

WEEKEND *TOUR*

PERSONAL ESSAY

**For God, for country
and for my Dad***Dinner table disagreements and my decision
to become political.*

// BY MADISEN FINCH

Since the beginning of my life, there has been an unspoken expectation that my dad would be gone. He seemed to always be donning the camo that marked his career. I was constantly reliant upon Skype, email — once I learned to read — and then FaceTime. I grew up with a dad whom I knew digitally. The global conflicts that shaped the world shaped my familial upbringing.

I didn't like war simply because it was war, but because it took my dad from me.

Becoming political felt like a natural consequence of growing up as an Army brat. To me, it was just the next step after realizing that my life was the reality of laws that, for most, were just written down on paper.

But for my dad, it went directly against what he wanted for me — why would I seek to criticize the country he fought so hard for? Why would I want to change the political sphere that for so long influenced our lives — to have an opinion when we would still have to follow the opinions of politicians regardless?

Much of this early rumination was influenced by my anger with America for taking my dad from me, for making decisions that incited conflict. While my pacifist tendencies never really left me — I still believe I would lose in the Hunger Games because I refuse to pick up a weapon — my love for my dad and for his honor taught me a lot about myself.

Instead of accepting the polarization that defines modern politics, I analyzed my familial politics. While knocking on doors, I walked through my family's and talked with them about issues that impacted us. My dad might not agree with my choice to fight for policy or ask the hard questions, but he's the reason I do it.

He might not have approved of my interest in politics, but he never wanted to stop me from chasing my dreams. It was in pursuit of these dreams that I read a quote from James Baldwin: "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on

the right to criticize her perpetually." This singular quote marked a shift in the way I understood my life as an Army brat. I realized that I could love something while still fighting it. I realized that every disagreement I had with my dad was just an act of love. I could keep fighting, just like my dad did — with the motivation to help our country — in the only way we knew how.

Every dinner table disagreement was charged with political feelings that developed because of my dad. Every time I started a debate defending veteran rights, advocated demilitarization or pushed against a candidate that used rhetoric calling people like my dad "suckers," he was in the back of my mind. He might not have agreed with my choices, my choice to become political, but it was all for him.

The older I get, the more I realize that my interest in politics is not a form of rebellion — it is a love for my family, for my country and for who I am. The same political environment that sent my dad to Iraq, Kuwait and South Korea made me care about veterans. I knew the birthdays he missed were for good reasons.

I still don't agree with the military industrial complex, or the devaluing of our nation's heroes or anything that could potentially fall under a "Project 2025." The same experiences that informed my development have become talking points for a polarized America — for polarizing politicians — but I believe that the love we have for where we come from — the shared love beyond ideological debate — can shift that political sphere.

This Family Weekend, I ask you to remember where you come from — to remember the people who made you who you are — and to not be discouraged from having the hard conversations. Not everyone gets to be an Army brat, but I'm grateful that I do.

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STYLE

**Boots and burgundy:
Fashion for fall**

// BY ANGELINA KOVALCHUK

With October imminent, fall is beginning to creep through campus. Whether strolling along Hillhouse Avenue or on Old Campus, the air feels colder and windier and the leaves are gradually fading into red and yellow. Our wardrobes also begin to change, welcoming sweaters and a variety of scarves. Dressing seasonally can help us cheerfully hail this turn of the year.

The ideal fall wardrobe should be all about layers. Great fashion must first and foremost be practical; and as the weather gets ever-more crisp, it is best to be well-insulated. This is not a time to compromise on basics, which form the foundation of a well-layered outfit. But basics can only take you so far. Some funky fall experimentation is key for a layered wardrobe. With that in mind:

Textures: Mixing materials and patterns can be a way of adding texture to an outfit and making any simple piece seem like a "staple." Lace and chiffon appear to be coming back into season, likely in response to Ralph Lauren's Fall/Winter 2025 collection. There are a multitude of "autumnal" patterns and materials that we can mix in: houndstooth, plaid and pinstripes, leather, corduroy and denim. These more dimensional materials mimic the textures of the season, like the crunchiness of fall leaves or the smoothness of pumpkin spiced lattes. Visual appeal is the objective, and that can only be achieved with seasonal awareness and the knowledge of when texture gets to be too much.

Tights: Practical and versatile. Aside from offering warmth, these add a preppy touch to any outfit and can also be worn under virtually anything. There is still time to wear the shorts and skirts we frequented throughout the summer.

Knitwear: There is an endless variety of knits and fabrics on the market, meaning infinite choices when it comes to sweaters and cardigans. One can never go wrong with collecting these. I encourage building an arsenal of shapes and sizes — boxy, baggy, slouchy, you name it. Subtly layering these with a simple white tee fits any context. I also recommend the sweater vest, an homage to prep school uniforms, worn over anything with a collar.

Scarves: Should be big enough to practically swallow us. However, an ultra-thin scarf can still add elegance while the weather permits it.

And on the topic of layering, what could be more quintessentially fall than outerwear? Use this fall as an opportunity to seek out pieces that not only live in,

but also bring out season after season. Counter the wind tunnels along Science Hill with a bomber or windbreaker. Procure a warm, double-breasted wool trench coat, preferably in a dark heather grey or deep brown, in preparation for the cold. Hunt, once and for all, for the perfect vintage leather jacket.

A fall wardrobe also hinges on color: the beiges, browns and reds that crowd the view when we look outside our windows. But neutrals can only take you so far. When your wardrobe appears to be a beige blob, burgundy is the solution — a color more fun to wear than black, white or brown yet just as easy to style. Burgundy compliments any tone and enriches any basic outfit while still embodying the autumnal spirit and paving the way for winter.

And of course, one cannot discuss fall fashion without touching on footwear. We've all heard the heavy heeled boots clicking through the paved campus walkways. A knee-high boot in all types of shapes and silhouettes is an investment well-worth it. But from Blundstones to Doc Martens, don't count out an ankle boot. Loafers, which walk the line of office wear and casual fashion, will soon see their day on campus. And we all know how rainy New Haven gets in the fall, so why not harken back to 2005 Kate Moss and splurge on a rain boot? Fashion does not always have to sacrifice functionality.

Many of the aforementioned pieces come back into style every season — an ode to autumn itself. Seasonal dressing is one part functional and the other part fully aesthetic. So the best way to prepare for the cooler weather is to embrace all the cliché, gimmicky, Gilmore Girls aesthetics that we've come to associate with the season. By making it a little more romantic, it could become a little more bearable, too.

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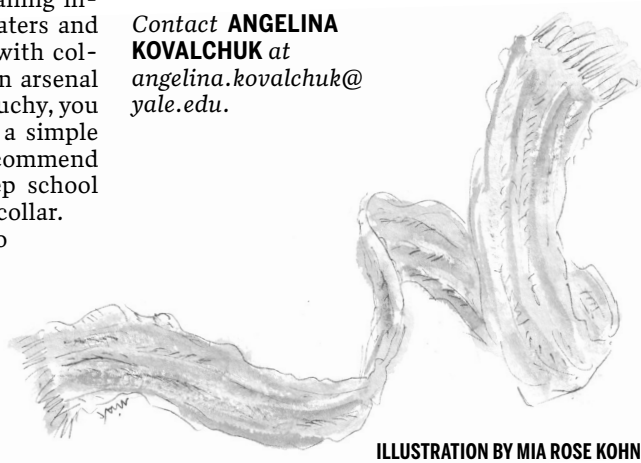


ILLUSTRATION BY MIA ROSE KOHN



ILLUSTRATION BY JULIAN RAYMOND

HOROSCOPES

// BY KIVA BANK

This upcoming weekend, parents and family drama will be welcomed onto campus — some with open arms, and others with less enthusiasm. Regardless of whether your parents are visiting or not, you'll still be caught in the middle of a family reunion you never signed up for.

Family dynamics are tough — especially when your schedule is already packed with midterms, essays and existential crises. As if you weren't busy enough, now you have to deal with 5 million questions about what classes you're taking, how your suitemates are doing and whether the dining hall food is edible. It's not, and you've answered 3 million of these questions before.

The interrogation is relentless, yet somehow you will be expected to smile through the intrusion and give a brochure-worthy campus tour. At the end of the day, Family Weekend isn't about school pride — it's about survival. Let the games begin.

The stars foretell an upcoming filial dilemma in your future:

Aries

You probably forgot it was Family Weekend until you started reading this. You're welcome for the much-needed reminder. Your family might not be visiting, but your roommate's parents definitely are. It's time to clean your side of the room before they take an unexpected tour of the suite. They will judge your collection of two-week-old takeout boxes and the unidentifiable stench that your bed reeks of.

Taurus

Your family has been too excited about this upcoming weekend, but not to visit you. They don't care to see their precious baby, their pride and joy, suffer through midterm season. Instead, they want to take advantage of the potential opportunity to witness a celebrity sighting in the wild jungle known as Cross Campus. When else will your mother have the chance to question Ben Affleck in person? She needs to know his opinion on who is most responsible for the Red Sox losing the '86 World Series. If he says Bill Buckner, he is not a real fan.

Gemini

You have to hide your double life from your strict parents when they visit. They were so proud when you were accepted as a Biomedical Engineering major, and you don't know how to tell them that you've given up on your med school dreams, replacing them with "Archeological Studies" and Indiana Jones fantasies. Your decline into the humanities coincides with your decline into partying and blacking out every weekend. Make sure to brief your suitemates on the situation so they can corroborate your fake life: you stay in each night, study faithfully for your soul-crushing biology exams, and you've never even seen a Solo cup.

Cancer

Your parents are not visiting this weekend, but that's okay because you don't have time for them anyway. Or, at least, that's what you say to comfort yourself. In any case, your weekend plans will be uninterrupted, so you are free to cry alone while watching your favorite comfort movies, self-inserting into the plot of yet another found family trope. You'll be fine. Really. Totally fine.

Leo

You're afraid your dirty family secrets will be exposed this weekend when your parents come to visit. You're a double legacy AND your parents are divorced? Pick a struggle. Fortunately, those around you already know because they can tell by your lack of empathy and constant state of ignorant bliss towards global conflicts. The pre-distressed Golden Goose sneakers you wear every day weren't fooling anyone, babes.

Virgo

Your parents are not divorced, but they should be. It will become painfully obvious this weekend when they get into a nasty argument on Beinecke Plaza, debating whether they should eat at

Sally's or Pepe's for lunch. Your father prefers gooey heaps of mozzarella on top of chewy crust, but your mother demands a thinner, crispier, charred finish. Their marriage was doomed from the start. Luckily, their spousal issues are not your problem anymore since you've already moved out and you'll be eating some of New Haven's best pizza either way.

Libra

You've been dating this guy for a while now, and you're ready to take your relationship to the next level: meeting the parents. Unfortunately, it looks like he is not as prepared for commitment as you are. Enjoy spending the entire weekend avoiding him and his family while trying to give your own parents an informative tour of campus. They will ask if every man they see on College Street is your "boyfriend." Good luck trying to explain to them that modern-day romance is dead.

Scorpio

Do NOT fall into the trap of hooking up with the hot dad at ADPhi this weekend. His cologne may be intoxicating, but it's just masking his midlife crisis. Or maybe it's the copious amounts of tequila that are clouding your judgment. With alcohol consumption involved, that means no Zeta Zaddy™ for you either. Take a break from your usual party antics this weekend before you embarrass yourself in front of people who still think Duran Duran is the epitome of pop rock.

Sagittarius

You're especially looking forward to Family Weekend because you'll get a brief respite from dining hall food. You're ready to be spoiled by your friend's family, who will take you out to dinner and treat you lavishly to the gourmet restaurant of your dreams: Chili's. You need to be chauffeured to the exclusive location far away in East Haven, and luckily, their parents have the perfect vehicle: a minivan that will fit all of your suitemates. Revel in the triple success of the night: good company, a free ride and of course, the Triple Dipper.

Capricorn

Your parents are excited to immerse themselves in Yale — and revisit their treasured days of youth — by living vicariously through your college experience this weekend. That includes meeting some of the cool people you spend your days with. The problem is you have no friends. Sure, you say hello to 10 different classmates you pass walking through Commons, but how many of them will actually sit down to have a meal with you? You can't continue to pass off every wave as "networking." Otherwise, your parents might start to realize that the only people eating with you are ... them.

Aquarius

For you, family visits include your annoying siblings who will be tagging along all weekend, bothering you while you try to get work done and stealing your guest swipes only to complain about how gross the food is. They are right about the lack of flavor, but their presence is still a nuisance — especially when your parents start loudly bragging about your older sister's robotics program at MIT. Don't worry, though, because you have the whole weekend to convince your parents that you're the prodigy instead, not just the "quirky" liberal arts sibling used for comic relief.

Pisces

Your situationship wants you to meet his parents, but he still won't commit to you. He's led you on for too long, and it's time to get revenge for all of the gaslighting he put you through. Try out his techniques of lovebombing this weekend ... not on him, but on his parents. Make them absolutely adore you, right before publicly dumping him inside of Sterling. The vaulted ceilings will echo your rejection like a Shakespearean tragedy. Iconic.

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