s overhaul introduced a requirement for each student to take a mix of courses organized into eight broad frameworks, including "culture and belief," "empirical and mathematical reasoning," and "ethical reasoning."

These days, much of the emphasis has been on interdisciplinary thinking. Under its dean, Martignetti professor of philosophy Sean Kelly, the Arts and Humanities division has consolidated some introductory coursework into interdisciplinary seminars, which take the form of large lectures taught by teams of faculty from different fields. Last year, Harvard launched nine such courses, organized around themes rather than departments. The initial offerings included "Introduction to the Medical and Health Humanities," "Bob Dylan the Classic," and "Language."

This blurring of disciplinary boundaries is a natural fit for philosophy, which offers training in tools such as formal logic and reasoning to work through problems in any field. "We've always been the 'and' in 'arts and sciences,'" says Alison Simmons, the Wolcott professor of philosophy and a regular instructor for Humanities 10, a popular, yearlong General Education survey course. "If you look at the catalog, there's 'Philosophy of Mind,' 'Philosophy of Biology,' 'Philosophy of Language,' 'Philosophy of Hip Hop,'" she adds. "I came through graduate school with the view that you can't do philosophy if you don't know something else."

A lot of philosophy students and faculty at Harvard, in fact, planned to study something else before stumbling onto the discipline. Di Paolo says that "Phil 16: Sex, Love, and Friendship" and Gina Schouten, the professor who designed it, are in part responsible for her decision to pursue a philosophy degree.

Schouten herself has a similar story. As an undergraduate at Ball State University in the early 2000s, she started out majoring in social work and took her first philosophy class "probably to torture my parents, honestly," she says. "But I really loved it. I got a little hooked, and I just kept taking more classes."

She found that she was picking up tangible skills to help her tackle big questions that came up in her social work courses, where she was interested in topics such as legal rights and access to representation for immigrants. There was a dissonance, she discovered, "between my preconceived notions about philosophy's infamous impracticality and the experience I was having."

"It was applicable everywhere," Schouten adds, "including to the things I cared about the most."

Years later, that idea—of exposing students to philosophy through issues and questions in which they were personally invested—drove the conception of her Phil 16 class, which she first taught in the spring of 2024.

"What's a good way to invite students into philosophical conversations?" Schouten asks. "One thought is, let them see that they already have an expertise on the subject matter. They've already been asking philosophical questions."

The class touches on concepts including consent, the "sex recession," and the difference between romance and love, with a syllabus that ranges from Aristotle's *Nicomachean*



Book illustration by Mark Steele; book page design by Megan Lam/Harvard Magazine

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Ethics (which examines the concept, and purpose, of friendship) to the 2018 book *American Hookup*, about sexual politics and feminism on college campuses. The class also watches *Casablanca* together, deconstructing the central romance of the film and contending with the idea that patriotism (as exemplified by the scene of the bar patrons singing the French national anthem) can be its own form of romance.

"I love it when the conversation goes in that direction," Schouten says, "about under what circumstances patriotism is a force for good, and whether it can stir us in a way that is similar to romance stirring [us]. This is the kind of question that captivates my philosophical excitement."

The class was an instant hit. "No introductory course when it's first taught gets an enrollment above about 12," Kelly notes, because students often look at course evaluation scores online to decide what to take. Phil 16's debut semester had 101 students.

"Every undergraduate wants to know about those topics, and she used that," Kelly says.

Schouten says that when she built "Sex, Love, and Friendship," she was thinking about what an undergraduate who only takes one philosophy class should get from the experience. But many students have come away with an appetite for more.

"This was my first ever philosophy class, and I was so nervous coming in because I thought philosophy was an unapproachable room of old people discussing the meaning [of] life in terms too difficult for most to understand," reads one anonymous review on the Q Guide, the University's student course evaluation platform. "But now I'm actually considering concentrating in Phil!"

Schouten stresses that it isn't an easy course, and several faculty members interviewed for this story floated the idea that philosophy's reputation as rigorous may, at least at Harvard, be its own draw.

"We're viewed as a difficult major," Simmons says, "and Harvard students actually like a challenge."

Indeed, more straightforward Philosophy-with-a-capital-P classes are increasingly filling lecture halls. Simmons has taught "Self and World: Early Modern Philosophy," a survey of the Western canon from the 1500s to the 1700s, since she joined Harvard's faculty in 1994. Her first class had eight students. Now, she regularly has 70 or 80.

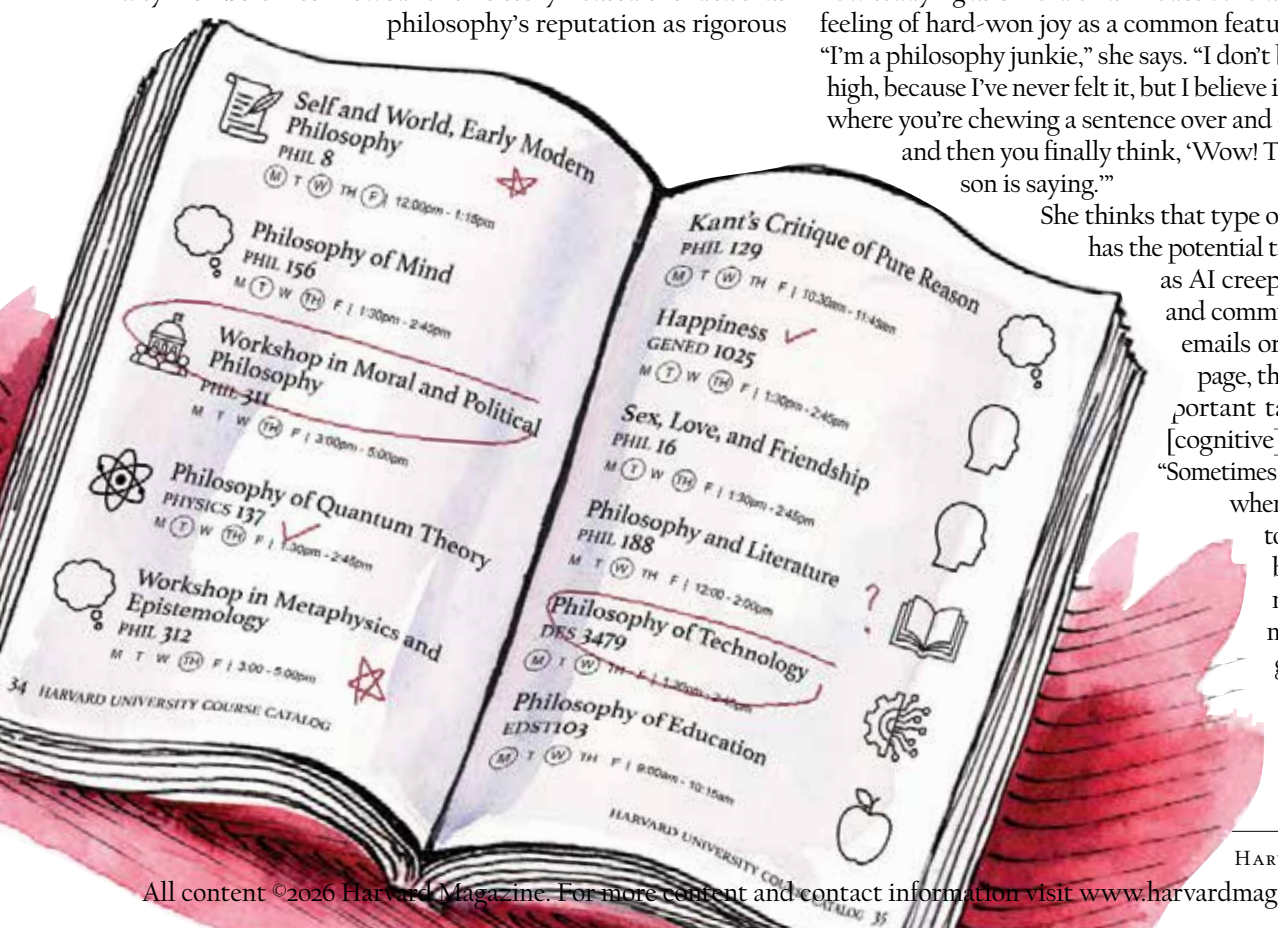
Samantha Matherne draws a similar number of students for her course on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, widely considered one of the most difficult philosophy texts in existence. (Kelly says he once mentioned that course enrollment number to a preeminent Kant scholar at Brown, who retorted: "Impossible. Kant didn't have 80 students in his *Critique* course.")

Harvard students and graduates often describe the challenge of working through such dense, difficult texts as an exhilarating, addictive endeavor, akin to climbing a mountain or completing a marathon.

"The first time I read *Critique of Pure Reason*, I thought, 'Oh my God, this is idiotic,'" says David Lehn '99, a philosophy concentrator who now works as a litigator in Washington, D.C. "Why did this guy write a 900-page book about these things? Why can't he say it more simply? I hated it. Then at some point the coin drops, almost, and you realize, this is the most beautiful, complex set of ideas. It's extraordinary that somebody could build this. People will read it the first time, the first five times, the first 10 times, and not really understand what's going on. And you have to just keep working through it to really get it."

Yael Goldstein '26, a Harvard philosophy concentrator who is now studying at Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, describes that feeling of hard-won joy as a common feature of the discipline. "I'm a philosophy junkie," she says. "I don't believe in a runner's high, because I've never felt it, but I believe in a philosophy high, where you're chewing a sentence over and over and over again, and then you finally think, 'Wow! This is what this person is saying.'"

She thinks that type of hard mental work has the potential to become more vital as AI creeps into our thinking and communication. "Writing emails or looking at a blank page, these are all really important tasks for exercising [cognitive] muscles," she says. "Sometimes I worry that, just like when we developed gyms to walk on treadmills because we're not moving around as much anymore, we're going to have to have the equivalent for thinking. That's a really frightening prospect."



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Increasingly, it's hard to talk about philosophy without also talking about generative AI, which is not only upending the process of teaching and learning but also calling into question the very purpose of a formal education. It's not foreign philosophical territory; as Simmons points out, Descartes was teasing out concepts of consciousness and what separates man from machine 400 years ago. Still, AI has contributed to making philosophy suddenly topical, even marketable. Goldstein says at least five adults in her life sent her a *New York Times* story last summer about how AI companies are hiring academics trained in logic, ethics, and theory of mind. "Like, 'Yay, you have a future ahead of you!'" she laughs.

Meanwhile, as technical skills suddenly seem more precarious, students' anxiety over job prospects is reflected, sometimes dramatically, in their choice of what to study. According to FAS data, the number of computer science concentrators plummeted 25 percent at Harvard between 2025 and 2026. Dean of undergraduate education Amanda Claybaugh thinks that shift represents an opportunity for all of the humanities.

"We're going to see a revaluing of different forms of knowledge," Claybaugh, who is also the Stone professor of English, says. "Career paths that seemed very certain for students are no longer seeming certain. The humanities were suffering from enrollments when other paths looked more likely to lead directly to a job, and things are really up for grabs now. What do English scholars have to offer the world of computing? What would we like the world of consulting and finance to know about the world of texts? Probably a lot, if we thought about it."

"I'm a philosophy junkie. I don't believe in a runner's high, because I've never felt it, but I believe in a philosophy high." —*Yael Goldstein*

Even beyond the tech world, the department's graduates fly in the face of the stereotype that studying philosophy is a career dead end. It's a misconception all humanities disciplines have long fought to shake off; a wide range of research shows that while STEM graduates make more than their liberal arts counterparts just out of college, earnings tend to even out over time.

After Harvard, where she remembers being one of "maybe a dozen" philosophy concentrators in her class, Molly Faulkner-Bond '06 went on to earn a Ph.D. in psychometrics and educational measurement. Since then, she has spent her career helping build more effective standardized tests for education organizations, including medical boards and state K-12 school systems.

Her philosophy training as an undergraduate provided a clear foundation for the work she does now. Her senior thesis was focused on the differences between subjectivity and objectivity—how we know something if nobody else can perceive or confirm it.

"Building a test is a concrete manifestation of that same kind of inquiry," Faulkner-Bond explains. "How do I know if a third grader learned the things a third grader [should] learn over the course of the year? How do I know if this person knows enough to be called a lawyer in the state of Louisiana? It's a very similar question."

Likewise, Goldstein's philosophy coursework at Harvard helped steer her life both in and out of the classroom. In "Inequality," a class taught by associate professor of philosophy Lucas Stanczyk, she read essays about homelessness that argued that stable housing is a form of freedom, compelling her to volunteer, for years, at the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter. "It totally changed the course of my extracurricular life," she says.

Goldstein also wrote her undergraduate thesis on homelessness, using her training in analytic philosophy and phenomenology to recast it as a form of political disenfranchisement, rather than as a personal or societal failing. The paper argues that "certain commitments we have to 'negative freedom,' or to political inclusion, demand that people have a private place to be," she explains. "That was the arc of the thesis, and then I spent a little time trying to think about a realistic implementation of that commitment. I pulled one or two readings from almost every single class I took."

That type of grounded engagement with real-world questions and worries marks an evolution for the department. Simmons says that when she first arrived at Harvard 32 years ago, philosophy was small and insular, with a curriculum geared toward preparing students for their eventual Ph.D.s. Now, an internal department report shows that students' interests range from "global governance to animal ethics."

And the training those students are getting, rooted in texts dating as far back as Socrates, are, in many ways, helping them grapple with an immediate future that can seem straight out of science fiction. Back in Emerson Hall, debating whether resurrecting the dead via chatbot is a good idea, Di Paolo and her Ethics Bowl teammates drew on tenets of existentialism and metaphysics to dig deep into the purpose of grief.

"Death, for one, is inevitable, [and] there's something about death that gives life meaning," Di Paolo says, recalling the discussion. Working through grief, the group decided, is a necessary step for the people who are left to keep living—one that can't, or shouldn't, be replaced by a ghost in the machine.

"We ultimately said that this is not something that people should be using as a form of therapy," Di Paolo says.

She could see herself making a career out of wrestling with such questions, possibly helping to shape regulations and ethical frameworks for AI companies. But the joy she gets out of it goes beyond job considerations.

"In a perfect world I would be sitting down doing ethics somewhere with a bottle of wine," she says, describing her future. "I just really love it." ▽

Schuyler Velasco is the associate editor of Harvard Magazine.

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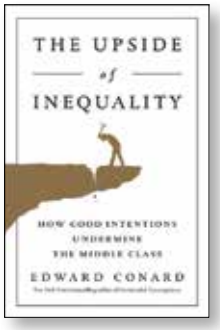
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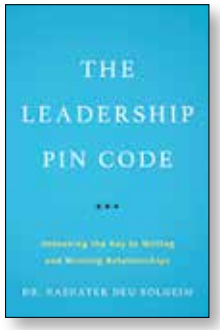
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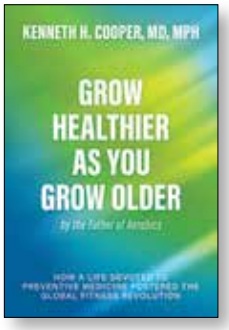
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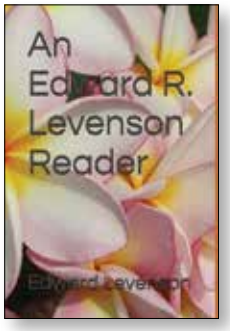
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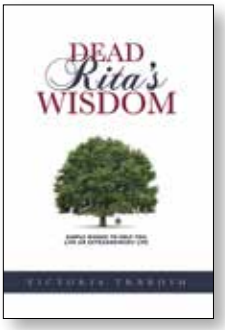
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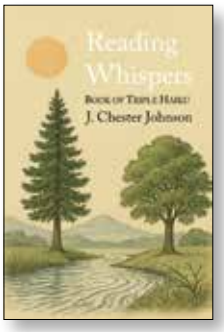
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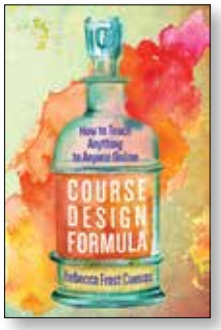
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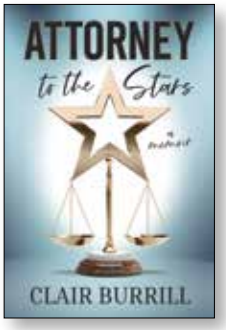
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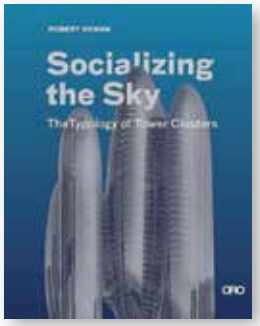
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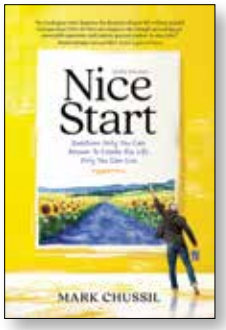
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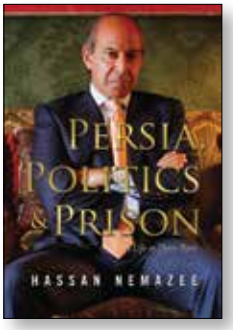
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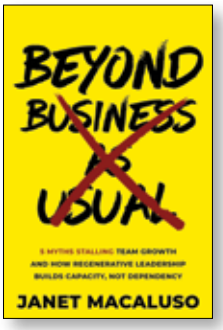
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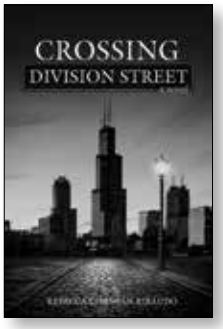
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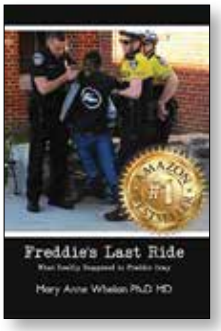
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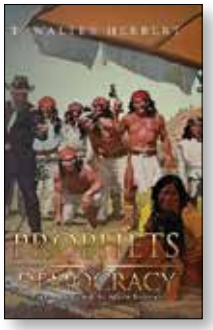
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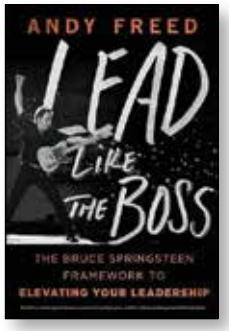
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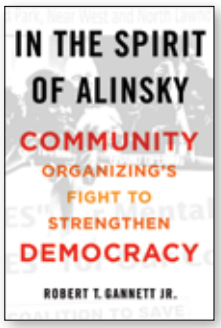
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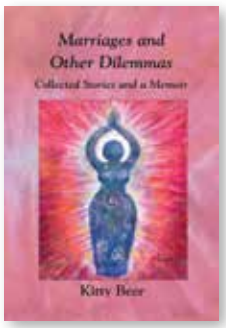
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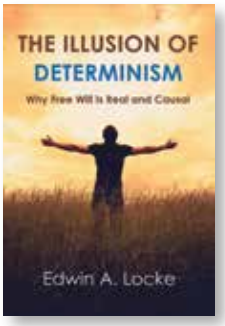
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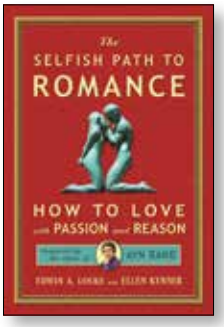
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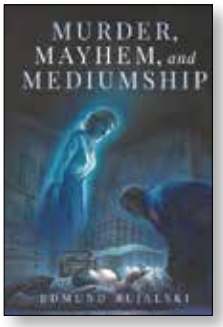
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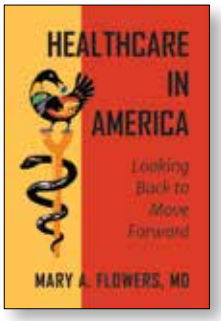
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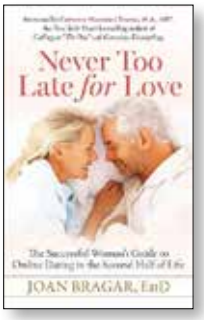
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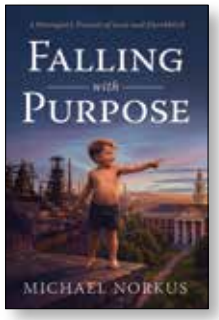
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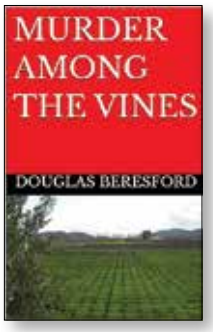
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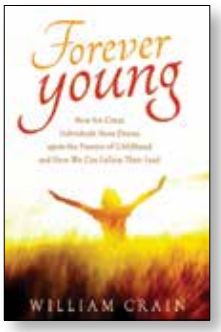
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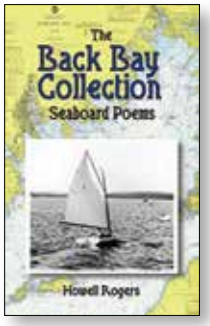
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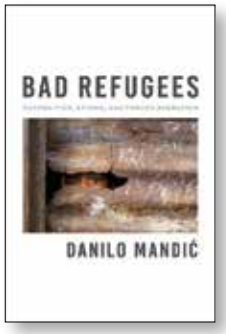
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Now on display at the Carpenter Center, *Waves Move Bile* reimagines a monument to colonial French Indochina as a female figure from Cambodian folklore whose disembodied head floats above the ground, trailing her internal organs behind her.

A Visceral Take on Empire

Artists Enzo Camacho and Ami Lien turn a colonial symbol inside out.

by Lydialyle Gibson

In late 2019, Enzo Camacho '07 and Ami Lien '09 arrived in Marseille, France, to begin research for a new work of art. The pair, who have collaborated since they were undergraduates, had been invited to create a piece for the Manifesta 13 biennale, a European cultural and arts event, which was set to take place in Marseille the following year. They spent two weeks in the city gathering ideas. They visited a Buddhist temple run by a Vietnamese monk and made friends with a sushi chef who planned to work with local fishermen to track sea pollution. They met with artists and activists working on labor and environmental issues.

In the end, what stuck with them was an image they'd encountered on their very first day: a monumental stone sculpture

Photograph by Joerg Lohse; courtesy of 47 Canal, New York

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at the bottom of the grand staircase leading to the city's main train station. Installed in 1925 and titled *Les Colonies d'Asie* (*The Colonies of Asia*), it depicts a topless, bejeweled woman reclining in a Khmer-style crown and a geisha-style bun—"this fantasy hybrid," Lien says, "of an Asian woman." Her hand rests on the head of a Khmer lion, and a basket of fruit, the spoils of conquest, overflows at her feet.

"That monument left such an imprint on our minds," says Camacho, whose work with Lien—incorporating sculpture, video, painting, and handmade paperworks—often explores the colonial histories of Asian countries and how past events in the region continue to shape contemporary life. "We knew we wanted to use that form, and we wanted to convert it."

The piece they created for the biennale, *Waves Move Bile*—currently on display at Harvard's Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts—reimagines the woman from the monument as an *ahp*, a folkloric spirit from Cambodia whose body comes apart at night as she floats through the air, a glowing head dangling her organs behind her. "This is a mythological figure that exists in different forms all around Southeast Asia," Camacho says, including the countries that, like Cambodia, were once part of French Indochina. In the Philippines, where he grew up, the folkloric figure was known as a *manananggal*, a terrifying winged monster whose head and upper torso would roam at night, leaving her legs behind.

The artwork consists of five sculptures suspended from the ceiling, each with a head modeled on the Marseille monument, trailed by a heart, lungs, intestines, and other viscera. Soft light illuminates the sculptures from within, like lanterns—or ghosts. "The idea was about decapitating this monument, this allegory of colonialism," says Camacho, "but also trying to give it new life, a different kind of resonance. To turn it inside out."



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AMI LIEN

The material for the sculptures was made in part from grass and kitchen scraps.

"To take it back," Lien says.

They built the artwork in the early months of 2020, under constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. To make the paper-like material that forms the sculptures, the artists gleaned plant fibers from kitchen scraps and grass they harvested from parks near their homes. Lien made one of the artwork's hearts



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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AMI LIEN

Enzo Camacho and Ami Lien each assembled different pieces of the artwork in their separate apartments.

out of kombucha skins. "Everybody was brewing their own kombucha during the pandemic," she says. "I made a giant scoby in a tub and then molded it."

Normally, Camacho and Lien, who create projects together in countries all over the world, draw their materials from local sites, to "situate" the artwork, Camacho says, in the social and political issues they're addressing. With *Waves Move Bile*, that rootedness was harder to achieve, but they still found ways. "We were pulping lemon peels and orange peels," Lien says, to replicate the gold of the Khmer crown. Experimenting with dyeing techniques, she discovered that turmeric produced a brilliant orange.

In Southeast Asian culture, the *ahp* and similar figures have been associated with otherness and fear, sometimes depicted as cursed by black magic or dangerous to pregnant women. But Camacho and Lien saw other meanings in the *ahp*'s mangled body: survival, resilience, the possibility of renewal after the fracture of colonialism and war. Lien also points out that in the region's traditional animistic belief systems, "where you're negotiating with these non-human, otherworldly beings," figures like the *ahp* "were not all terrible." In fact, she says, some theories contend that they became increasingly demonized with the spread of Catholicism.

At the Carpenter Center, *Waves Move Bile* is part of *Knowledge Is Myth: Chimeric Continuities*, an exhibition on view through December 13, featuring works from Asian diasporic artists that curator Danni Shen says "complicate the binaries" of subjective and objective ways of understanding the world. One of the show's other artists, Candice Lin, creates fantastical collages mimicking the pages of a scientific archive to question how knowledge is produced and consumed. Another series of works explores eco-spiritual rituals from pre-colonial Korea, contrasting them with images of ecological rupture in the demilitarized zone between present-day North Korea and South Korea.

Waves Move Bile is the show's most technically complex work. Its lights flicker in syncopated pulses, timed to an audio track of ambient and bodily sounds—running water, ticking clocks, church bells, hiccups, coughs, footsteps, and even the trickling splash of someone peeing. The most intimate of those sounds are informed partly by traditional Chinese medicine (which also influenced the artwork's title); that practice was always in the background of her family's culture, says Lien, who grew up mostly in Arizona as the child of Taiwanese immigrants. She and Camacho also organized the sculptures' structure according to the traditional Chinese medicine concept of the body's five core organ systems: heart, liver, spleen, lung, and kidney.

Partly, though, the artwork reflects the time in which it was produced—when the pandemic halted activity around the globe soon after their trip to Marseille, the two artists found themselves in lockdown an ocean apart. Camacho is based in Berlin and Lien in New York City; typically, they come together during months-long residencies in places like Singapore, Shanghai, Cambodia, and the Philippines. Some of their most important artwork evolved from trips to the Philippine sugar plantation island of Negros, where they first traveled in 2017 to study a 1950 mural in a workers' chapel. Known as *The Angry Christ*, it was painted by abstract expressionist Alfonso Ossorio '38. Coinciding with the Carpenter Center's exhibit, the Harvard Art Museums is holding a show of his work, *Alfonso Ossorio: Line and Lineage*, open through April 11, 2027.

In 2020, Lien and Camacho were sending messages and recordings back and forth (the coughs and other bodily sounds are theirs), while separately constructing pieces of the sculptures. The resulting artwork is haunting, both beautiful and grotesque. Its sense of physical dislocation fits the circumstances of its creation. "It was important to us to present the figure of the *ahp* as an open wound," Camacho says, "to visualize the aftermath of colonialism as a continuing struggle, a thing that people are still trying to survive and fight at the same time."



PHOTOGRAPH BY DIANA PFAMMATTER

Ami Lien and Enzo Camacho

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FALL/WINTER

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Off the Shelf

by Gabriella Gage

"I never knew anyone quite like my father, but then I never really knew my father, either," wrote the historian Daniel J. Boorstin at age 76 in the only nine pages of autobiographical narrative he produced during a career spanning thousands of pages of historical writing. This unfulfilled quest for generational understanding becomes the *raison d'être* of the new biography of his life, *The American: The Hidden History of Daniel J. Boorstin and His Twentieth Century*, written by his son, Jon Boorstin. It also echoes the central preoccupation of many of the books that follow: identity.

From favorite presidents and family histories to professional stigmas and competing interests, identities—both personal and collective—are actively cultivated, begrudgingly or gratefully inherited, openly ignored or railed against.

Great American Presidents: The Twelve Who Transformed the Nation by Allan J. Lichtman, Ph.D. '73 (Bancroft Press, $32.95)

Great American Presidents offers a few surprises and plenty of opportunities for debate. Impact, not virtue, unites its 12 ideologically diverse presidents. From Washington and Polk to LBJ and Reagan, each chapter includes a timeline of achievements—measured by lasting effects, both good and ill. Lichtman, a historian and political analyst known for predicting U.S. presidential election outcomes, provides a framework for evaluating historical performance; each chapter ends with a numerical "greatness" scorecard.



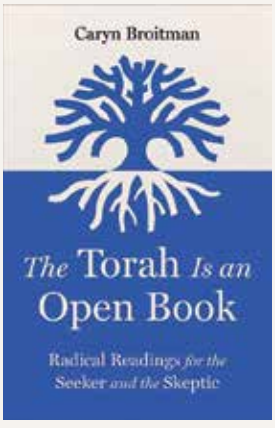
The Au Pair by Teddy Wayne '01 (Harper, $30)

An affair. A murder. A fragile male ego. *The Au Pair*, like the publishing professionals it portrays, understands the marketplace down to the Brooklyn-writer protagonist and a juicy, headline-making trial. In his latest page-turner, Wayne revisits a particular flavor of toxic masculinity—equal parts willful naivete and entitlement—embodied by his protagonist, author Steven Hammer, whose convincing internal dialogue reduces the novel's female counterparts to vehicles for his own life lessons.

The American: The Hidden History of Daniel J. Boorstin and His Twentieth Century by Jon Boorstin '67 (University of Georgia, $34.95)

In this untraditional biography of his father, Daniel J. Boorstin, writer and filmmaker Jon Boorstin explores the void between fathers and sons and the context that makes each generation a product of its time. The story begins with Daniel's grandfather, a Jewish immigrant in the deep American South; it continues through his father Sam's defining role in the 1913 trial of Leo Frank, a young Jewish factory worker in Atlanta wrongfully convicted of murder and subsequently lynched. It then follows Daniel's youth in Tulsa and the beginnings of what would be a prolific career as a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and the 12th Librarian of Congress. Along the way, the author examines the reverberations of antisemitism, racism, and historical trauma across generations.





The Torah Is an Open Book: Radical Readings for the Seeker and the Skeptic by Caryn Broitman '83 (Broadleaf Books, $26.99)

Questioning the Torah is an integral part of a sacred tradition called *midrash*, the rabbinic process of interpreting and expanding upon the text of the Hebrew Bible. Rather than advocating literal interpretation of the Torah, which comprises the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, Broitman, a rabbi and former Silver Fellow at Harvard's Center for Jewish Studies, shows how an "open" approach allows modern readers to challenge and connect with the text through their own lives. She argues that this approach deepens collective understanding of the Torah while welcoming readers regardless of religious background or beliefs.

First Encounters with AI: Writers on Writing, edited by Nina Beguš, Ph.D. '20 (University of Michigan, $19.95 paperback)

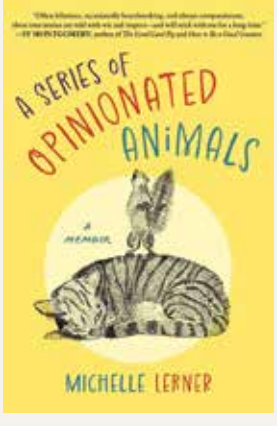
Beguš, a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley, adds new voices to the conversations sparked in her recent book, *Artificial Humanities: A Fictional Perspective on Language in AI*. In this new essay collection, writers share their encounters with generative text and contend with its perception as an existential threat to their profession. Essays consider how AI can help writers overcome writer's block, the ways generative texts lack emotional investment, and what this technology might mean for the future of the profession. One essay is delivered as an extensive prompt that allows readers to plug-and-play into AI tools. Contributors include Sasha Stiles '02, Ken Liu '98, J.D. '04, Nicholas Nardini, Ph.D. '17, and

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former postdoctoral fellow Katy Ilonka Gero.

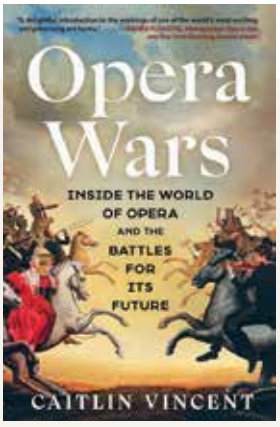
Class Encounters: A Memoir of the 1960s by Frinde Maher '64, M.A.T. '66 (TidePool Press, $32)

"The ruling class" is "hard to get into and hard to see outside of"—a keen observation by the author that doubles as a prevailing theme in this memoir-meets-exploration of class identity. Maher's advantaged upbringing, marked by cotillions and old money musings on "summer people," provides both a vivid main antagonist to her coming-of-age story and the privileged means of opportunity to challenge it. After following other family members to Harvard, Maher, who later became a professor of education and women's studies at Wheaton College, strives to develop a belief system and career independent of that pedigree while candidly confronting her own naivete and detachment from the working class she aims to help through her social activism in the 1960s and career in teaching.



A Series of Opinionated Animals: A Memoir by Michelle Lerner, J.D. '98 (Bancroft Press, $27.95)

Love propels both the narrative and narrator in this unusual memoir of a life shaped by relationships with animals. From the hijinks of a squirrel in captivity and a "ferocious" chicken, to love at first sight with a horse named Shire, we witness how animals cultivate and, in Lerner's case, shape a destiny. Her childhood bonds with nonhumans lead to a career as a lawyer and animal advocate who co-founded the Harvard Law School Student Animal Legal Defense Fund.



Opera Wars: Inside the World of Opera and the Battles for Its Future by Caitlin Vincent '07 (Scribner, $30)

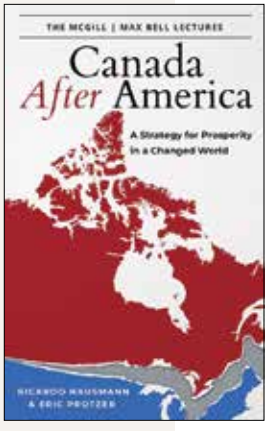
In 2024, 2.1 million Americans attended an opera—up 23 percent from the prior year, a surprising increase after decades of audience decline and declarations of the art form's pending death (looking at you, Timothée Chalamet). Here, Vincent, a librettist, trained vocalist, and opera company director with a love-hate relationship to the discipline, unpacks our complicated relationship with opera. She traces its history against a backdrop of colonialism, explains the basics for newbies, and examines questions of adaptation, authenticity, appeal, and resilience. The result is a playful, approachable peek behind the curtain for connoisseurs and novices alike.

Has Medicine Lost Its Mind? Why Our Mental Health System Is Failing Us and What Should Be Done to Cure It by Robert C. Smith, S.M. '99 (Prometheus, $28.95)

From exorbitant costs to disparities in access, the failures of the U.S. healthcare system are widespread. But some of its biggest care gaps, we learn, exist in the area of mental health. Half of all Americans will experience mental health challenges at some point, but fewer than half will have access to care (and less than 10 percent of those experiencing substance abuse issues, specifically). Extreme shortages of mental health professionals leave patients in the hands of primary care teams who lack training to treat psychological disorders, thanks to the mind-body divide in the medical profession. Drawing on decades of clinical experience and teaching, Smith, a professor emeritus of medicine and psychiatry at Michigan State University, argues that prioritizing mental health could improve overall patient health outcomes while reducing costs through prevention.

Canada After America: A Strategy for Prosperity in a Changed World by Ricardo Hausmann and Eric Protzer (Sutherland House, $23.95)

For decades after World War II, Canada's prosperity relied on its proximity to and economic integration with the United States. But during the second Trump administration, tariffs, retaliatory duties, and deteriorating relations have exposed vulnerabilities in Canadian economic policies and revealed how the U.S.-Canada relationship stunted Canada's growth in certain sectors. Hausmann, a Harvard Kennedy School professor and director of Harvard's Growth Lab, and Protzer, a research fellow at the lab, offer a timely, well-rounded road map with proposals for Canada that include prioritizing supply chains more resilient to distance and tackling a housing shortage that limits urban growth.



Berlin Before and After: A Cautionary Mirror for Our Times by Wendy Lesser '73 (Harper, $32)

This intriguing cultural study is equal parts history, travelogue, and cautionary tale. Lesser begins with the city on the precipice of upheaval in 1929, examining its descent into Nazism and its conversion into the capital of the Third Reich. The book's second half turns to modern-day Berlin, navigating how the city has transformed while echoes of the past remain alive within its walls, and how it is dealing with modern-day challenges, from extreme wealth gaps and widespread inflation to erosion of women's and minority rights. Along the way, parallels between late-Weimar Berlin and twenty-first-century America start to seem eerily familiar.

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People & Passions







Hochman racing at the 2026 USA Triathlon Nationals in Milwaukee in August

ALUMNI

To the Max

Elite athlete and coach Juliet Thompson Hochman helps normal people "do extraordinary things."

by Nell Porter Brown

On a Friday afternoon in August, the dock area at Milwaukee's Lakeshore State Park was abuzz with hundreds of athletes in wetsuits. They had come from all over to compete in the 2026 USA Triathlon Nationals—some hoping to qualify for world championships in Germany.

Among them was Kira Bierly. She had trained for nine months for the event, her first national competition, and now had to perform: swim almost half a mile, then bike 12.4 miles and run 3.1 miles. Two minutes before the starting whistle—while all the other racers in her 25-29 age group were already in the water along the dock—she was walking alone, trying to get herself together, when she ran into her coach, Juliet Thompson Hochman '89.

Hochman was waiting for her own age group's race to start. The former Olympic rower had been in dozens of competitions since 2015, including grueling half-Ironman events, and hoped to win today. When Bierly suddenly appeared, Hochman recalls, she was "standing there like a deer in the headlights, in a full-blown panic." She stuttered and shook, apologizing. Hochman grabbed her shoulders, thinking, "What do I do? Do I take the gentle approach? Do I take the 'Get your ass in the water!' approach?" She made Bierly look her in the eye, and then pointed outward, directing the young athlete's gaze about 200 meters across the water.

"Look. There. All you have to do is get to that red buoy," Hochman said. Then she hustled Bierly toward the starting position, repeating: "Just get to that buoy!"

A minute later, the whistle blew. Hochman saw her client among the wave of women splashing across the water like a school of mad fish. Race assistants in kayaks and jet skis prepared to grab anyone who floundered. But no one was pulled out. And soon Hochman had slipped into the lake herself.

Photographs courtesy of Juliet Thompson Hochman

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This world of pressure, of combatting nerves and pushing oneself to the grinding edge of physical and mental endurance, is totally normal to Hochman. "The training is fun!" she says. "I like swimming, biking, and running as much as other people love painting." In high school, she played three varsity sports, and at Harvard she was the first freshman to ever make the varsity heavyweight rowing team—and then became the youngest member of the 1988 U.S. Olympic team, which finished sixth at the games in Seoul, South Korea. Returning to campus as captain, she led the crew team in an unprecedented, undefeated regular season.

Now, relying heavily on what she learned at the Harvard boathouse, she has triumphed across the board as a triathlete, including earning two world championships at the 70.3 (half-Ironman) distance. Coaching seemed a natural extension of her activities. "I probably should have been a coach my entire career," Hochman says, "but I think if you come out of Harvard and your parents have spent all this money for you to go there and everyone is becoming bankers and consultants, [it feels] hard to do something really different." She initially gave herself a year to start earning some money at it, and since 2018 has built up a solid clientele through LifeSport Coaching, a company founded by her own coach, Lance Watson. In addition to training for 14 to 20 hours a week from her home in Hood River, Oregon, she guides other triathletes, virtually, around the world—from beginners to seasoned competitors, aged 18 to 70. "I help create a flight path," she says, "for normal people to do extraordinary things."

The world of extreme sports is beyond grueling. The Olympic triathlon race is double the distances of the half-Ironman, which Bierly and Hochman raced in Milwaukee, while main Ironman events cover a total of 140.6 miles: a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride, and a 26.2-mile marathon run. Along with all her wins—including seven national championships in triathlon, duathlon, and aquabike—Hochman has had serious injuries over the years.

Risks run high to body and mind. Andrew Shen '23, who raced an Ironman during his senior year at the College, wanted a coach to help him do more and found Hochman online in 2022. Impressed by her superhuman energy and athletic credentials, he also felt a kinship through their Harvard connection. Since then, they have worked together, including to prepare for Shen's fourth Ironman, the DATEV Challenge Roth in Germany, in July 2026. There, paralyzing stomach issues—"a GI breakdown," as Shen describes it—hit him midway through the marathon. His carbohydrate load had run dry, yet he couldn't tolerate eating. When your body is giving out and all you have left is your mind, "you really go into some very dark places, and hope you make it out in one piece," he says. "I know *The Odyssey* is going on right now, and the feeling in a race is very much like strapping yourself to the mast." Yet he still finished in 11 hours, well within the 15 allowed.

There's a constant debate in the Ironman sphere: how much do you force yourself to go on when every cell in your system is screeching 'NO!'? Even professionals sometimes crawl deliriously across the finish line—or drop out. "If there's concern that you are going to do permanent physical damage and not be able to hike with your grandchildren if you continue, then you stop," Hochman allows. "But otherwise...you go until you drop because you have absolutely nothing to lose."

"You go until you drop because you have absolutely nothing to lose."

—Juliet Thompson Hochman

Hochman first found sports as an oasis. At St. Paul's School, "when I was intimidated by academics or people or the whole social scene, I would just go for a run, or shoot hoops, or practice the penalty shot," she says. "It was almost just an escape for me and I always felt like, 'Okay, this is a place where I can be good at something.'"



Hochman and her client Kira Bierly (left) preview the bike and race courses for the USA Triathlon Nationals in Milwaukee.

That sense of refuge carried throughout college. She switched from a pre-med concentration to East Asian studies but spent most of her time on the Charles River. "It was a women's boathouse," she says, "where you could be yourself, make mistakes, learn how to lead, and be powerful and outspoken. It was such a great place to grow up from 18 to 22."

Hochman's college coach, former Olympic rower Liz O'Leary, says she was thrilled to watch Hochman, the boat's stroke, zealously drive herself and the team to greatness. "I think 99.9 percent of people don't know what they are capable of doing, and are nowhere near their limit," O'Leary says. "For Juliet, it's, 'I can do it. You can do it. We can do it. Let's go!'"

After college, Hochman started a nonprofit that recruited college athletes to coach in South Africa's townships and ran teaching programs in the country. Her mother had been a junior show-jumping champion in South Africa; her father, from England, ran marathons. In 1984, while the family was watching Olympic women's rowing on television, Hochman remembers her father putting his arm around her and saying, "That will be you in four years."

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Hochman met her husband at the Stanford Graduate School of Business and worked over the years at entrepreneurial nonprofits and in private-sector project management, spending some time as a stay-at-home mom raising two sons. In 2012, the family moved to Amsterdam for her husband's job; she learned Dutch and joined a group of Dutch women rowers, including other former Olympians, to race throughout Northern Europe. Back in Oregon two years later, she yearned to keep racing at something: "I love competing," she says. "I love winning." That's when she learned about national and world triathlon championships—leading to races, coaching, and the "invention of me as 'Athlete 2.0.'"

With clients, Hochman mines what she learned while rowing, when she figured out how to envision achieving "a big hairy goal," like getting to the Olympics (which she did every night while going to sleep), and then how to break the task down into doable steps. "Execute what you have to do each day—and show up for the next," she says.

Transcending physical obstacles and mental fear takes practice. From the start, she gives clients a few activities "that scare them a little," raising the bar over time and staying in close contact, so that "even if they don't think they can do something, the fact that I think they can pushes them further," she says. "And then you introduce this exciting element of curiosity: 'What more can I do?'"

One's mind, as any athlete will say, is often the true opponent. Creating a mental toolkit is essential, Hochman says: self-talk, mantras, songs, prayers, inspirational quotes and people, "whatever it takes to help you break out of spiraling down the toilet." For decades, she has listened to show tunes during workouts: *Hamilton* is committed to memory, and she recently rediscovered *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Everyone, at times, gets stuck in looping, degrading thoughts, she says: "It's too hard," or "I suck." But, she adds, you must practice turning things around to be "your own best coxswain." She still thinks about rowing and those "horrific moments when you can't see or hear and your heart rate is over 200," and remembers how Harvard coxswain Leigh Weiss '88, Ph.D. '98, would yell at her, shouting things like: "'JT! Prove to them that you belong here!...Show these people what you and I know you can do!'" Hochman says. "At that moment, I would have put my fist through a wall for that woman."

At the same time, she guides athletes to be realistic about accomplishments and to immerse themselves in the daily training. "My God, you spend a lot of time and money preparing for these races," she says, "so you better enjoy the process and not place your entire self-worth on a very specific outcome."

In 2024, Shen made it to a pinnacle: the Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii. Things started out fine. But then he was stung by jellyfish for the first time, which led to an adverse body response amid extreme heat and humidity. Soon blisters turned every footfall into an electrical bolt of pain. Shen finished, digging deep into his toolbox, which includes not wanting to disappoint family and friends "who believe in me," he says. But he'd hoped to make better time. Hochman's response afterward—honest, grounding, and encouraging—has stuck with him. She emphasized that he was only 24 and had just completed a race most people only dream about. It was the big-picture perspective he needed, when he tends to worry about details and focus on everything that could or does go wrong.

Hochman also helped ground her client in Milwaukee. Kira Bierly owns that she panicked before the race—which had never happened before. "I was overcome with the sheer wave of, like, 'Holy cow, I can't do this! It's so scary!'" she says. Hochman steadied her enough to focus her mind on one simple goal. By the time Bierly reached the second buoy, she had kicked into high gear.

"To sprint the last three miles and cross the finish line was incredible—even though I thought I was in last place," Bierly recalls. "Juliet found me a few minutes after she finished her race and ran over and gave me a really, really big hug and then she just screamed, 'You got fourth!'" They spent the rest of the day together—through lunch, dinner, and the award ceremony for Hochman. Award for what? "Oh, you get an award if you're first," Bierly answers. "And she came in first in her age group—of course." ▽

2026 HAA Clubs and SIGs Awards

The Harvard Alumni Association Clubs and Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) Awards recognize exceptional volunteer contributions.

Outstanding Alumni Leadership Award recipient **Katherine Zeitlin Haskell '79** has advanced the mission of the Harvard Club of Washington, D.C., for more than 35 years. As club president, she navigated leadership transitions. She also spearheaded a project to launch a new club website, a comprehensive review of membership criteria, and a bylaw update.

The Outstanding Alumni Community Award honors the **Harvard Club of France** and the **Harvard Latino Alumni Alliance.**

The Harvard Club of France has organized events, including a "Harvard in the Regions" series, and partnered with other Harvard organizations and Ivy+ alumni groups. The club supports the Harvard French Scholarship Fund and the Fundraising4Access initiative.

The Harvard Latino Alumni Alliance (HLAA) has energized alumni and students while highlighting the experiences of Latino students and graduates. Through expanded programming and regional hubs, the SIG has increased membership across the United States. The SIG independently hosted the inaugural Latino Alumni Conference in Cambridge and has bolstered connections with student-led groups and paired students with alumni mentors.

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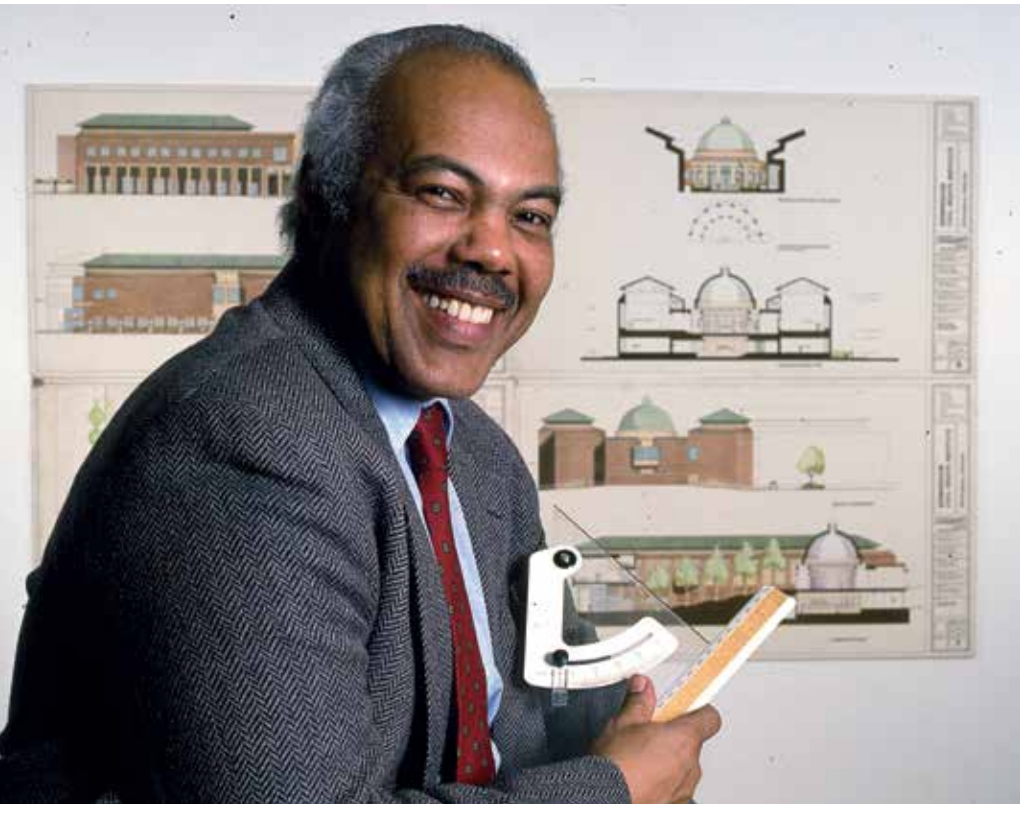


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J. Max Bond Jr. posing in the 1980s with drawings of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

VITA

Designing Change

A new book about architect J. Max Bond Jr. reveals how he helped commemorate Black American history and pursue equality.

by Brian D. Goldstein

Soon after arriving at Harvard College in the early 1950s, J. Max Bond Jr. '55, M.Arch. '58, found a favorite building. "The undergraduate library here, Lamont, is quite modern," the 16-year-old wrote to his parents, "and is really beautiful." Designed by Boston architect Henry R. Shepley, A.B. 1910, Lamont opened in 1949. The pert red brick box, a departure from the Georgian and Georgian Revival style that rooted the Yard in the seventeenth century, showed Bond how architecture could push beyond a past in which he did not see himself reflected. For a Black freshman increasingly interested in the built environment, the possibility of making the world anew promised not just physical change, but social change, too.

Bond would go on to become an internationally prominent architect, designing buildings in diverse sites, from northern Ghana to rural Mississippi to Harlem to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Many of the structures he created helped honor Black history; all offered a humane vision of architecture's broader responsibilities.

Bond's upbringing primed him for that role. Born in Louisville in 1935, he grew up across the South, spending time in New Orleans, Atlanta, and Tuskegee—with a stop in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. His parents, educators and civic leaders, taught their three children to insist on their fundamental equality as Black Americans. (His father, J. Max Bond Sr., served as president of the University of Liberia in the 1950s.) At only 13, Bond graduated from high school and was admitted to Morehouse College. His parents decided he was too young to go; they instead sent him north to the Cambridge School of Weston for further preparation.

From there, Bond went to Harvard, receiving a National Scholarship from the University and becoming part of the College's then-largest cohort of Black freshmen (15 in all). Soon the Yard offered a second lesson in the power of designed space. Although housing discrimination was no longer College policy, segregation persisted. Nine of the 12 Black freshmen living on campus were housed in the corner of the Yard defined by Hollis, Stoughton, and Holworthy Halls. This fact attracted the interest of some classmates—identified by the College but unnamed to this day—who, on the night of February 5, 1952, set a cross on fire in front of those dorms.

When the event went unacknowledged by the College and the press, Bond and fellow student James Boone Jr. wrote about it in a letter to the *Crimson*. "Some of the onlookers cheered when, after ten minutes, the cross was knocked down, but we are sorry to say that others expressed indignation at its destruction," they wrote. "A Negro student passing [through] the Yard was hailed with remarks such as might be expected in the Klan-dominated States of the South."

Bond did not let the racism of the cross-burning, or subtler acts that followed, discourage him. He concentrated in architectural sciences and then pursued a master's degree at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. While there, he was told by a professor that there had been no successful Black architects—so Bond spent a summer working for the most successful Black architect in the world, Los Angeles-based Paul Williams. Frustrated with classes that taught Eurocentric architectural histories, Bond traveled to Tunisia after graduation to see what he had missed, and then on to Paris and New York, where he married American writer and activist Jean Carey. In 1964, they moved to Ghana, where Bond helped build the modern, postcolonial country that Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, a proponent of Pan-Africanism, had envisioned. Bond's major contribution was a bold concrete library in Bolgatanga.

Photograph by Anthony Barboza/Getty Images

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Returning to the U.S. in 1967, he was committed to advancing the civil rights movement through the tools of his field. Work with his first firm, the New York City-based Bond Ryder Associates, included community-generated development plans, flexible housing responsive to residents' needs, and building materials, especially masonry, that created jobs for Black workers.

Meanwhile, Bond Ryder became preeminent in designing monuments commemorating the Black freedom struggle. The King Center in Atlanta (1982) and Harlem's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (1980) recorded histories still unfolding. A decade later, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute opened, its prominent dome making those histories unignorable in a city that had marked their apogee. These structures, like many of Bond's designs, shared brick construction; forms integrating modernism and the architectural history of the African diaspora; and an emphasis on the human scale and surrounding cityscape.

Though Bond found success as head of a Black-led firm, served on the New York City Planning Commission, and was a professor at Columbia University and a dean at the City College of New York, he was still at a disadvantage in the business world. Black architects then—as now—made up only 2 percent of the profession, according to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and many private clients wouldn't hire Black architects for high-profile projects.

In 1990, amid an economic downturn, Bond Ryder merged with the predominantly white Davis, Brody & Associates, a move that brought Bond some big, privately funded projects. One, an extension of the Harvard Club of New York in the early 2000s (with his firm by then renamed Davis Brody Bond), involved Bond's effort to escape the backward-looking architectural forms he associated with his undergraduate frustrations. When some members protested the geometric, largely glass-and-stone façade as an unwelcome deviation from Harvard's architectural orthodoxy, Bond heard echoes of his past. Yet his vision and persistence won out on 44th Street.

Never one to demand the spotlight, Bond viewed architecture as a collaborative pursuit. In his final years, that commitment won him central roles on some of the thorniest projects of the day. Bond's firm served, for example, as the associate architect for the memorial on the site of the destroyed World Trade Center. A critic of Ground Zero's reconstruction—"The rush to get to a building almost inevitably set up a process that was exclusive and elitist," he told *The New York Times* in 2003—Bond became the foremost Black architect shaping it. A second project, which Bond had pushed for since the early 1990s, was the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture. In early 2009, his team, which included architects Phil Freelon, David Adjaye, and the firm SmithGroup, became a finalist in the competition to design the building.

Bond, however, had by then received a grave cancer diagnosis. He did not live to see the realization of the project of his lifetime, a bronze standout on the National Mall. He died on February 18, 2009, two months before his team won the commission. Yet the museum's 2016 dedication marked indelibly the shaping impact of Black history—and Bond's own history—on the built form of the United States.

Brian D. Goldstein '04, Ph.D. '13, is an associate professor of architectural history at Swarthmore College and the author of Max Bond: The Life and Work of the People's Architect *(published on September 15, 2026).*

2026 John P. Reardon Jr. Alumni Award

The Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) John P. Reardon Jr. Alumni Award honors individuals for their longtime contributions to the University. This year's recipients are:

Geraldine Acuña-Sunshine '92, M.P.P. '96, of Boston and Manila, Philippines, was the first Filipina elected to the Board of Overseers, served as its vice chair for 2023-24, and is a past president of the Harvard Club of the Philippines. She has co-chaired the Harvard College Fund (HCF) and the Harvard Kennedy School's HKS Fund executive committees.

Eryn Ament Bingle '95, of Riverside, Conn., has been a class reunion co-chair and member of the HCF executive committee since 2005. She has served on the HAA's board of directors, the HCF Women's Philanthropy Initiative, and the Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) national advisory board for public service.

Robert "Bob" S. Blacklow '55, M.D. '59, of Lincoln, Mass., has been a class secretary, reunion chair, and HCF volunteer, as well as a member of the Harvard Medical School reunion planning and gift committees, the Committee for the Happy Observance of Commencement, and the PBHA board.

Robert "Bob" George Manson, M.P.A.'04, of Dublin, Ireland, is a longtime member and past president of the Harvard Club of Ireland. He established a fellowship for nonprofit leaders in Ireland to attend Harvard Business School executive education programs and co-founded a program encouraging students to apply to the Harvard Kennedy School.

Allyson Mendenhall '90, M.L.A. '99, of Denver, Colo., has held numerous roles—including chair of the Graduate School of Design (GSD) alumni council and graduate school director on the HAA board. The first GSD graduate to serve as HAA board president (2022-23), she received the Harvard GSD Alumni Award.

Steven Schaumberger, M.B.A. '88, of Chicago, has organized and hosted hundreds of events that foster connection and lifelong learning as the programming chair for the Harvard Business School Club of Chicago and the Harvard Club of Chicago.

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THE UNDERGRADUATE

Life in the Dollhouse

Harvard's House system was designed to create community. It also arrests our development.

by Annushka Agarwal

The conveyor belts are the most disconcerting part. Every dining hall has them, sometimes in plain sight, sometimes hidden bashfully in a wood-paneled corner. When you're done hacking away at your rotisserie-style block of tofu, you can push your seat back and deposit your tray on the nearest conveyor belt. The tray will be whisked out of sight.

Life in a Harvard House has an oddly frictionless quality. Well into our college careers, most students don't have to cook, commute, or argue with a landlord. We can get anything from ibuprofen to emergency contraception at a University-run vending machine. For a steep fee, students can pay other students to pick up their dirty laundry, clean it, and deliver it back to their door in a neat bag. So many of the demands of everyday life—the scrubbing, the scrounging, the waiting around—are either eliminated or outsourced to other people.

What replaces these responsibilities, apart from studying, is a perpetual carnival of recreation. Just look through a Harvard College inbox: you'll find hundreds of advertisements for random enticements. The librarians at Lamont host cookie-decorating afternoons to promote their archival services. Dunster House occasionally turns its courtyard into a petting zoo. Harvard's undergraduates have few responsibilities and many unearned delights. We are living through an extended adolescence.

It isn't an accident that the structure of the College can feel a little paternalistic. The House system, established in the 1930s under President A. Lawrence Lowell, was explicitly designed to provide a moral and social education.

Part of the impetus was that students were highly segregated by social class prior to the creation of the Houses. "A college...to be successful must be a democracy," Lowell wrote in a 1904 essay. "A democracy cannot continue to exist if rich men live apart by themselves in expensive private dormitories, and the poorer men by themselves in

Illustration by Sam Island

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other places." Most notorious of these luxury residencies was the Gold Coast, a group of buildings along Mt. Auburn Street that housed wealthy undergraduates.

The simpler, less-cited reason for the House system's creation was that undergraduates—at that point, all men—were lonely. As Harvard's enrollment increased, University officials struggled to provide personalized support to students. Shortly before his death in 1894, University secretary Frank Bolles wrote an influential essay suggesting that Harvard create four divisions with separate deans who would live alongside students. "There is something very ugly in the possibility of a young man's coming to Cambridge and while here sleeping and studying alone in a cheerless lodging, eating alone in a dismal restaurant, feeling himself unknown," Bolles wrote. Small residential communities would allow for greater supervision of students' health and morals and might "break the barrack-like monotony of the dormitory."

Did the house system succeed? On one hand, it helped create orbs of connection within a student body that is ambitious, competitive, and unbelievably neurotic. And, within the University, the House system has succeeded in reducing the sense of inequality. Students from different backgrounds eat in the same dining halls, use the same College-provided toilet paper, climb onto the same rickety fire escapes at sunset. In an alternative world, students might have to fend for themselves in finding a place to live—and Lowell would roll over in his grave at the sight of Cambridge's real estate market.

On the other hand, residential houses have an unnerving quality of artifice, like a zoo exhibit that is contrived to meet the animal's everyday needs but bears limited resemblance to its original habitat. House life is materially excessive. It is sustained on the labor of people who are often paid poorly. (Dining hall workers—members of the UNITE HERE Local 26 union—are, at print time, demanding better salary and benefits during contentious contract negotiations.) The more we engineer college life to reproduce a specific set of social and intellectual values, the more distant students grow from

INTRODUCTIONS

The Dance Life

by Schuyler Velasco

In November, Ming Min Hui, M.B.A. '15, is stepping down after 11 years as executive director of Boston Ballet, where she worked closely with artistic director Mikko Nissinen to strengthen the financial side of the company. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.



Ming Min Hui

What is your background in ballet?
I danced through high school. I was on pointe, performing in local productions of *The Nutcracker.* I was in New York after college—at J.P. Morgan doing investment banking and corporate strategy. And whenever I could find a moment, I would do drop-in classes at Alvin Ailey or Joffrey. So by the time I was watching Boston Ballet during my first year of business school, I'd had a lifetime of loving dance.

What were your goals for keeping Boston Ballet financially healthy?
It's nice and good to grow audiences for *The Nutcracker,* which pays a lot of bills. But you want to see that [growth] for everything you do, particularly the boundary-pushing stuff, and you want to see it grow in diversity. We also run a large school, and that's an important piece of the DNA—not only to grow revenue, but also to bring more youth into the art form.

What challenges do ballet companies face today?
I could spend an hour on this, but one is dealing with the ballet canon. Ballet is inherently elite and Eurocentric; it originated in the French courts. So you have some incredible technical ballets that are pretty problematic. *La Bayadère,* for example, is a gorgeous piece that has stereotypes about the Eastern Oriental other, and problematic treatment of women. Do you stop performing those things? Do you put a different story around it?

I have to ask you about Timothée Chalamet, who famously drew criticism last March for saying "nobody cares" about ballet and opera anymore.
We loved the free PR! This happened when we were producing our *Winter Experience,* and the houses were sold out for two weeks straight on some of the most cutting-edge ballet you'll see in the world. So it was amazing to be able to respond with, "Doesn't look like a problem to us."

What's your favorite ballet?
Right now, it's Crystal Pite's *The Seasons' Canon,* set to Max Richter's reinterpretation of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons.* Abstract or contemporary art can risk losing audiences, but this is universally loved because it's so riveting.

Photograph by Ernesto Galan

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what happens outside of the University.

That detachment is not unique to Harvard, but it is more discernible because so few of us live off campus. About 98 percent of Harvard's undergraduates reside in University-provided housing, compared to 66 percent at Boston University and 59 percent at Tufts. Here, the House is the gravitational center of undergraduate life. Dinners, parties, and academic advising typically take place through the House, and students who live off campus risk missing out. The upcoming closure of the Dudley Co-Op will leave even fewer options for students hoping to live independently.

Here, an uncertain trade-off emerges. House life is comfortable and enriching, but it also breeds a strange dissociation from the outside world. The question is, which aspects of reality are worth impressing upon students through experience? And which can we afford to suspend?

In Neil Gaiman's *The Graveyard Book* (2008), an infant named Nobody "Bod" Owens is adopted by ghosts. Bod grows up in a tomb, learning to read from the letters on the gravestones. It is a warm, nostalgic childhood, but also a childhood that runs parallel to reality. Bod knows nothing of the world outside the graveyard. When he meets his first human companion—a girl named Scarlett—she tells him about "the world outside, about cars and buses and television and aeroplanes." He, in turn, tells her about dead Romans and Celts.

Only when Bod turns 15 do these two worlds collide. He leaves the cemetery with a small suitcase, a forged passport, and some cash. When he tries to hug his ghostly, adoptive mother goodbye, he finds that he can no longer see her. "He might as well have been trying to hold mist," Gaiman writes. For Bod, coming of age means forgoing fantasy. It means living amid the roughness of the world and experiencing uncurated discomforts and joys.

My mother and I read *The Graveyard Book* together when I was in elementary school. Halfway through my first year at Harvard, I told her how much I missed home, and she mailed a copy of the book to my dorm. Each time I sit down to study its familiar pages, I wonder if I have yet to leave the graveyard. I have learned a lot over my three years at Harvard, but I often don't feel like I am growing up.

Part of this outlook is rooted in comparison. I grew up in Vancouver, and most of my childhood friends go to college in major Canadian cities. Some of them lived on campus for the first year, but by this point, almost all of them are renting apartments with friends. When I visit them, we make homemade pasta sauce in their charming Montreal kitchens. I sit in the cafes where they work as baristas, typing away at my Canvas discussion posts. When they visit me, they sleep on a mattress next to a noisy radiator on the fourth floor of Kirkland House. I take them to the dining hall, where they can drink from our chocolate milk machine. It's hard not to feel a little bashful.

My friends like to invent terminology, and they started talking recently about the "blight mindset." Like many Gen-Z colloquialisms, the blight mindset defies precise definition, but it is best described as a cultivated enthusiasm for difficulty. The challenging part is figuring out what could be done, institutionally and personally, to foster a blight mindset at Harvard. Deliberately making students' lives harder to facilitate vicarious class empathy would be, well, a little weird. Should we make ibuprofen more expensive so that Harvard students have to see what "the real world" is like for average Americans? Should we make freshmen commute from Ashmont instead of Mass Hall? Probably not.

One small but feasible step would be to encourage students to take on more of the labor that sustains us. College housing could offer a limited number of meals per week, and have students cook their remaining meals in communal kitchens. The College could require that students take out the compost, mow the lawns, mop the floors. These changes would require a shift in House culture. The crocodile in the zoo isn't used to cleaning the safety glass himself, after all. Students would sacrifice some of our free time and some of that feeling of weightless adolescent freedom. But we might also gain a larger stake in the physical and social communities that most of us cherish.

A few weeks ago, I returned to Kirkland House and started my final year at Harvard. I had spent my summer living alone in Singapore, and it was calming to be back in a place I knew well. The ceilings sloped the same way, the radiator clinked the same way, the hallways were just as long and tendrilly.

I am growing conscious that this feeling is transient. Come May, I'll leave for an unknown place. My familiar House, soon slated for its turn in the Undergraduate House Renewal Program, will be gutted after I'm gone—conveyor belts and dysfunctional radiators and all—and eventually rebuilt. Occasionally I worry about what is waiting for me on the outside. ▽

Annushka Agarwal '27 is one of this year's Berta Greenwald Ledecky Undergraduate Fellows.

2026 Aloian Memorial Scholars

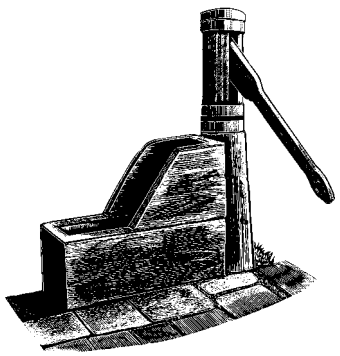
Two students have been named David and Mimi Aloian Memorial Scholars for enriching the quality of life in their Houses.

Sophia (Fengrui) He '27, of Leverett House and Newton, Mass., is a double concentrator in history and economics with a secondary field of study in energy and environment, and a U.S. Army ROTC cadet. As Leverett's Stein chair, she transformed weekly gatherings into vibrant spaces of belonging and founded an event series to foster student-alumni connections.

Jacqueline Metzger '27, of Quincy House and Washington, D.C., is a history concentrator with a secondary field of study in theater, dance, and media. As House committee co-chair and Festa chair, Metzger leads cornerstone events and attends to quieter rituals of care such as checking in on peers and making meal deliveries. As student chair of Quincy's "Big Questions" dinner series, she helps foster honest dialogue on philosophical and ethical issues.

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Math Man, Tiger Tale



"Your wooden arm you hold outstretched to shake with passers-by."

Gerald B. Folland '68, professor of mathematics emeritus at the University of Washington, is a closer reader of *The American Mathematical Monthly* than most people of Primus's acquaintance. Recently, he stumbled on a series of reminiscences about Benjamin Peirce, who served as Perkins professor of mathematics from 1842 until his death in 1880. (Folland described him as the "first really distinguished member of the Harvard math department.")

The essays, published in 1925, came from a cadre of distinguished contributors—among them Harvard presidents Charles W. Eliot and A. Lawrence Lowell, and W. E. Byerly, a subsequent Perkins professor. All painted a portrait of a lost era and, in Peirce, a lost kind of academic.

Here is Byerly's depiction of the campus of yore: "Cambridge was a small straggling town. The inhabitants still spoke of visiting Harvard Square as going down to the village." The portion of the College Yard east of University Hall "was a hayfield, from which the University drew a modest annual profit."

But inside Harvard's gates, Byerly recalled, were "giants" among the professoriate: "poets, discoverers, philosophers, seers in soft hats and long cloaks [who] looked their parts," upon whom he and other freshmen gazed "with admiration and awe." Among them, Peirce stood out as "a real live genius, who had a touch of the prophet in his makeup."

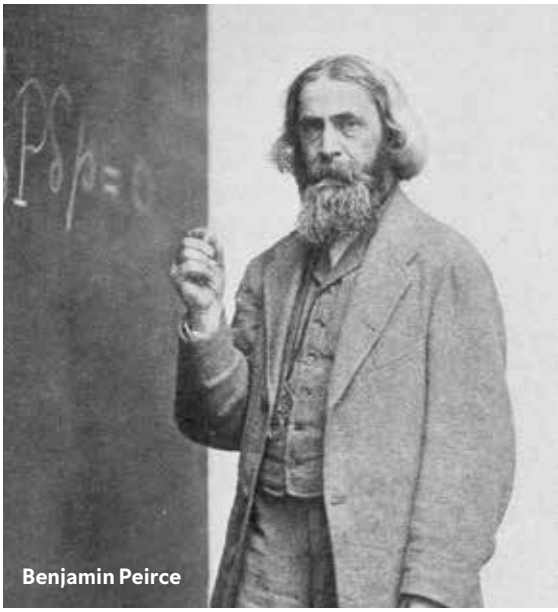
Not that it was easy to study with a prophet, Byerly continued. "I always had the feeling that his attitude toward his loved science was that of a devoted worshipper, rather than of a clear expounder." His blackboard calculations were "illegible, marred with frequent erasures," and when the bell rang, he was often left "abstractedly staring at his work, still with chalk and eraser in his hands, entirely oblivious of his departing class."

Such pedagogical peculiarities aside, Peirce was a superb mentor. Lowell called him "the most massive intellect with which I have ever come into close contact." And Eliot cited Peirce's public service and his bedrock conviction that "the true greatness of nations grew out of their fostering of education, science, and art."

May that spirit live on in the Benjamin Peirce Fellows, the math department's cohort of likely leading scholar-teachers of the future.



One would be hard-pressed to find a more Tiger-ish person than John McPhee, the illustrious *New Yorker* writer. Born in Princeton (where his father was the physician to the university's athletic department), he graduated from Princeton High and Princeton University (1953) and, since 1975, has taught his craft to hundreds of undergraduates at you-know-where.



Benjamin Peirce

So Primus was tickled to learn how McPhee relied on a dyed-in-the-crimson fellow traveler during his postgraduate year at Magdalene College, in the *other* Cambridge. (The confession appeared in McPhee's "Tabula Rasa" feature in the April 27, 2026, issue of *The New Yorker*.)

In September 1953, McPhee wrote, he and C. W. Ufford '53 were bound for the University of Cambridge on the *Queen Elizabeth* (those were different times). The two had met at Deerfield Academy, where McPhee took a gap year. As they sailed, Ufford regularly ceded McPhee the first 14 points in squash games—before toying with him and finishing him off.

In England, McPhee played basketball on a team that made it to the national tournament, where the roster's uniformly small stature seemed a disadvantage. He asked Ufford to join, as a rebounding specialist. Lo and behold, the team advanced (eventually falling to a team of Navy personnel attached to the U.S. embassy).

McPhee credits Ufford's height and overall athleticism, but Primus prefers to think otherwise. After all, Ufford was the Lionel de Jersey Harvard Scholar at Emmanuel College—where John Harvard himself had matriculated more than four centuries earlier.

—Primus

Editor's note: The previous College Pump (September-October 2026) referenced a 70th reunion essay by higher education leader Thomas Ehrlich '56. It can be read in full at harvardmagazine.com/ehrlich-higher-education-retrospective.

Photograph from Benjamin Peirce, 1809-1880: Biographical Sketch and Bibliography, *by Raymond Clare Archibald, 1925*

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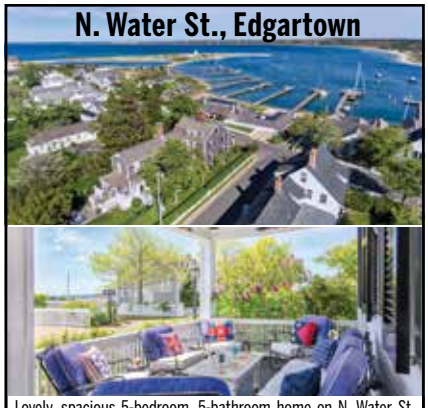
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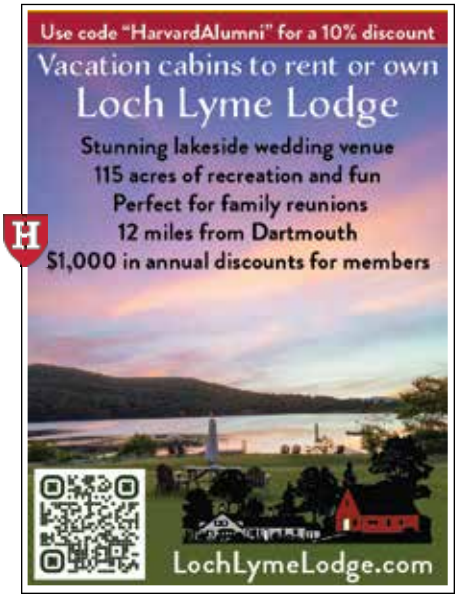


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PERSONALS

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Watching the sunset while holding hands on a sailboat and sipping a dark and stormy. Nestled on a cozy couch in front of a warm fireplace in the winter. If this is your vision for healthy, warm, romantic relationship, I can introduce you to a special gentleman who is looking for a partner to share his life. He is a Harvard Business School grad, an avid sailor, photographer, father, friend. Active, fit, 5'10". If you live an active life, are located in Greater Boston, are in your 60s or 70s, and hope to find a mature, romantic relationship that celebrates you as a special person, this may be your opportunity. Bio and photo: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

SINGLES: Three Day Rule Matchmaking is looking for accomplished, relationship-minded singles of all ages to join our exclusive network of screened members. Our free network is used by our matchmakers to introduce exceptional people to our clients, giving you the opportunity to meet someone you may not otherwise cross paths with. Join our network at https://www.threedayrule.com/pool/lisa or email Lisa directly at lisa@threedayrule.com.

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Intersections Match by Jasbina: The Only Premier Matchmaking Firm—for Indian Singles—in the US, Canada & the UK. info@IntersectionsMatch.com, http://intersectionsmatch.com.

Our charming, highly accomplished private client holds a top position as professor at a coveted Ivy university known for its excellence right here in the Northeast. Petite brunette with deep, dreamy brown eyes, she is athletic and fit, living her best healthy and active lifestyle. During the day she loves outdoor activities: swimming, biking, etc., and enjoys theater, concerts, and the arts all year round. She hopes to meet an equally fit, accomplished, eligible gentleman, intellectually curious, kind, and generous of heart and spirit. He should have an advanced/and or Ivy degree and a thriving career. Our client brings much to a new relationship: she has studied abroad, is Ivy educated, well-traveled, and is multilingual. Her strong match embraces similar values, ethics, and cares about his effect on others and the world. He is 48-58; a high achiever, but fun and not overly materialistic; warm and grounded. Contact privately: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

Stunning, worldly, and charming, our private client (5'5"), is a semi-retired foreign affairs professional, a former US ambassador, now based in Washington, DC. Multilingual and amazingly well-traveled, she recently concluded a stint as visiting professor at one of the top Ivy universities. Last year as part of her position she curated and led an amazing trip abroad to Africa with and for her students. The trip was a huge success. Now in the fall/winter of 2026, the focus is on curated introductions to men who are deserving of her external and internal beauty. Her many interests extend beyond the academic to music, fine arts, literature, and dance. Her match is a confident, successful, kind gentleman (65 to mid-70s—open to all ethnicities) who also shares her passions and love of fascinating travel, international literature, politics and art. I recently had the privilege of having brunch with her at the Waldorf in DC, and she is as dazzling and fun in person as she is on paper! Bio and photo in confidence: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com or 212-627-0121.

DC-based stunner. Our slender, fit, attractive, Ivy-educated, and very private client, a "woman for all seasons," talented, charming, and accomplished, enjoys a man with a brilliant and purposeful career. Her match is a confident, 5'8" and above, fit, attractive gentleman, 68-78, accomplished, kind, good values, love of adventure and travel, family-oriented, and genuine. Contact: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

Our client (34) is a warm, accomplished, and family-oriented physician living in New York City. A devoted mother to two young sons, she enjoys an active lifestyle filled with running, Pilates, travel, and time with family. She is thoughtful, independent, and has built a successful life and career but is looking for a true partner to share it with—someone kind, supportive, emotionally present, and excited to be an active part of family life. She seeks an established, health-conscious Jewish man in his 30s or 40s who wants children, values family, takes care of himself, and is ready to build a loving partnership. She appreciates confidence and chemistry over a particular "type" and is looking for someone who is comfortable in his own skin and won't compete with her but will genuinely be there for her. A strong connection to Jewish life and a pro-Israel perspective are important. Respond confidentially to erica@threedayrule.com.

This dynamic and feminine woman is a born-and-raised New Yorker. She helms a successful real estate development company. Gorgeous, she's 5'4", in terrific shape, pursuing skiing, yoga, biking, hiking, tennis, pickleball, and golf. Travel and adventure are in her nature. She loves live music, theatre, and many cultural opportunities. Well-educated, she also enjoys the Knicks, Rangers, the US Open, Burning Man, and Art Basel. A foodie, she entertains at home, from casual to formal. An empty nester, this is the perfect time to meet our incredible catch! Bonnie@bonniewinstonmatchmaker.com.

Our client (36) is a charismatic, accomplished, and down-to-earth woman with deep roots in the Bay Area. Born and raised in Los Altos, she is a Stanford graduate and former professional soccer player who went on to earn her MBA from Columbia Business School and build a successful career in banking, entrepreneurship, and sports investing. Today, she runs her own firm, invests in sports ventures, and enjoys an active lifestyle filled with travel, great meals, meaningful work, family, and giving back. She seeks a smart, confident, ambitious, and athletic man in his 30s or 40s who is intellectually curious, health-conscious, loves to travel, wants children, and strives to be great at whatever he does. He should be charismatic, moderate and open-minded, and ultimately excited to make the Bay Area his home base while building a life filled with adventure, laughter, deep conversation, and mutual support. Respond confidentially to erica@threedayrule.com.

Seeking accomplished, attractive men for introductions. The Right Time Consultants continues to successfully match eligible men with our private, attractive, female clients. We are a boutique matchmaking firm that maintains a high-touch, private, confidential, and thoughtful process. You are 40-80, intentional, thoughtful, and would be appreciative of a highly curated introduction. sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com or www.therighttimeconsultants.com, go to "get started."

Our client (62) is a smart, thoughtful, and warm woman living in San Francisco. A Dartmouth and Stanford Law graduate, she spent her career as an attorney in government and at leading technology companies before recently retiring. She enjoys an active, intellectually curious lifestyle filled with travel, reading, cooking, exercise, great food, good friends, and time with family. She is also deeply committed to her community, volunteering with an organization that helps seniors remain in their homes. She seeks a kind, emotionally intelligent, and financially secure man who is intellectually curious, passionate about something, family-oriented, health-conscious, and excited to get out and experience life together. She appreciates someone confident but not arrogant, comfortable with both conversation and quiet, and open to travel, spontaneity, and building a meaningful long-term partnership. Respond confidentially to deni@threedayrule.com.

Our private client is considered one of the top international academic and public policy leaders in his field of expertise. Based on the West Coast and connected to a renowned university department, his work takes him all over the country and around the world. At 6'3", he is articulate, kind, handsome, and the proud and fully engaged father of two thriving adult children. Born and raised in Canada, he came to the United States to attend Harvard where he received his Ph.D. He enjoys a wide range of interests: music is his top interest, and he plays in orchestras and chamber music ensembles whenever he can. Our client practices meditation, has a love of the outdoors: hiking, cycling, skiing, ocean kayaking, and recently resumed studying French. He is seeking a loving, kind, attractive woman in her late 50s-60s who is as engaged in worthwhile endeavors as he is and would be happy to spend time with him on the West Coast as well as Canada and all over the world. Bio and photo: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com. Please be concise. All confidential.



Matchmakers! Reach singles in the Harvard community. Info: classifieds@harvard.edu

Our client (54) is a sophisticated, adventurous, and accomplished woman who is embracing an exciting new chapter in life. A former trial attorney who built her own arbitration and mediation practice, she recently launched a personal concierge business and is making more time for the things she loves—including travel, fitness, wine, culture, and trying new experiences. She enjoys everything from the symphony and community choir to Jazzercise, cooking classes, learning French, and exploring new places. She seeks a confident, self-made man who is financially stable, tall, fit, and comfortable in his own skin. He should be curious, spontaneous, culturally engaged, and genuinely excited to make the most of life, from international travel and adventures to great meals and a good glass of wine. A dog lover with a healthy, active lifestyle, he should have a life and interests of his own while being ready for a meaningful relationship and plenty of laughter. Respond confidentially to martina@threedayrule.com.

Blonde, beautiful, and charming just begins to describe our private client based in Manhattan with a wonderful second residence in Connecticut. Confident and upbeat, her homes are havens for entertaining her friends and family and celebrating occasions with style, grace, and class. An accomplished entrepreneur, she continues to enjoy her successful private practice in the financial world, being philanthropic, and a lifelong learner. As successful and happy as she is, she is now much more interested in finding a wonderful and accomplished gentleman with a big heart and a great sense of joie de vivre. Abstractly, he is a fit businessman/entrepreneur who is sincerely looking for a great partner to share his already wonderful life. The demographics for this search are 62–74, 5'9"+, East Coast, liberal or moderate, generous, loves travel and family. Reply in private: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

Our client (74) is a warm, generous, and intellectually curious woman with a lifelong passion for the arts, culture, and ideas. A former professional cellist, she moved to Philadelphia in the 1980s to lead marketing for the Philadelphia Orchestra and has since worked with NPR, Congress, and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Today, she shares her love of art as a guide at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and enjoys an active, engaged lifestyle filled with biking, fitness, lectures, concerts, cooking, and community events. She seeks a confident, independent, and well-educated man who is intellectually curious, financially stable, culturally sophisticated, and has interests and opinions of his own. She values empathy, integrity, generosity, and a lively mind, and hopes to find someone with whom she can share everyday life and build a committed partnership. Philadelphia is preferred, though she is open to New York or Washington, DC. Respond confidentially to tori@threedayrule.com.

Our fabulous client is a delightful physician (Yale BS/Stanford MD). Born and raised in Cambridge, MA, lives in DC. Travels from DC to Boston and to SF/Bay Area, to see family and friends. Deeply passionate about her grown kids, healthcare, and giving back. Very active, she enjoys the outdoors including golf, beaches (especially Cape Cod and the islands), the arts, photography, and investing. Brings warmth and energy and is quick with a smile and shared laughter. Her match is a healthy physician, scientist, or expert in his field, 65-76, an optimist with a kind heart. Bio/photo: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

Our client (57) is a successful, warm, and outgoing woman living in Wilmington, DE. A Global HR leader, she has built an impressive career while maintaining close relationships with her family and longtime friends. She enjoys an active lifestyle filled with travel, pickleball, boating, walking, reading, good wine and martinis, and discovering new experiences. She is ready to find a committed partner who shares her enthusiasm for life and wants to explore the world together. She seeks a kind, confident, and accomplished man who is healthy and active, college-educated, financially established, social, and has a great sense of humor. He should be comfortable with himself, motivated, curious, and open to growing together. Philadelphia, South Jersey, and Delaware are preferred. Respond confidentially to lauren.daddis@threedayrule.com.

Our Bay Area Gem is a striking brunette, slender, and extraordinary in every way! Based in Mill Valley, California, she is open to meeting men in the Bay Area/Southern California and the East Coast. At 5'5" and very fit, she radiates great energy, charm, and intelligence. Her educational pedigree includes Smith College, Stanford, and The University of Chicago, and yet she is unpretentious, genuine, and fun! We are searching for gentlemen (65-77) who are meaningfully engaged in the world and confident in any setting. Our "Gem" enjoys sailing, skiing, languages, reading, travel, and politics. Her ideal match is a wise, creative thinker who shares many of her interests and has a deep sense of humanity. You both have/had great careers and value family time with children and friends. Respond with bio/photo to: sandy@therighttimeconsultants.com.

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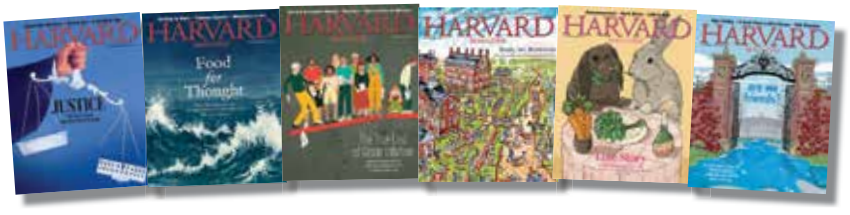
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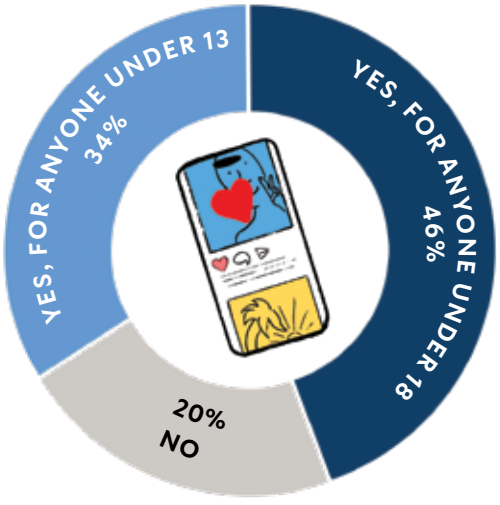
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You Answered...

Our September-October story "When We Were Friends" described the early days of Facebook at Harvard. We asked readers to share their attitudes toward social media—and give us their tips for limiting usage.

Here's a sampling of the answers we received.
Find more online at **harvardmagazine.com/social-media**

Would you support government-imposed social media restrictions for minors?



"This is an issue for **parents**, not the government." –ROSS L.

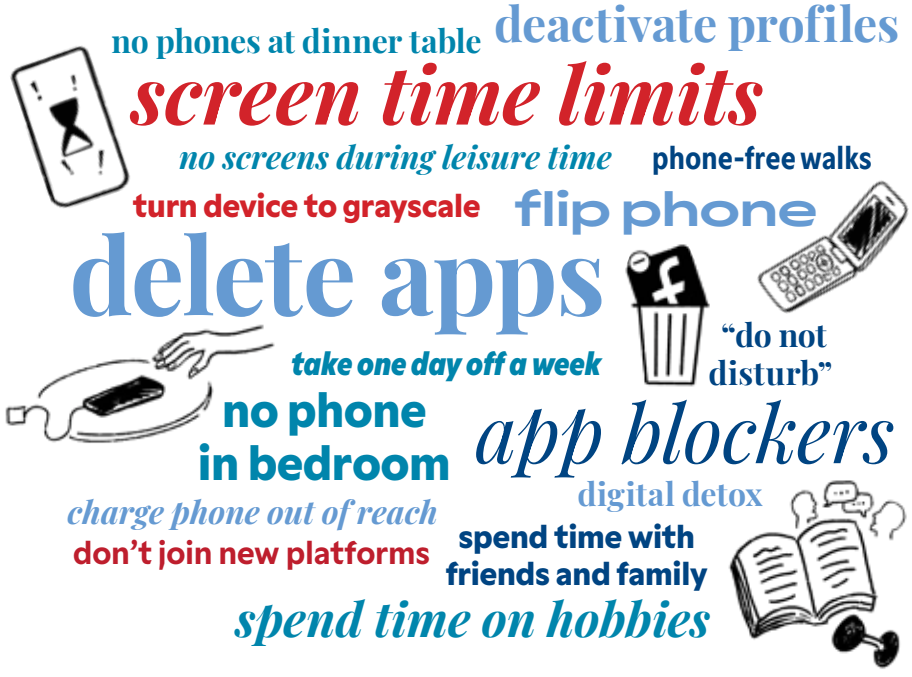
"**The persuasive design features** of social media are causing **tremendous harm** to society and children in particular. In addition, children should not have the ability to sign a contract to give away their data when they are not able to sign other contracts until they are adults." –JEFF M.

"[It's the] parents' job to restrict, but the social media platforms should give the parents **the tools to establish real guardrails**. I might consider curbing some of the addictive practices that the platforms use—but I don't like censorship." –STUART P.

"I was there when social media started and immediately saw how it was going to serve the platform and not the users. I've avoided it in the post-to-the-world cases since, as best I can. I believe it is not designed for the benefit of its users, and is **actively harmful** when it **affects young minds**." –MATT E.

"Kids don't have the executive function necessary to consume social media with appropriate levels of **skepticism** and **distance**." –JON H.

What actions do you take to curb your social media usage?



Next Question

Our cover story, "**The Lifestyle Prescription**" (p.26), describes the science behind lifestyle medicine.

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Go to **harvardmagazine.com/healthy-habits** or use the QR code below. The results will be shared online and in our next issue.

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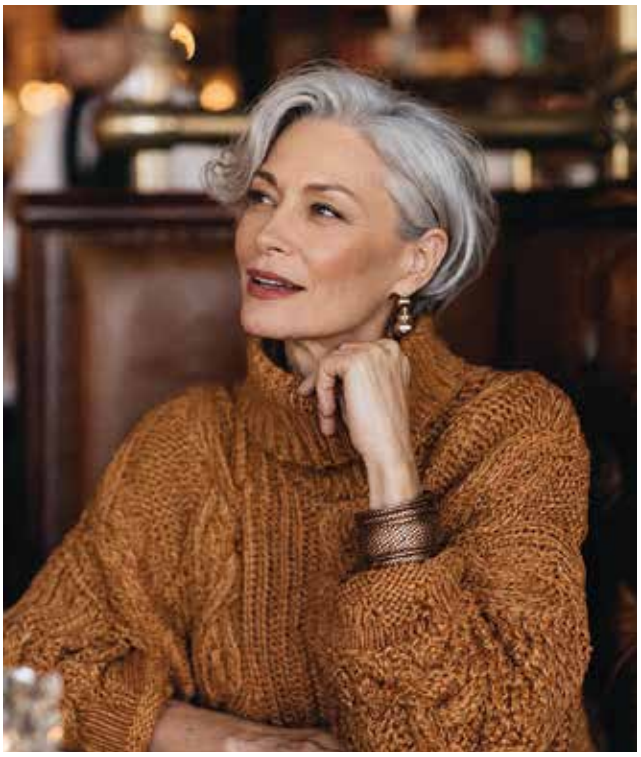
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With her new Fortell AI Hearing Aids, Fiona Briggs is 10 times more likely to correctly hear the waiter recite the evening's specials, and the significance of that improvement goes way beyond her preference for halibut over cod and Brussels sprouts over broccoli.



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Wide margin claim stems from independent testing by HearAdvisor. Full results available at fortell.com/evidence.